

Park Chung-Hee Regime's Saemaul Undong and the Populist Political Strategy: Focusing on Rural Saemaul Undong in the 1970s

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ABSTRACT--- *This study purports to review Saemaul Undong (new village movement) in the 1970s as a rural modernization movement from a perspective of populism. From the perspective of direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity as a basic theory of populism, the development of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s can be interpreted as the process of interaction of combination of the governing strategy of the Park, Chung-Hee regime and villager's socioeconomic demands. Park obtained comradeship or comradely union from villagers by holding several rural events and providing economic rewards by encouraging comradely connection with the people. The regime pursued strong solidarity between the nation and rural areas by applying the cooperative traditions of rural areas to the organization and system of Saemaul Undong. The administration attained successful results by making the people have identical group consciousness through large-scale Saemaul education and Saemaul symbols and eventually disseminated the governing ideology of modernization throughout the country effectively. Therefore, his administration came to vitalize and spread Saemaul Undong in the 1970s through building a comradely sense among the people, strengthening solidarity between the nation and the people, and reinforcing the identity between the people. That is a basic theory of populism which is one type of governing strategies, containing direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity*

Keywords--- Saemaul Undong, populism, Park Chung-Hee regime, mass mobilization, rural modernization

1. INTRODUCTION

Strong arguments against 'populism' have been developed in the Korean society since the 2000s. Regardless of whether conservative and progressive, right and left wing, all the political forces have tried to define opinions against their ideological and political attitudes towards diverse social issues and policies; including free meals, free health service, free child care or college tuition-cutting as populism.

The term populism started to be used in earnest with the advent of the Kim, Dae-Jung administration in 1998 (Seo 2008: 17). As conservative media and the opposition party expressed their critical opinions on the Kim administration's policies on labor, welfare, and the reunification of North and South Korea. They stated that populism or popularism was no longer necessary. The advent of democracy brought with it populism as a significant political word. In particular, political and social interest in populism rapidly increased during the Roh, Moo-Hyun administration between 2003 and 2008; taking the opportunity of 'reform legislation' in 2004 and 'candlelight rallies' in 2007. Moreover, after the Lee, Myung-Bak government appeared in 2008, application of the word populism quickly grew. It was usually used by conservative or right wing to criticize progressive or left wing, and the word became one of the keywords explaining Korean politics. Almost all issues or policies regarded as 'free-' have been used as a political tool criticizing political incompetence and populism of opposite sides. Such issues have been described as a rhetoric expression of 'giving without any strings attached'. Given this situation, populism was considered either as a negative political tool or means to obtain popularity from the people or public. Furthermore, the Korean society faced a situation which only emphasized conceptual ambiguity of populism (Laclau 1977: 143~145).

Nevertheless, the reason why populism has received attention in the Korean society is as a result of demagoguery and mobilization of the public (the people or grassroots), and their subjectivation in the political phenomena. In other words, it is necessary to review or reconsider movement of populism revealed in the process of mobilizing the people and making them subject in reality which showed how democracy was implemented in the Korean society.

In this respect, Saemaul Undong during the Park, Chung-Hee regime can be a useful case for analysis in order to review the phenomenon of populist politics in Korea. Although there were both positive and negative evaluations of Saemaul Undong (it was implemented through the process of collecting data on the socioeconomic demands of the people by the Park administration and it created the ruling pressure of authoritarianism respectively), it was true that Saemaul Undong had collective participation of the people and their expression of desires in the era of the capitalistic

industrialization in the 1970s (Kim 1993: 54~60). That is to say that Saemaul Undong can be a meaningful object to explore demagoguery, mass mobilization, and subjectivation of the people under the Park administration in the 1970s in terms of interpretation in various ways such as modern popular politics to embrace the people worn out by poverty (Go 2006: 183), mobilization for development infused with subjectivation of the people (Jo 2004: 177), or a national mobilization system for the people neglected from the rapid compressed growth (Kim 2004: 176~180).

