

# LATECOMERS AND LEGACIES IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social Change in Asia  
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# Four types of explanation for rise of movements

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## ○ Grievance

- The worse the problem the earlier the movement

## ○ Resource mobilization

- Socioeconomic—Availability of financing, leaders, organizational infrastructure, networks, information, etc
- Discursive--Traditions and local culture may point out different values and priorities than development

## ○ Institutions

- Opportunity structure of politics (multi-party system or not, grass roots politics), class structure of society

# Path Dependence

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- Concept of path dependence

- The outcomes of a *path dependent process* depends not only on current conditions, but also on previous outcomes
- In the broadest sense *history matters*—what choices you have today are dependent upon what choices outcomes from the past have provided you

- Relevance for Liu's analysis

- Legacy of early riser movements affected later movements
  - Taiwan—early riser environmental movement created cross-class connections that loosened authoritarianism so that late-riser labor movements emulated them and moved into electoral politics
  - South Korea—early riser labor movements mobilized a massive class-based organizational effort to confront authoritarianism, so late riser environmental movements emulated confrontational tactics and focused on labor being the victim of pollution

# Environmental Coalitions in Taiwan

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- Creation of cross-class farmer/urban middle-class coalition
  - 1971-77 53% of protests were farmer, but 1985-87 only 26% were
- Process
  - Journalists, ecologists, medical doctors, chemists, and lawyers in urban areas added *ideological-scientific backing* to farmers
  - Voluntary associations to deal with environmental issues emerged in the 1980s
    - 1984 Consumers' Foundation became involved in environmental issues
    - 1985 *New Environmental Monthly* published and became New Environment Foundation in 1987
    - 1988 Environmental Protection Union (TEPU) founded by professors
    - 1989 Homemaker's Union and Foundation

# Importance of Urban/Rural Cross Class Coalition

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- Initially, hegemonic developmental ideology ruled
  - Collective betterment comes from industrial production and accumulation of national wealth
- Farming population
  - Lacked **discursive ability** to overcome developmental ideology
  - Was becoming economically less and less relevant as Taiwan industrialized
- Urban intelligentsia
  - Able to turn local crop damage discourse into more universalistic public health discourse
  - But lacked political muscle that was provided by the direct action of the farmers and middle classes
    - Farmers and middle classes could mobilize voters through kinship and neighborhood networks, and voluntary associations (resource mobilization explanation)

# Taiwan Government

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## ● Before 2005

- National Assembly 國民大會
  - Chose president and amended the constitution
- President governs through five “yuan” (chambers)
  - Executive, legislative, judicial, examination, control (audit)

## ● 1987 martial law lifted (since 1949)

- Up until 1990 those elected on the mainland in 1947 continued to serve indefinitely
  - In 1990, the Judicial Council ruled that those elected in 1947 should all retire in 1991, and direct elections were held in Taiwan

## ● 1991 President 總統 directly elected

## ● 2005 National Assembly abolished itself and relegated its powers to the Legislative Yuan

- Official name “Legislative Yuan” 立法院 but newspapers generally now call it “National Assembly” 國會

# Elections under Martial Law in Taiwan

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- KMT allowed local elections from 1969 and gradually expanded these to national elections bit by bit
  - Pollution issues came to be incorporated into candidates' election platforms (institutional explanation)
- During 1970s and 1980s opposition parties were not allowed
  - “independents” (黨外 dangwai) ran on anti-pollution platforms
  - These later moved into the DPP (organized 1986, legalized 1991)

# KMT response

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- Original attitude to environmental activism
  - let local (Taiwanese) forces fight it out over pollution
- KMT had to reconstitute its legitimacy through democratization in the 1980s
  - Old mainland legislators retired, and the national levels of the system were opened to Taiwanese (institutional explanation)
  - Environmental Protection Bureaucracy consolidated
    - 1982 National Environmental Protection Bureau (later upped to Administration)

# Labor Latecomer on Taiwan

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- 1970s labor disputes in scattered SME's were dealt with by arbitration
- 1986 two DPP endorsed labor candidates defeated KMT-endorsed Chinese Federation of Labor candidates
  - (Yoonkyung Lee *Militants or Partisans* says Taiwanese labor saw their problem as ethnic discrimination because CFL was KMT and thus mainlander dominated)
- 1987-8 labor unrest after lifting of martial law
  - Unions at large corporations elected their own representatives
  - But 1987 Workers Party split
  - 1989 strike at FECF (Far Eastern Chemical Fiber) broken up by police forces
    - Union leaders were fired
- These are mostly institutional/structural explanations

