How Ideology Divides Generations: The 2002 and 2004 South Korean Elections

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Introduction

An interesting but unusual phenomenon in the 2002 presidential and the 2004 National Assembly elections of South Korea is the generation gap. In those elections voting behaviour was sharply split between different age groups. Roh Moo-hyun and his party were backed by a younger generation while the opposition candidate Lee Hoi Chang and his party attracted older voters. For instance, in the 2002 presidential election two thirds of young voters voted for Roh Moo-hyun whereas Lee Hoi Chang from the Grand National Party (GNP) relied mostly on older voters. A distinctive division lay particularly between young voters in their twenties and thirties on the one hand, and voters in their fifties and older on the other. This pattern of voting was even more apparent in the 2004 general elections. The governing Uri Party again fared well among young voters in their twenties and thirties. The Uri Party[1] attracted around 60 per cent of young voters in both constituency and party list voting. By contrast, the conservative opposition GNP garnered more support from old voters in their fifties and older (see appendix 1). The press then called this "a battle of generations" (*JoongAng Ilbo*, Dec. 21, 2002) or even a "generation revolution" (*Hankook Ilbo*, Dec. 24, 2002) with some journalistic exaggeration. It appears that the 2002 election was the first presidential election in which a generation gap influenced the electoral outcome.

However, this discrepancy in preferences between generations had little to do with tailor-made policies and promises favouring certain age groups. Neither Lee Hoi Chang nor the GNP made any special promises, like generous pension schemes or better medical care for older voters,

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nor did Roh Moo-hyun and the Uri party's make special commitments to their younger supporters. Rather, recent politics in South Korea show an ideological division between different generations. Roh played up his image of a progressive and reformist, successfully attracting younger voters while driving older voters away. Even though older voters tended to prefer conservative candidates and younger voters liked liberal candidates in previous elections (W-T Kang, 2003: 54–57), the difference was not striking and few paid attention to it. In fact, it is not unusual for younger voters to have different political attitudes. In many democracies younger voters tend to lack commitment to and trust in political institutions and are often disillusioned with politics. The turnout rate among younger voters also tends to be low. Henn and others concluded that young people in Britain "have a different conception of what politics is" (2002: 187). Earlier, Inglehart pointed out the "dramatic differences between the goals emphasized by old and young" (1987: 1295). However, the political aspirations of younger voters all of a sudden burst upon the scene in South Korea during the 2002 and 2004 elections. Why did generation politics gain such political significance in 2002, but not, for instance, in 1997?

This article focuses on the generation gap in recent South Korean electoral politics. A main purpose of this article is to analyze the characteristics of the political division between generations and what the various political ideologies represent. This article also examines reasons for the sudden rise of generational politics and its political implications.

Breaking the Mould?

Electoral politics in South Korea remained fairly stable since democratization. Regionalism used to be the main determinant in people's voting behaviour in all the elections since 1987. The regional rivalry was firmly established between Kyungsang and Cholla. Voters cast their ballots for a party that they perceived as representing their "home" region. Strong antagonism between the two rival regions visibly began to wane in the 2002 presidential election despite some remaining influences (M-H Kim, 2003). Instead, ideology took its place.

In the past, ideological difference between parties was not very significant in South Korea. The conservatives dominated party politics in spite of rapid industrialization and the consequent growth of the working class. This is largely attributed to the experience of the Korean War and the lingering effects of the "red complex." The bitter experience of the war "left South Koreans permanently scarred and "colour-blind," unable or unwilling to distinguish social democracy from brutal Stalinism" (B-K Kim, 2000: 67). Moreover, the war had often been highly politicized by

Abstract. An interesting phenomenon in recent South Korean electoral politics is the generation gap. In the 2002 presidential and the 2004 National Assembly elections, voting behaviour was sharply split between different age groups. A main question of this article is to figure out the underlying characteristics of the generational differences in the two elections and of the ideological division in the South Korean context. Findings show that the generation gap reflects different assessments of the authoritarian period and its inheritance. Young voters took a libertarian view and a negative assessment of the authoritarian era, while older voters, especially in their fifties and older, had a positive attitude toward the authoritarian legacies. Roh Moo-hyun's victory was largely attributed to his successful mobilization of young voters' generational rebellion.