This study will investigate Park, Chung-Hee's Saemaul Undong as a populist governing strategy. In order to achieve this, the study will review the background of Saemaul Undong in 1970 as a matter of necessity in a populist governing strategy. It will also investigate the development of Saemaul Undong from the point of view of the application of the theory of populism. In addition, it will also explain briefly why despite the evaluation of forceful national mobilization, the people still remember Saemaul Undong as a great part of history, which they achieved independently.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION DIRECTIONS

2.1. Literature review

Existing studies on Saemaul Undong are largely classified into two perspectives: a 'modernization strategy' considering Saemaul Undong as rural development, local community development and economic development strategy; a governing strategy concentrating on social disciplines and control of the Park administration through Saemaul Undong. The recent research trend focuses on discussion about the latter by agreeing that Saemaul Undong was the practice of a 'ruling (governing) strategy' of the Park administration to stabilize and maintain his regime.

This study focuses on the discussion on the second since it purports to review Saemaul Undong as a governing strategy of the Park administration. The studies on the 'governing strategy' can also be divided into two: (a) an approach from the perspective of a hegemonic governing strategy and (b) an approach from the perspective of a governing strategy by force and control.

When it comes to the hegemonic approach, it is mainly split into positive (Hwang 2004) and negative (Go 2006) opinions on the hegemony of the Park administration through Saemaul Undong. Hwang (2004) insists Saemaul Undong made the people into modernized subjects who had strong social and economic desires (Hwang 2004: 479). In other words, Saemaul Undong was the political process practiced with hegemony of the Park administration by combining top-down development-oriented mobilization with socioeconomic demands of the people (Hwang 2004: 480). On the contrary, Go (2006) considered Saemaul Undong as modern popular politics established by the nation to bring the people to its base of support (Go 2006: 183). He maintains that Saemaul Undong was a hegemonic governing strategy of the Park administration but it didn't realize the hegemony since Saemaul Undong received collective participation and attention from villagers but it also controlled their autonomy and met with opposition (Go 2006: 194~195).

According to studies on the force and control approach, it argues that force and control of the Park administration were realized. Representative studies are Jo (2004), Kim (2004), and Park · Han (1999). Jo (2004) considers Saemaul Undong part of development-oriented mobilization by the Park administration through all-out force and subjectivation of the people in the 1970s (Jo 2004: 177). Kim (2004) contends Saemaul Undong was a mobilization system to attract villager's voluntary choice and based on the process, it helped raise political support for the Park administration (Kim 2004: 176~180). A study of Park · Han maintains that Saemaul Undong of the Park administration was a grand-scale mass mobilization for the economic development and the revitalizing reforms system. It was conducted by forceful rule, so it was developed and spread authoritatively and rapidly (Park & Han 1999: 39~40).

The discussions mentioned above have three problems in common. First, it is limited to dichotomous evaluations on whether Saemaul Undong involved people's voluntary participation or whether it was forcefully implemented mobilization by the administration. Secondly, although those studies mentioned concepts of modern politics, subjectivation of the people and populism, they didn't discuss populism and mobilization revealed in Saemaul Undong. Thirdly, it didn't explain that the Park administration tried to make the people subject in Saemaul Undong in the 1970s.

2.2. Discussion directions

This study additionally purports to analyze Saemaul Undong of the Park, Chung-Hee administration in the 1970s in terms of a governing strategy. The governing of a modern nation doesn't simply consist of one-sided top-down ruling approach. Instead, it should secure support and agreement of the people based on exclusive power to obtain legitimacy to rule and as a result it tries to accept demands from the people. In this sense, the governing of the modern state is based on the top-down approach but it is still sensitive to the demands from the grassroots. Therefore, this study considers Saemaul Undong as practice of a governing strategy by the Park administration which met 'bottom-up demands' of the people based on the 'top-down force'.

Furthermore, this study tries to understand Saemaul Undong as a populist governing strategy. As the term, populism, has evolved into several variations of the word including 'populist', 'democrat', 'mass mobilization', 'popularity', 'popularism'. Its application is complicated and it has already been used 'excessively'. That's why the ideology is

sometimes misused by other political power. Under this circumstance, in spite of many attempts to define the concept of populism in various ways, there is no consensus about defining its concept among researchers (Laclau 1977: 143~145). Notwithstanding, there is no doubt that the basic theory of populism consists of direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity.

Accordingly, this study will place the basic theory of populism on the appearance and development process of Saemaul Undong in rural areas in the 1970s, and the reasons are detailed as follows. First, there are two opposite opinions that populism. One, that is a pathological phenomenon of democracy and two, its essential factor (The Hankyoreh 2010-03-18: 23). However, these two agree that the fundamental characteristic of populism is ‘people sovereignty or political subjectivation of the people’. This feature of populism can help to induce factors about what made the Park administration communicate with the people and stick together in the development of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s. Second, the discussion about what gave birth to populism, which is related to crises of the government or democracy led by modernization, can help track a motive of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s. Third, the populism represented as people’s sovereignty and top-down solidarity also helps explain memories of the people of today on Saemaul Undong of the 1970s.