# Taiwan Labor Strategy

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- **Triangular**
  - Direct action through strikes
  - Union reforms within large-scale private and public firms
  - Pursuit of political power in the ballot box
    - (Yoonkyung Lee argues that political incorporation of labor dampened militancy and allowed labor influence in national economy policy)
- **Initial failures led to recalibration of strategy**
  - Union reform in large-scale state-owned enterprise with more job security and legal recourse (resource mobilization)
  - (Taiwan has a relatively large state sector in petroleum, telecommunications, railroads, steel, shipbuilding, airlines, water, electricity, postal services, tobacco, and liquor that the KMT used to control the economy and accept kickbacks)
- **Does this strategy build a “labor aristocracy”?**
  - “labor aristocracy” would be a part of the working class that can maintain more power, better salaries and working conditions than other parts of the working class (that might have less job security and no union representation)

# Korean Labor's *Tango de la muerte* with the state

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- Waves of protest
  - 1978-81 100,000 workers
  - 1986-89 1,600,000 workers
- Repression of Labor (grievance/institutional)
  - Labor blocked from electoral politics with failure of Progressive Party in 1956 (and execution of Cho Pongam in 1959)—system of political management of elections introduced
- Military rule from 1961-1987
  - Labor law institutionalized enterprise unionism and outlawed “third party intervention” in labor disputes
  - Enterprise unions tended to be dominated by appointees more beholden to the company and Ministry of Labor than company workers (ōyong nojo 御用組合)

# Labor response to repression

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- Militant labor response to repression (discourse + resource mobilization)
  - Underground organization and educational campaigns
  - Strong sense of solidarity and social contact in industrial cities
  - Blacklisted workers became full-time labor organizers
  - Students joined labor in labor/student alliance after Kwangju Uprising of 1980 (some 3000 students quit college to open night school to “raise labor consciousness”)—activists (hwaltongga) (discourse)

# Female Labor in 1970s Korea

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- 1970s—struggle for democratic unions
  - Centered among female workers in light industry who struggled to turn government unions (ōyong nojo 御用勞組) into democratic unions (minju nojo 民主勞組)
    - NB: the Korean term “nojo” is short for rōdō kumiai 労働組合, the Japanese term for labor union
  - Hard working conditions in female-centered light industry (grievance based)
    - Longest work week in the world (50+ hours) made normal life impossible (use of uppers to stay awake)
    - Workers made half what white collar did, and female workers half of that
    - Military/authoritarian management techniques with male foremen managing female workers
    - Society looked down on workers (kongsuni/kongdori)

# Korean Labor's Organizational Resources

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- **Missionary consciousness raising**
  - Jeunesses Ouvrières Chrétiennes JOC—Catholic), Urban Industrial Mission (Protestant)
  - Small circle meetings, seminars on labor law and message that only collective action can improve things
- **Why female activism?**
  - Concentration in a few large industries with gender discrimination
  - Low cost of participation since women expected to work only until marriage (so blacklisting less fearsome)
  - Few opportunities to improve themselves through individual effort
  - Women target of missionary activity, and more likely to participate in church life
- **However, women did not see the main issues as gender issues, but regarded them as class issues**

# Korean Labor Tactics (Liu)

- 1980 Kwangju Uprising was a turning point
  - Students, though they had discursive power, realized they couldn't get democracy without the leverage of labor
  - Labor realized that democracy was necessary for them to be able to organize to apply leverage (institutional)
  - Worker/student alliance formed 勞動聯合
- Blacklisted workers became “front line workers in the wilderness” 在野前線勞動者 (chaeya)
  - Used “labor praxis” theory 現場輪 (activism within the factories to raise consciousness)
  - Small groups to develop class and political consciousness
  - Area-based movements to try to organize whole industrial areas
    - 1985 Kuro solidarity struggle failed, but led to Seoul Council of the Labor Movement
  - “spot system” of cellular organization
  - Intense political economy study groups among university students, some of whom went into factories to organize (it was illegal for students to go into factories)