Résumé. Un des phénomènes intéressants dans la vie politique électorale sud-coréenne concerne les différences de générations. Les groupes d'âge différents ont montré un comportement électoral différencié dans les élections présidentielles de 2002 et les législatives de 2004. L'interrogation majeure de cet article est de trouver les principales caractéristiques des différences générationnelles dans les deux élections, ainsi que les clivages idéologiques dans le contexte sud-coréen. Les résultats de cette étude montrent que les différences générationnelles reflètent celles du jugement sur la période du régime autoritaire et de ses héritages. Les jeunes électeurs possèdent une vision libertaire et un jugement négatif sur la période du régime autoritaire, tandis que les électeurs plus âgés, notamment ceux qui ont plus de 50 ans, font preuve d'une attitude positive sur les héritages de la période autoritaire. La victoire de Roh Moo-hyun s'explique en grande partie par la mobilisation réussie de la révolte générationnelle de jeunes électeurs.

the authoritarian regimes (W-T Kang, 1998: 97). Even after democratization, ideology did not have much significance in South Korean electoral politics, and the progressive (or liberal) ideology, not to mention socialism, was not politically represented at all. However, ideology suddenly mattered in 2002.

The effects of ideology on voting behaviour can be seen in Table 1. The ideological position of Roh Moo-hyun's supporters was somewhat skewed in a progressive direction. By contrast, Lee's supporters leaned toward a conservative direction. In comparison with Lee's supporters, the ideological position of Roh's supporters was farther from the centre.

This pattern of voting was further reinforced in 2004. Figures 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b show how voters evaluated parties' ideological positions

TABLE 1

Means of Voters' Self-Placement by Chosen Candidates

Voted for	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	t-test
Roh Mu-hyun	3.90	2.33	741	$t = 12.54$, df $=1248$
Lee Hoi-chang	5.59	2.37	509	$p < 0.01$

[0—extremely progressive; 5—in the middle; 10—extremely conservative]
Source: calculated from KES02.

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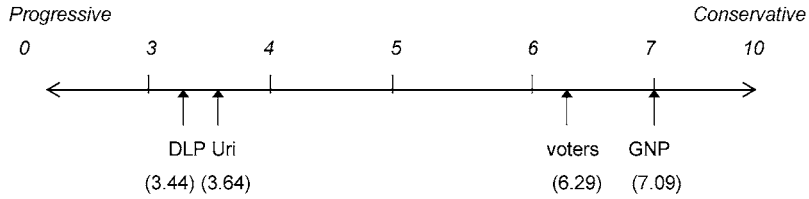
FIGURE 1A
Evaluation of Parties' Ideological Positions by the GNP Voters (Party List Votes)



according to which party they supported in the 2004 legislative election. Figures 1a and 1b indicate how the GNP voters perceived ideological positions of the three main parties. The perceived positions of each party in these two figures look very similar. Figures 1a and 1b confirm that the GNP voters are conservative. The party most representative of the conservative voters' position on the ideological spectrum is the GNP, while the Uri party, the main rival of the GNP, is perceived to be further along the spectrum, with the socialist Democratic Labour Party the most distant.