This research narrows the object of analysis down to Rural Saemaul Undong in the 1970s. Saemaul Undong started in rural areas with the president Park, Chung-Hee’s proposal on the Saemaul Beautification Project at the meeting of provincial governors on April 22, 1970, and spread out to all places in Korea, including factories and cities. In other words, based on success of Saemaul Undong in rural areas, it became a pan-national movement. In terms of governing acts, Saemaul Undong in the 1970s was results of diverse rural rehabilitation movements such as a national rehabilitation movement or a self-labor project which began in 1961 when the Park administration started. Those projects failed for several reasons, but it had a direct impact on Saemaul Undong in other ways, for example in terms of its form of movement, its organizational structure, selection and implementation of projects and security of finances. Therefore, Rural Saemaul Undong was the starting point of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s and a combination of mass mobilization in the Park administration. In this sense, this study reviews how a populism-based governing strategy was realized by focusing on the analysis of Rural Saemaul Undong in the 1970s in the Park administration.

3. BACKGROUND OF SAEMAUL UNDONG: CRISIS OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

3.1. Socioeconomic changes in the 1960s

The Korean society experienced economic growth qualitatively due to an industrialization policy implemented since 1960. This qualitative development caused both positive and negative results: the physical foundation for the Park administration; socioeconomic problems such as imbalance of industrial structure, deepened gaps between rural and urban areas, and the rich and the poor, and exclusion of workers. Accordingly, a new breakthrough needed to address the socioeconomic problems, so Saemaul Undong was the gateway to tackle it.

Thanks to labor-intensive, export-led industrialization since the early 1960s, Korea under the third republic achieved rapid economic growth, the most prominent in the world. The real average annual growth rate of GNP was 7.8% during the first five-year economic development plan (1962~1966) and reached 10.5% during the second five-year economic development plan (1967~1971).

The economic growth in the 1960s made a contribution to strengthening the governing ability of the Park administration. With that, more government officials were employed and the amount of collected tax was continuously increased in the 1960s. Taking a look at the number of government officials recruited from 1961, the year of President Park’s taking office to 1971, the numbers of national and local government officials grew up to around 170,000 and about 60,000 respectively (Economy Planning Board 1961; 1971), which means the rates were raised by 180% and 288% each as compared with 1961. In addition, when it comes to general tax revenue during 1961 to 1970, it rose from 37.8% in 1961 to 51.8% in 1965 and was even in excess of 70% in 1968.

However, the qualitative economic development in the 1960s made imbalance of industrial structure, relative poverty in rural areas, and isolation of workers & the marginalized. In particular, export-oriented industrialization policy and neglect of agriculture caused serious problems including unbalanced constituent of human resources and structural change in industries. In the terms of the industrial structure, agriculture became of little importance relatively and the population involved in farming noticeably decreased. The proportion of agriculture in GNP was lowered by 11.9% from 38.7% in 1961 to 26.8% in 1970 and the agricultural population decreased by 10.4%.

In comparison with income of urban worker households, the income of farming households dropped from 81.6% of the worker’s income in 1965 to 60.7% in 1969 (Han 1998: 113). The relative decrease in the income made the farmers feel more deprived, which finally caused serious structural change including people’s exodus from rural to urban areas, demographic aging and an increase in the female workforce in rural areas. The number of population moving from rural to urban areas in the late 1960s was around 1.8 million while the number from urban to rural areas was just around 380,000 (Hong 1977: 55). Furthermore, the total number of economically active population in rural areas in the late 1960s fell by around 1 million from 1965 to 1970 (Ministry of Labor 1971: 10~11).

Therefore, there was a big possibility that the socioeconomic structural change in the 1960s could lead to unrest of farmers, the base of support for the Park administration after 5·16 Coup in 1961. In fact, the regime actually needed the support due to the parliamentary election in 1967 and the constitutional reform in 1969. Therefore, the Park administration needed a new governing strategy to maintain and strengthen the base of support.