# Korean State Repression during Military Rule

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- ◉ Local self-government abolished
- ◉ Political parties dominated by Seoul elites
  - Party leaders chose candidates
  - Elections short, campaigning limited
  - Organizations (like unions) not allowed to endorse candidates
- ◉ FKTU (Federation of Korean Trade Unions) controlled by government
  - As a “third party” a national union would not be able to mediate local disputes (contrast UW grad students affiliated with UAW)
  - Labor unions not allowed political activity
- ◉ Riot police and union-busting goons 救社團 sent in to violently break up strikes

# South Korean Democratization

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- Seoul had been awarded the 1988 Olympics
- April 1987 demonstration in Seoul attended by 1.4 million people
- June 10, 1987 two students killed by tear gas canisters
  - Huge public funeral and demonstration held in central Seoul
- June 29<sup>th</sup> declaration of Rho Tae Woo
  - Restored direct election of the President
  - Moved to single seat constituencies
  - Proportional representation for parties (rather than Presidential appointment of 1/3 of legislature)
- Reduction in labor repression
  - Wave of violent strikes led to reimposition of repression, but the cat was out of the bag by then

# June 10<sup>th</sup> Demonstrations 1987



# Yonsei Student Yi Hanyeol



# 1980s Korean Environmental Movement

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- Environmental conflicts on outskirts of a few industrial zones
  - Affected persons were relocated with compensation (supposedly)
- 1985 Onsan incident (Cadmium poisoning) precipitated large scale publicity
  - Over the next five years many citizen environmental NGO's formed (religious, student, lawyer)
  - Until 1991, though, most protests were local
- Opposition to construction of golf courses
  - Concerns here weren't 100% environmental
  - Golf in Korea is a high-class expensive sport for elites
  - Golf is a symbol of wasteful use of land, and government corruption (since payoffs were used to get construction permits)
- 1991 Doosan spill of phenyl into Naktong River created a national stink
- Environmental protests folded into the “nationalist-democratic movement”

# 1990s Korean Environmental Movement

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- Reorientation of NGOs to “transcend class boundaries” and “speak to the entire national audience”
  - In the case of South Korea NGOs tend to be elite organizations of the educated middle class
- 1992 Rio Environmental Summit
  - Accepted donations from government and chaebŏl
  - Emphasis on reaching people through the media rather than grass-roots organization

# Early-Riser Legacy?

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- ◎ Later movements to some extent always imitate previous movements
  - Taiwan labor incorporated into political system, so easier for environmental movement, too
  - Korean labor excluded from the political system, so environmental movement also began as an opposition movement
    - South Korea has had labor parties, though they have had little electoral success
      - Democratic Labor Party 10 seats in 2004, 5 in 2008,
      - 2011 DLP merged into United Progressive Party which was banned in 2014

# Liu's View of Labor Movements

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- **Emphasizes similarity of Taiwan and Korea**
  - Others emphasize difference in militancy, mobilizing capacity, labor dispute structures, and partisan tendencies
- **Korean labor movement began in textiles because of poor working conditions**
  - European labor movements were founded in artisan culture and craft unionism, a cultural resource not available in East Asia
- **Both Taiwanese and Korean Movements suffered state repression**
  - Korea 1980-81 (but repression began 1969)
  - Taiwan 1989 when independent, political labor movement emerged
  - Crystallized new strategies afterwards in male-dominated strategic industries (steel, shipbuilding, etc.)
    - Taiwan moved into larger state-owned industries
    - Korea moved into heavy and chemical industries owned by chaebŏl
    - Large pool of labor organizers

# Erosion of Labor Power

- South Korean workers at large-scale enterprises did OK, but others not so much, especially after 1997 currency crisis
- State-introduced counter movements
  - Korea—movement from militarist Factory New Village Movement to Corporate Culture Movement (Japanese 家の会社 discourse)
    - Attempt to reduce worker grievances through scientific management, and affect discourses about work to induce company loyalty
  - Korea neoliberal reforms after 1997 introduced restructuring and subcontracting
    - 1997 general strike headed them off, but then 1997 currency crisis and IMF bailout put them back in
    - Tripartite reform commission (government/management/labor) excluded political parties
  - Korea now—skilled workers in large-scale industry have strong unions, wages, and benefits (labor aristocrats), but have had to jettison solidarity with other workers (contingent workers)—i.e. have become a “labor aristocracy”
    - Decrease of union density a symptom of this (Korea 18.6% 1989→9.9% 2011; Taiwan 12.5% 1989→ 6.3% 2012)
    - State able to criticize organized labor for their “iron rice bowls” 铁饭碗 in Taiwan (쇠밥통 of 쇠파그릇 are Korean translations, but aren’t really used colloquially in Korea except as translations of Chinese terms)