Figures 2a and 2b clearly demonstrate that the Uri voters tend to have a fairly strong progressive ideology. The ideological distance between the Uri party and its supporters in both figures is quite small. The difference is merely 0.2 (party list vote) and 0.18 (constituency), while the figures for the GNP showed greater distance of 0.8 (party list vote) and 1.02 (constituency). That is, the Uri voters are more closely aligned ideologically with the position of the party they voted for. This implies that the Uri voters as well as Roh's supporters were more ideologically motivated. The four figures confirm Downs's (1957) proximity model of party competition in which "rational" voters casts their vote for the party that most closely represents their views on the ideological spectrum. The four

FIGURE 1B
Evaluation of Parties' Ideological Positions by the GNP Voters (Constituency Votes)

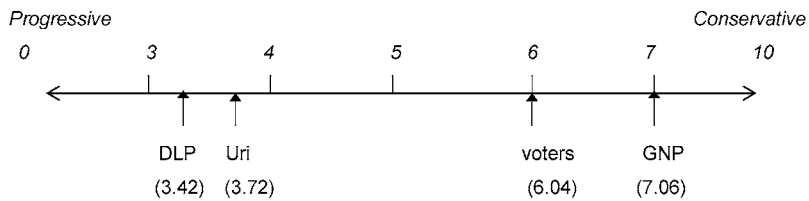


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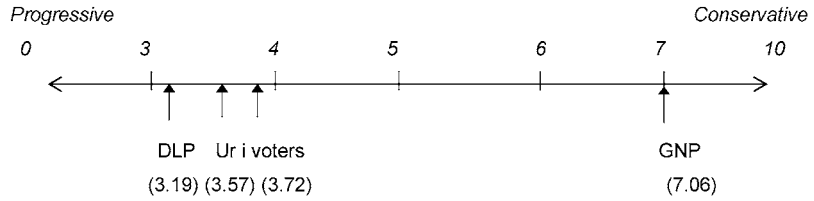
FIGURE 2A
Evaluation of Parties' Ideological Positions by the Uri Voters (Party List Votes)



figures illuminate that ideology mattered in these two elections. They also indicate that South Korean politics had become fairly polarized as the two major parties defined themselves quite differently from each other.

In many democracies ideological attitudes are related to class or status. Working-class voters tend to support progressive, often socialist, candidates while middle-class voters tend to be conservative. This line of argument still holds (Crewe, 1993) in spite of debate over class dealignment in the West European democracies. To say the least, class is important although not a dominant factor (Bartle, 1998: 502). Of particular note in South Korean politics, however, is the fact that the ideological distinction was made between age groups, not between classes.

Table 2 shows clearly differing ideological stances of different age groups, with young voters displaying progressive tendencies while older voters showing conservative inclinations. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirms that the ideological differences between varying age groups turn out to be statistically significant. It is noteworthy that voters in their thirties, not in their twenties, were most progressive in 2002. The same age group still remained fairly progressive in 2004. Voters in their thirties and younger are sharply divided from older ones. This implies that the

FIGURE 2B
Evaluation of Parties' Ideological Positions by the Uri Voters (Constituency Votes)

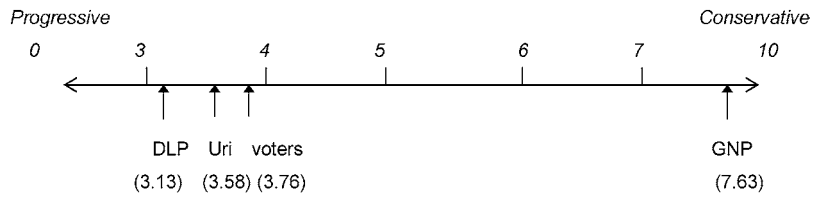


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TABLE 2
Ideological Self-Placement by Age Groups

	2002			2004		
Age	Mean	Std. Dev.	ANOVA	Mean	Std. Dev.	ANOVA
20s	4.05	2.18	F = 32.8	3.82	2.30	F = 37.0
30s	3.87	2.24	P < 0.01	4.02	2.14	P < 0.01
40s	4.83	2.56		4.91	2.42	
50 and older	5.33	2.47		5.50	2.36	
Total	4.54			4.59		

The original questionnaire of the 2002 survey has a 5-scale measurement for ideological self-placement. For a comparison with the 2004 survey, every response was recoded into a 10-scale measurement. [0—extremely progressive; 5—in the middle; 10—extremely conservative]
Source: calculated from KES02 and KES04.

generation gap over ideology may not necessarily represent a mere "age effect," that a liberal and progressive young man will naturally become conservative as he grows old.