3.2. Authoritarian governing and appearance of counter forces¹

The Park's authoritarian governing and appearance of its counterforce were a significant background for the birth of Rural Saemaul Undong in the 1970s. The Park administration seizing power with the 5·16 Coup established a strong president-centered governing system through the military administration and the 3rd and 4th republic. Due to this, its oppressive measures led to the appearance of social counterforce mainly consisting of the opposition party, intellectuals, workers, and farmers. Therefore, it was essential for the administration to have a governing strategy to control the counterforce and bring the people together.

The military government which came into power after the 5·16 Coup in 1961 strengthened the power base through a 'purification action', a 'counterrevolutionary affair' as well as execution of military administration. The reinforcement of the power base was implemented at the meeting of the National Reconstruction Supreme Commission which seized control of national sovereignty including administration, legislation and jurisdiction. The parliamentary functions were handed over to the Military Revolution Committee, 15 parties and 238 social organizations were dissolved, the cabinet members of the previous administration were arrested, and 4,369 politicians were limited to conduct political activities (Oh 2001: 156). In the name of social purification, 2,100 pro-communists were arrested (Oh 2001: 156~157) and almost all news media were closed based on the No. 11 of Military Government Ordinance (Hankook-Ilbo 1961-5-28). All these measures rapidly made the government power concentrated on the president Park, Chung-Hee (Oh 2001: 157).

With the launch of the 3rd Republic in 1963, a strong president-centered system was established. The Central Intelligence Agency which originally existed for national security turned into an organization to strengthen the power of the president (Oh 2001: 114). In addition, the military became a channel for recruiting ministers and governing organizations to wield force against the society (Oh 2001: 120). As a result, one-man power system eventually ended up with the October Revitalizing Reforms Regime in 1972.

This reinforcement of a power structure caused social counter forces to be formed. After the military government in 1961, all the activities of political power including the opposition party were stopped and activities of civic groups were restricted. It wasn't easy for counter forces to be created properly at the beginning of the military government. However, social counter forces between intellectuals and students were formed with announcement of extension of the military government and a presidential election in 1963. Particularly, after the launch of the 3rd republic in 1963, as forceful measures were continued, the struggles of the counter forces intensified. As university students and intellectuals fought against the Korean-Japanese talks to promote the Korean-Japan Normalization Treaty in 1964, the Park administration took forceful actions such as proclaiming martial law in Seoul in 1964 and invoking the garrison act in Aug. 1965 (Jo 2004: 161).

It was repeated through the 1960s and led to a state-of-national-emergence declaration in 1971. Under this political circumstance, it was inevitable for the Park administration to try to solve a crisis of political legitimacy and secure the support base to maintain his regime.

4. DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNING STRATEGIES OF SAEMAUL UNDONG: DIRECT APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE AND TOP-DOWN SOLIDARITY

4.1. The unified-with-the-people but superior leader

Most existing studies have dealt with a factor of the best national sovereignty significant for the development of Saemaul Undong by arguing Saemaul Undong was launched from the appearance of the president Park and finished with his death (Oh 2002: 157~158; Park & Han 1999: 37~38). The president actually played an important role in making, planning, implementing and evaluating Saemaul Undong, so the president and Saemaul Undong were bound up each other. In this respect, it is worth discussing political ideas and its realization process by the president revealed in the development of Saemaul Indong.

Park's political ideas were influenced by historic factors including the colonial period, liberation & the Korean War, and personal factors such as poverty, success and honor, but ultimately the idea came down to nationalistic ideas such as

¹ In this study, counter forces include all the social power against ruling power such as the opposition party, intellectuals, students and workers. However, it doesn't simply mean controlled power as a residual category of the ruling power.

the ideology of a sovereign ruler (Jeon 2001: 313).

A leader in modern times, with developed democratic ideas is a comrade walking in the same way as people under control as if taking a step forward and standing in an equal position where he shares the same interest with them. A leader of modern days is a person who shares a fortune with people under his control and has the spirit to share the joys and sorrows of his people by being on their side, not ruling over them with authoritarianism (Park 1961: 18).

Park thought a leader should be a comrade sharing ideas with the people and a superior person leading the people one step ahead (Jeon 2001: 164). His view of the leader was reflected on the development of Saemaul Undong right after the 5·16 Coup, and particularly, he made an effort to diffuse an idea that a leader should be a comrade being together with the people.