# Media Environment and Labor

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- Reporters in Asia highly educated and tend not to be of working-class background
  - They treat labor demands treated as “special interests”
  - They criticize labor violence “now that we have democracy”
  - They tend to ignore female and irregular workers ignored (over 50% of the work force in Korea)
  - Taiwan and South Korea both import migrant workers on temporary contracts for 3D occupations (dirty, dangerous, difficult)
  - Restructuring—outsourcing, subcontracting—weakens labor
- Response
  - Unions address migrant worker problems, middle-aged unemployment
  - Privatization redefined as “selling off state assets”
  - South Korean unions address female and contingent workers
- Notice discursive struggle in the labor movement

# Environmental Trajectory

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- Taiwanese initial coalition of urban intellectuals and rural victims became strained
  - Intellectuals wanted comprehensive solutions
  - Victims wanted compensation
    - This makes them vulnerable to accusations of greed
  - Government environmental apparatus freezes out the NGOs and intellectuals
- South Korean environmental movement has similar tensions
  - KAPMA (Korea Anti-pollution Movement Association) became KFEM (Korean Federation of Environmental Movements) because of tensions over government compensation and relocation
  - Issues—dams on Nakdong River, golf course in national park, wetlands reclamation

# Institutional Competitors in EM

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- ◉ More robust governmental apparatus
- ◉ Environmental impact statements mean companies arise to provide these
  - Large firms set up environmental research offices
- ◉ Movement displaced from NGOs to government and business groups
- ◉ Discursive struggle still on in the media
  - Environmental discourse widely accepted
  - Businesses use public relations techniques to reduce environmental pressures
- ◉ Issue—who are the constituencies that will maintain environmental pressure?
  - Where are the grass roots? (cf. Weller)

# Response?

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- ⊙ Professionalism
- ⊙ Rebuilding the grass roots
  - Coalitions with trade unions?
    - Are workers the chief victims of pollution?
    - Does depletion of resources lead to worse working conditions?
- ⊙ Liu argues that the movements are converging
  - Labor moving from leverage power to ideological power
  - Environmental movement moving from ideological power to leverage power

# Theoretical Issues?

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- Why do some grievances lead to the development of social movements (collective actors) and others not?
  - Leverage versus ideological power?
  - Endogenous (movement-centered) versus exogenous variables?
  - Historical conditioning?
- Polanyi and Gramsci
  - Polanyi—expansion of markets leads to “social protection movements” (grievance explanation)
  - Gramsci—movements have a material class basis and organize along those lines during which “organic intellectuals” emerge to create a counter-hegemonic ideology that can become hegemonic
    - Liu adds that working-class movements follow Gramsci, but environmental movements work from ideology first
- Movements develop through battles in economic and ideological terms
  - Whichever movement develops first leaves a legacy that can be made use of by latecomer movements

# Role of Democracy?

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- Taiwan and South Korea only East Asian countries to develop democracy through popular uprisings and elite compromises
  - (Japan's democracy was imposed by the US occupation, though there are historical roots in Taishō democracy 1912-1926)
  - Labor and environmental movements contributed to development of democracy
    - Early riser movements clashed with authoritarian regimes
    - Late riser movements contributed to vibrant democratic scene
- However . . .
  - No labor party has had electoral success in either Taiwan or South Korea
  - Conservative parties returned to power in both countries in 2008 (but Liu didn't know that DPP would come back in Taiwan in 2016, and Democratic Party in South Korea in 2017)

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

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- ◉ Post 1968 (revolt against US and Soviet hegemony)
  - Neoliberal globalization (from 1990s)
    - Networks of capitalist enterprises, think tanks, and policy institutions advocating free trade, and application of market principles throughout society
      - Production through dispersed horizontal trade networks
  - Rise of feminism and ethnic movements
  - Cross-border migration increase

# Green Growth in Korea

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- >Dent 2009 Myungbak Lee “Green Growth Strategy”
  - Green energy sectors (renewables, efficiency)
  - Emerging “clean” high tech industry
  - Modeled on 1973-9 Heavy and Chemical Industrialization
- 1962 Park Chung Hee, “dark smoke rising from the chimneys is the symbol of our nation’s growth and prosperity.”
- “Four Major Rivers Restoration” project was an ecological disaster
- Mostly talk and goals, but not much action