Logistic regression models are employed to see if there were any relations between ideology, generations and the electoral outcomes. The models in Table 3 comprise variables of ideology, age, income, sex, education, and regions. Revision of SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement) with the United States and the impeachment of President Roh were also included for the 2002 and 2004 elections respectively. Despite a much less antagonistic atmosphere from regional rivalry, regions still had a marked impact on voting choice. The impeachment issue in 2004 also greatly affected voters' choices whereas the revision of SOFA in 2002 did not turn out to be statistically significant.

Except for region, ideology and age are the variables that had consistent impact in the two consecutive elections. Interestingly, the patterns of their coefficients look similar. The more progressive voters were, the more likely they were to vote for Roh, and vice versa. In comparison with voters in their fifties and older, younger voters in their twenties and thirties gave clear preference to Roh. Other variables, such as income and education, proved statistically insignificant, which suggests weak influence of class and status on voting. Results in Table 3 confirm that both age and ideology mattered in the 2002 and 2004 elections.

These results indicate that political features associated with certain ideologies may be idiosyncratic in South Korea. It is interesting to see what South Korean voters have in mind when they regard themselves as progressive or conservative. I will now look into what ideology stands for in the South Korean context and why ideology and generation have become so interconnected.

TABLE 3
Logistic Regression Models

2002			2004		
	B	Exp(B)		B	Exp(B)
Constant	1.10[a]		Constant	−2.31[a]	
Ideology	−0.31[a]	0.74	Ideology	−0.32[a]	0.73
Age			Age		
20s	1.10[a]	3.01	20s	1.33[a]	3.77
30s	0.52[a]	1.68	30s	0.81[b]	2.24
40s	0.15	1.16	40s	0.29	1.34
Income			Income		
Low	0.39	1.48	Low	−0.10	0.90
Middle	0.15	1.16	Middle	0.22	1.25
Sex			Sex		
Male	0.07	1.07	Male	−0.05	0.96
Education			Education		
Primary	0.26	1.30	Primary	0.85	2.35
Secondary	0.02	1.02	Secondary	−0.15	0.86
Revision of SOFA			Impeachment		
In favour	0.29	1.34	In favour	−2.86[a]	0.06
Region			Region		
Chungchong	0.13	1.14	Chungchong	1.40[a]	4.07
Cholla	4.38[a]	79.69	Cholla	2.77[a]	16.02
Kyungbuk	−1.41[a]	0.24	Kyungbuk	−1.15[a]	0.32
Kyungnam	−1.28[a]	0.28	Kyungnam	−0.14	0.87
−2 log likelihood = 1164.15			−2 log likelihood = 433.8		
Cox & Snell's R^2 = 0.27, Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.36			Cox & Snell's R^2 = 0.42		
Percentage Correctness = 74.1			Percentage Correctness = 82.9		

[a]$p < 0.01$; [b]$p < 0.05$
Dependent variables
0—Lee Hoi-chang; 1—Roh Mu-hyun (in 2002)
0—Grand National Party; 1—Uri Party (in 2004)
Independent Variables
Ideology [0—extremely progressive; 5—in the middle; 10—extremely conservative]
Age [contrast category—50s and older]
Income [contrast category—high income earners]
Education [contrast category—college/university students/graduates]
Sex [contrast category—female]
Region [contrast category—Seoul/Inchon/Kyunggi/Kangwon]
Revision of SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement) [contrast category—opposed]
Impeachment (of President Roh) [contrast category—opposed]
Source: calculated from KES02 and KES04.

Empirical Analysis: Generation and Ideology in the South Korean Context

The notion of ideology has been employed in a variety of different contexts and with a number of different meanings (Sanders, 1999: 183).