Through this, Park attained success in deeply embedding the image of a comrade-like leader integrated with the public in the people. As he met the people face-to-face in almost all places where Saemaul Undong was implemented and shared emotions together, ‘Park, Chung-Hee’s Saemaul Undong’ was naturally entrenched in the people. It was usual to see pictures of the president in newspapers and the media, standing with farmers participating in rice planting and harvesting. The people came to believe the president was also ‘from farm family’ and participate in his political line and policies by seeing the pictures of drinking rice wine with farmers, greeting the senior by holding their hands at the village inspection, and visiting everywhere of the country.

Park disseminated comradeship being with the public he always insisted through Saemaul Undong, further, appealed for his governing ideology about the modernization of the nation to the public directly. The people memorizing the meeting with the president as an eternal glory, sending grateful letters and presents to him, and able to throw all theirs to the national policies, were the main subject for the modernization of the country by sharing the comradeship with the president through Saemaul Undong.

4.2. Selected traditions: solidarity between the nation and communities

4.2.1. Organization of Saemaul Undong and incorporation of village meetings

After Saemaul Undong all kicked into high gear in 1972, the Park administration first systemized an organization. The Saemaul Central Committee was organized in Mar. 7, 1972 and its affiliated agents were formed at the level of city-province, city-county, community and village. In this process, all village meetings were incorporated into a Saemaul-related organization and the villagers naturally become the members (Ministry of Home Affairs 1980a: 154~157). This kind of an organization way achieved effects of incorporating several groups in communities into Saemaul-related organizations. Farmers got into a Saemaul farming association, women into a women association, youth into a Saemaul youth association and the elderly into a Saemaul senior association.

In addition, the administration organized related administrative organizations centering on the Presidential Secretariat. An officer in charge of Saemaul² was set up in the Presidential Secretariat in Mar. 1972, a manager in charge of Saemaul education in the Ministry of Education in Apr. 1972 and Saemaul-related departments in the Ministry of Home Affairs during 1973 to 1974 (Ministry of Home Affairs 1980b: 737~738). Local administrative organizations were also systemized, which was conducted based on double actions such as control over personnel affairs and rewards. Government officials passive in Saemaul Undong were disadvantaged in the personnel affairs while officials and front-liners with good performance were given benefits in the personnel affairs and rewards³.

The most noticeable thing in the Saemaul-related organization was the integration of various village meetings into the organization. The meeting consisted of all the households of the community and matters decided at the meeting would be carried out by all the villagers. People who didn’t follow the decision made at the meeting faced sanctions such as fines, social rejection, migration or exclusion from joint work. The ‘fulfilment of obligations’ and ‘communal sanctions’ were traditions which had carried over from the past. The village as a producing and living community kept public order and shared life through the collective regulations. The fact that village meetings were incorporated into the Saemaul-related organization meant villager’s participation in Saemaul Undong came to meet conditions, which can be enforced by the

² The Presidential Secretariat wielded strong control over Saemaul Undong by delivering planning-instructions, work division and expenses allocation for the projects to each department from the beginning of Saemaul Undong in 1972, and ‘ordering’ them to report on the results to each secretary office (Presidential Secretariat 1972e: 556).

³ ‘Saemaul shoes’ of ‘presidential gifts’ were given to the 41, 250 local government officials ‘devoted’ to Saemaul Undong (Presidential Secretariat 1972d: 704), and fountain pens or ballpoint pens of ‘royal gifts’ were given to personnel in charge of Saemaul Summer School and their wives in the name of the first lady (Presidential Secretariat 1972c: 544).

village regulations.

The Park administration took advantages of village regulations and functions of the village meeting to make all the villagers participate in the process of development of Saemaul Undong. The administration investigated status of all the villages across the country through the Presidential Secretariat from the beginning of Saemaul Undong⁴, based on the process, it unified the village meeting with a town meeting and held it regularly. Moreover, they structurally forced villager's collective participation following village regulations. That villagers from both communities which succeeded in developing Saemaul Undong and which failed it continued participating in the town meeting (U et al. 2001: 58~59) means that the tradition worked well to exercise its own functions

4.2.2. Economic rewards and realization of benefits of communities

Park administration tried to realize national demands of economic growth and economic desires of the people worn out with poverty through Saemaul Undong. The implementation method and results of Saemaul Undong explained the process of combining those two demands and desires, and showed direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity.