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The term "conservative" may have various meanings and so may the term "progressive." In order to examine what ideology represents in the South Korean context, it is sometimes more appropriate to measure an ideological position by merging responses to different questions about attitudes; self-placement measures are often criticized because respondents have only a vague understanding of the left-right scale (Sanders, 1999: 185–86). To test empirically ideological characteristics used to classify voters as conservative or progressive, data from the two surveys conducted in 2004 were analyzed.[2] These surveys include ten questions, each representing key contentious issues which help measure ideological categories (see appendix 2). Factor analysis is employed to figure out the ideological features in recent South Korean elections. The objective of factor analysis is to represent a set of variables in terms of a smaller number of hypothetical variables (Kim and Mueller, 1994: 1).

Table 4 includes ten variables which are classified according to three factors. The first factor comprises issues of capital punishment, the National Security Law and women's rights. The second factor includes issues of chaebol reforms, introduction of class action and relations with the US. The third factor consists of education policy and welfare policy. At first glance the groupings look confusing. For instance, women's rights do not seem to have anything to do with the abolition of the National Security Law. In a similar vein, class action and chaebol reforms look

TABLE 4
Factor Analysis: Three Categories of Ideology

	Component		
	1	2	3
Capital punishment	**0.670**	—	−0.253
National Security Law	**0.644**	0.116	—
Women's rights	**0.606**	—	—
Aid to N. Korea	0.468		0.200
Environmental policy	0.377	0.126	—
Reform of chaebol	−0.101	**0.692**	—
Class action	—	**0.632**	−0.103
Relationship with the US	0.137	**0.632**	—
Education policy	−0.139	0.115	**0.705**
Welfare policies	0.202	−0.123	**0.675**
Dimension of ideology	libertarian-authority	developmental state	left-right

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization
Factor loadings less than 0.01 are omitted.
Source: calculated from KPSA/*JoongAng Ilbo*

unrelated to the relationship with the US. However, the three sets of variables illustrate some significant qualities that are useful in better understanding ideology in the South Korean context.

First, the controversy over the National Security Law effectively can be understood with the same logic as the "libertarian-authority" dimension of ideology. People who tilt toward the "authority" pole want to preserve religious values and traditional norms, uphold moral standards and take tough measures to prevent disorder and crime. By contrast, the libertarian ideology underscores individual rights and liberty and generosity and care for social minorities, like women or homosexuals. Libertarians also stress freedom of speech and political participation and oppose censorship. Advocates for abolition of the National Security Law argue that the law abused human rights in suppressing opposition to the authoritarian regime. President Roh Moo-hyun had clearly represented this view in the following television interview.

> "Abolishing the National Security Law means that Korea is finally becoming a civilized nation.... We should not approach the National Security Law in terms of legal theory. We need to see how it has affected our history," he said. "The bottom line is that the law was overwhelmingly used to persecute those opposed [to the authoritarian regime], not those who posed a threat to our national security ... there was tremendous suppression of human rights, and inhumane acts were committed." (*JoongAng Ilbo*, Sept. 6, 2004)

By contrast, people who want to keep the law intact believe that national security would be jeopardized without it and, as long as North Korea remains a communist regime, the law should be maintained. In other words, advocates for the abolition of the National Security Law emphasize human rights whereas their opponents underscore social order. Capital punishment and women's rights are also typical issues of a libertarian versus authority dimension. Therefore, all three variables in factor 1 represent a libertarian-authority opposition.

Second, the issue of chaebol reforms has often been interpreted in the context of the left-right opposition. A newspaper interview with an economist about chaebol reform shows the conservatives' perception of the policy: "'The Roh's administration is a leftist regime and is caught in the trap of leftist values,' he said. 'The government should stop pursuing its leftist and populist agenda and adopt a practical approach'" (*Korea Times*, Aug. 13, 2004).