The Park administration achieved higher project effects and formed a sense of fellowship with the people by providing rewards to communities and farmers directly based on rating and a competition system through Saemaul Undong.

The economic rewards in Saemaul Undong are specified into rating and the competition system. The administration divided all communities across the country into three types, fundamental, self-help and self-sufficient, and offered rewards based on their annual performance. Activities were also different depending on the rating of each community. For the fundamental villages, major activities were about basic projects such as establishing a public well, a village road and a town hall. Main activities in the self-help villages focused on infrastructure for better production and living environment including paving a farming road, and constructing a bridge and a house. When it comes to the self-sufficient villages, activities for income generation such as cultivating the saplings or manufacturing industrial products were focused.

Moreover, the administration also selected excellent villages with great performance of Saemaul projects and rewarded them in various ways. An annual evaluation on the results of Saemaul Undong was conducted across the country and villages with good results were rewarded apart from their type-based rewards. Taking an example, based on evaluation on exemplary villages in each province in 1973, 2 million won were given to 6 villages each and 400 million won to 2 villages each (Presidential Secretariat 1973a: 514), and it was broadcast across the nation through media. The reward and public relations obtained magnificent effects, which was enough to raise excessive competition among participating villages.

The economic reward mentioned above resulted in a considerable effect through combination with communal tradition which already existed in rural areas. At that time, there were no big differences in participating in Saemaul Undong to develop their communities since the rural areas in Korea had tradition of cooperative work based on participation of all villagers for their community projects and the economic rewards were provided at a village level. The villager's long term projects including constructing a bridge, expanding a village road and paving a farming road were implemented through cooperative works of all the villagers, and the decision that their community should be developed based on the participation of all the village members was made at a town meeting. In addition, the thought of keeping their villages ahead of others to achieve economic rewards was spread.

4.3. Dissemination of governing ideology of modernization of the nation

The Park administration tried to disseminate governing ideology of modernization of the nation and share it with the people through Saemaul education and Saemaul symbols. Through the proliferation of the ideology, a great deal of villagers became the 'driving force of history'⁵, and communities turned into 'better places to live in'.

The administration defined Saemaul education as a pan-national education to develop mind and acquire skills, which is essential for practicing Saemaul spirits, and stressed a goal of Saemaul education was 'to practice ideology of the revitalizing reforms regime and defeat communist forces, and raise production and incomes' (Ministry of Home Affairs

⁴ According to an investigation into the village status all over the country, not only external aspects including households, population, area, land use, cultural facilities and community leaders, but also historic and social sides such as origins and backgrounds of the formation of villages, state of common property and fund-raising, and conditions of communal organizations were closely examined (Presidential Secretariat 1972a: 207).

⁵ 'Who participated and who made an effort for what kinds of works to create a new part of history... I think this might be the most glorious legacy we can hand down to our descendants' (National Saemaul Leaders Convention Nov. 22, 1973: Ministry of Home Affairs 1975: 1137).

1975: 1047). In this respect, the Saemaul education played a role in realizing and spreading the governing ideology of the Park administration. The fact that around 67,790,000 participated in the education for 8 years from 1972 to 1979 (Ministry of Home Affairs 1980b: 61) showed the effort of the Park administration indirectly.

The Saemaul education was classified into two, Saemaul leader training and Saemaul training for residents. The Saemaul leader training was provided based on 7 to 10 day-camp training for excellent Saemaul leaders in rural and urban areas. A curriculum was mostly about Saemaul spirits and farming techniques (Ministry of Home Affairs 1980b: 1049). When it comes to the Saemaul training for residents in rural areas, the tour-based education was offered through various programs such as cultivating rural leaders, providing farming techniques and fostering farmers. Particularly, the education in rural areas reflected opinions of farmers and obtained great results. For instance, the agricultural machine training was widely open from adolescents to women, so the number completing the training rapidly rose up to around 35,000 in 1972 and about 480,000 in 1979 from only 749 from 1970 to 1971 (Ministry of Home Affairs 1980b: 63).

Meanwhile, the Park administration put the top priority on disseminating the governing ideology by using various Saemaul symbols. They embedded one-united group consciousness into the people and made them recognize they were treated as a social being. In addition, they did make Saemaul Undong their new history and the people the main subject of the history through holding an annual large-scale convention all over the nation.