This newspaper article suggests that some people see the chaebol reform issue in terms of a left–right opposition. Even though the reform of chaebols means state intervention and imposition of regulations, it would be an oversimplification to interpret the issue solely in terms of left–right ideologies. The issue of chaebol reforms is rather related to the evaluation of the developmental state in the 1970s when the authoritarian

regime vigorously nurtured chaebols as the main driving force of modernization.

The formation and growth of chaebols are closely related to the active role of the state in supporting them. David Kang said, "By encouraging the formation of large conglomerates that accounted for large percentage of the Korean economy, the state in effect became 'mutual hostage' with the chaebol" (2002: 117). Advocates for chaebol reforms criticize the special favours given to them under the authoritarian regime and consequent collusion with the rulers. They believe that the current market dominance by chaebols was achieved by victimizing workers and small and medium-sized firms. They point out that in order to foster chaebols the authoritarian regime harshly suppressed workers' demand and trade unionism, and chaebols in return took care of establishing slush funds for the rulers. In an attempt to put an end to such irregularities, the proponents of Chaebol reforms call for transparent management, improved corporate governance and enhanced check against the unrestricted power of owners and their families. This is the main reason for their strong support for the introduction of class action.

By contrast, conservatives see the preferential treatment for chaebols as inevitable and necessary for modernization. They also value the successful role of chaebols as the engine of the nation's economy and often long for the "good old days" of the authoritarian era. These two competing views show why the left–right opposition alone cannot properly explain the differing attitudes toward the chaebol reforms and that it is best seen along with class action.

The chaebol reform issue can be better explained in terms of evaluation of the "developmental state" during the authoritarian era. This is also true of the relationship with the United States. People in their fifties and older firmly believe that military dependence on the United States is critical to ensuring the nation's security. By contrast, younger voters tend to point out that the United States effectively supported the illegitimate authoritarian regimes as the US needed a barrier against the spread of communism in the Cold War era. They also suppose that the United States turned a blind eye to another military coup in 1980 and the brutal oppression that accompanied it. Moon pointed out that "anti-Americanism in South Korea is in part an effort to confront the history and legacy of authoritarianism and the nationalism that was framed and imposed by dictators to justify their rule" (2003: 141). These two opposing views on the relationship with the United States also reflect different assessments of the authoritarian era. Conservatives see the United States as a saviour from the communists, while its critics think that the United States practically helped the authoritarian rule. This idiosyncratic dimension of ideology comes not only from the lingering Cold War legacy, but also from

the assessment of the achievement of the authoritarian era and the regimes themselves.

Accordingly, the issues of chaebol reform, introduction of class action and the relationship with the US can be classified in the same category. The three variables of this second group are associated with the assessment of the authoritarian era. To encompass all three variables it would be better to call this dimension as the negation–preservation of legacies of the authoritarian era.

The third group of variable represents mainly a difference over how material and economic values should be distributed. This includes competing concepts such as equality versus efficiency, distribution versus growth, state versus market, labour versus capital, and so forth. Welfare policy is unarguably the classic example. A major controversy in education policy is over whether the government should allow high schools to "opt out" and to freely select their students on the basis of competition and the market. Currently students are randomly allocated based on geographical proximity, which follows the principle of standardization. In this regard, the education reform issue is over a market versus state control. Accordingly, this issue can be put into the same category as welfare policy. The other two variables did not turn out to be statistically very relevant.

A remaining question is whether—and how—the three relevant ideological dimensions are connected to the different generations. As noted, a distinctive feature in recent South Korean electoral politics was that ideology was closely interrelated with age groups. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is employed to see how each age group responded to the three dimensions of ideology. Table 5 shows that the two dimensions, libertarian–authoritarian and developmental state, are associated with generations. Voters in their twenties and thirtiess and ones in their forties and older display significant differences in attitude toward the libertarian–authoritarian dimension. This difference is also apparent even between people in their forties and fifties and older.

The dimension of the developmental state reveals a similar pattern of the response between age groups. The discrepancy lies between people in their fifties and older and the other younger age groups. Post-hoc tests confirm the difference in attitudes between age groups in these two dimensions (see appendix 3). By contrast, the left-right dimension of ideology does not turn out to be statistically significant.

Consequently, some interesting features can be identified. First, the ideological conflict in the two consecutive elections in 2002 and 2004 had little to do with the left–right ideology. Such attitudes between age groups do not vary much, as seen in Table 5. Second, the ideological conflict is more related to the dimensions of the libertarian–authority and the developmental state. These two dimensions have proved very influential in creating a division between generations.

TABLE 5
ANOVA Tests

Dimension	Age	Mean*	Std. deviation	N	ANOVA
Libertarian vs. authority	20s	4.57	1.88	255	
	30s	4.59	2.11	267	$F = 61.1$
	40s	5.65	2.16	202	$p < 0.01$
	50s+	6.66	2.23	282	
Developmental state	20s	3.71	2.00	253	
	30s	3.61	1.68	260	$F = 28.5$
	40s	4.07	1.93	194	$p < 0.01$
	50s+	5.06	2.25	249	
Left vs. right	20s	4.21	2.00	258	
	30s	3.82	1.75	269	$F = 2.2$
	40s	4.17	1.88	204	$p = 0.09$
	50s+	4.01	2.08	283	

*(progressive) 0–5 (in the middle)–10 (conservative)
Source: calculated from KPSA/*JoongAng Ilbo*

Discussion

Empirical analyses illustrate some key features of ideology in the South Korean context, but some questions still remain unresolved. Among the three dimensions of ideology, only two proved relevant. The question is why these two dimensions of ideology abruptly gained political significance. Moreover, even though the analyses showed a generation leap over ideology they did not explain its sudden emergence and how Roh Moo-hyun successfully rode the ideological wave in 2002.

To answer these questions it is important to put Korean ideology in a historical context. Its origin dates back to the authoritarian period. Park Chung Hee led a military coup which overthrew the incumbent civilian government in 1961. After two terms in power after 1963 Park just barely squeezed through a tight presidential election in 1971 against Kim Dae Jung. In 1972 Park changed the constitution so that he practically became a dictator. His regime manipulated an anti-communism ideology to justify the military coup and his reign. It was also used to suppress opposition, and the National Security Law was used as a legal tool to silence them. After Park was assassinated in 1979, Chun Doo Hwan led another military coup, and ruled until 1987 when mass democratization movements swept the country. His regime also used an anti-communism ideology as a tool to destroy opposition. Some opponents were taken into custody without due legal process and were tortured. A progressive and liberal ideology took shape as the nation struggled against the authoritarian rule, and a strong antipathy to the anti-communism ideology developed along with it. Instead, pro-democracy forces demanded respect for

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freedom of thought and human rights and a restoration of liberal democracy. Thus, the struggle against the authoritarianism was a contest between libertarian–authority and negation–preservation of anti-communism.

Despite apparent challenges, the anti-communism ideology remained almost intact throughout Korea's democratization process. Democratization in fact was negotiated as a compromise between the authoritarian regime and pro-democracy forces, and thus the authoritarianism was not completely rooted out. The old guard were able to function in the new political environment as a result of a rise of regional antagonism. The former authoritarian force successfully transformed itself into a political party that represented the North Kyungsang region. It even succeeded in winning the presidency in the first election after democratization in 1987 after a split among the pro-democracy leaders.

Since the critical election of 1987, regional rivalry has prevailed in all elections. The origin of regionalism in South Korea is related to regionally uneven development policies during the 1970s and 1980s. The authoritarian regimes favoured the Kyungsang region and alienated Cholla provinces. This created a kind of a "core-periphery" division between the two regions. Besides, political leaders, such as Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung, deliberately provoked the sentiment of regional rivalry to mobilize support from their respective home regions.