The convention in Saemaul Undong was a sort of sense of modernization and an aggregate of various Saemaul symbols. In the convention, the Saemaul flag and other flags from all different organizations fluttered and the Saemaul song made by the president was sung in chorus. Saemaul leaders greatly devoted to the national projects of Saemaul Undong were awarded a national badge at a gym where the biggest number of people gathered in the history of Korea. Success stories of Saemaul Undong from all across the country were presented, which made the people feel a sense of accomplishment, so it more helped spread Saemaul Undong. On the last day of the convention, a resolution adopted by the Saemaul leaders was read. Through this process, the governing ideology permeated in all the people beyond the participants. Based on that, it was possible to give honor and responsibility to the Saemaul leaders, playing a leading role in realizing the national project, modernization of the nation, who finally contributed to spreading Saemaul Undong more efficiently. In addition, the success cases were promoted through TV, movies and newspapers, so it helped make a contribution to reproducing new successful villages.

In this sense, the Park administration made an effort to reproduce a ‘model’ and ‘success’ in people’s everyday lives by discovering and promoting outstanding Saemaul leaders and successful Saemaul villages through the Saemaul education and the Saemaul symbols. Ultimately, it tried to disseminate strong will of economic development and modernization and the governing ideology of the revitalizing reforms system.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has reviewed Saemaul Undong of the Park administration in the 1970s from a perspective of the governing strategy of populism. In other words, it investigated how direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity of the Park administration were formed and processed through the background and development of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s, and from this process, it tried to discover why Saemaul Undong is still remembered by the people as our great history.

The 1970s in Korea was the time socioeconomic change based on the capitalistic industrialization emerged as external results of economic development were actually achieved, starting in the 1960s. At the same time, as democratic resistance was on the rise against the long-term seizure of power by the Park administration, political changes were expected. Accordingly, the regime needed a new governing strategy to secure the justification and legitimacy of the government and keep the regime stable. Meanwhile, the period of the 1970s put farmers in economic poverty and relative deprivation which had been left behind by industrialization in the 1960s and alienation from the process of forming the modern nation. Therefore, there was a big possibility at that time that the people would actively respond to stimulation such as an agriculture-first policy. In that situation, the environment was already ready for the direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity of the administration even before the appearance of Saemaul Undong which was implemented for poverty elimination and community development in rural areas in the 1970s. Therefore, villager’s active participation was easily expected. In addition, the condition was also well-represented in the fact that the Saemaul Beautification Project (pilot project of Saemaul Undong) starting in 1970 achieved remarkable results and finally spread across the nation in 1972.

From direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity, the basic theory of populism, the development of Saemaul Undong in the 1970s can be interpreted as an interaction between the governing strategy of the Park administration and villager’s socioeconomic demands. First, Park stressed comradely union with the people, and achieved comradeship and a sense of identity from villagers through various events in rural areas and material rewards. Through this, he was successful in establishing the base of support for his stable government. Secondly, the administration pursued strong solidarity between the nation and rural areas by actively applying cooperative tradition in rural areas into the organization and system of Saemaul Undong. For example, they provided various economic rewards to villages differentially, so it helped stimulate the people to have group consciousness and encourage them to participate in their community activities competitively. Particularly, village level-based projects and rewards which reflected a community spirit in Korean rural areas greatly contributed to spreading Saemaul Undong across the nation. Thirdly, the Park administration led to successful results in making the people have the identical group consciousness by launching Saemaul education and

Saemaul symbols, and disseminating the governing ideology for the modernization of the country. Therefore, his administration finally came to invigorate Saemaul Undong through building comradeship between the president and the people, strengthening solidarity between the nation and the people, and enhancing identity between the people in the 1970s. That is a basic theory of populism which is one type of governing strategies, containing direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity.

Putting together, positive memories and evaluation conducted around the year 2000 at the time Park administration appeared in the Korean society can be considered as the results of reflection of the populist governing strategy. Despite memories of crises of democracy by the long-term seizure and authoritarian rule, the fact that the people were the main subject in history such as the leader sharing comradeship with people, the project method applied with cooperative tradition, sharing results of community level-based projects, and a sense the people accomplished the national project by themselves, is still remembered up to now. Therefore, the governing strategy of the Park administration through Saemaul Undong in the 1970s was considered successful and its core was to practice the populist strategy based on the basic theory of direct appeals to the people and top-down solidarity.

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