Regional division reached its height when three major parties merged into the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) in 1990.[3] The creation of the DLP further isolated the Cholla region. In addition, the merger was a marriage between a former authoritarian block and some of the pro-democracy forces led by Kim Young Sam, which amounted to another compromise between former enemies. The compromise made it difficult to get rid of the anti-communism ideology even after Kim Young Sam took over the presidency (1993–1998). Under the Kim Dae Jung's administration (1998–2003), some elements of the anti-communism faction were challenged by the conciliatory mood created by the "sunshine policy" toward North Korea. However, regionalism still mattered in politics more than anything else, as Kim Dae Jung himself was hostage to the consuming regional rivalry.

The fading effect of regionalism in the 2002 presidential election directly resulted from the retirement of former presidents, who were *the* driving forces of regional rivalry, Kim Young Sam, Kim Dae Jung[4] and another party leader from the old era, Kim Jong Pil,. When the "three Kims" disappeared from the political scene there were no other key players who had the charisma to mobilize voters through regionalist sentiments. In this regard, the widening of the generational and ideological rift implies electoral dealignment and the transformation of a major political division. Thus, the departure of the political barons opened old wounds of the authoritarian legacies, and Roh Moo-hyun shrewdly exploited them in 2002.

Roh Moo-hyun from the ruling Millennium Democratic Party took an unusually "radical" stance in the South Korean political context. He "portrayed himself as part of new generation of Korean politicians advocating drastic reforms" (Lee, 2003: 74). He was the first major candidate to publicly claim that his ideological stance was progressive and openly challenged political taboos like the National Security Law and the relationship with the United States. Despite controversies over the efficacy and the ideological validity of the sunshine policy toward North Korea, he firmly stood by the engagement policy. On the contrary, Lee Hoi-chang, who led the main opposition Grand National Party, adopted a very strongly conservative position. He represented the vested interests of the South Korean establishment (Lee, 2003: 74). His ideological position was in stark contrast to Roh's, which polarized the competition even more. Roh's radical stance provoked both positive and negative reactions. The most ardent supporters of Roh's political causes were voters in their thirties. As seen in Table 2, they proved to be the most progressive. It is intriguing to see the extent to which members of a specific age group identified themselves with a single candidate. Voters in their thirties have often been dubbed as the "386 generation." The number 3 stands for the fact that they are now in their thirties. The number 8 indicates that they went to colleges and universities in the 1980s. The number 6 represents that they were born in the 1960s. In comparison with their older contemporaries who experienced the Korean War and subsequent absolute poverty, the 386 generation was the first beneficiary of the economic development. They were also actively involved in the pro-democracy movement against the military-based authoritarian regime in the 1980s. A shared experience of such political protest against the authoritarian regime created a cohort with similar political values. They were generally reform minded and had affinity with progressive ideology. Various poll results also showed that the 386 generation is ideologically more progressive than any other age groups (W-T Kang, 2003: 292–300). During the 2002 election campaign this age group attracted widespread attention with their eagerness for political reforms.

Roh Moo-hyun also vigorously participated in the democratization movement. He earned a reputation as a maverick for having challenged the prevailing regionalist politics of the times and was acclaimed a champion of political reforms. Roh once described the present South Korean situation "as being at the crossroads of either going back to the dictatorial past of the Yusin era,[5] or revitalizing the reforms era, or moving forward to the future" (*JoongAng Daily August 5, 2004*). Roh dramatically highlighted his progressive views during the 2002 election. In this regard, the 386 generation and Roh Moo-hyun shared pro-democracy activism and a deep-rooted hatred for the legacies of the authoritarian era. This is why Roh's progressive stance struck a chord particularly with voters in

their thirties. Many of the 386 generation were passionate supporters of Roh Moo-hyun. When Nosamo,[6] an internet-based fan club for Roh, was organized, the 386 generation accounted for the majority of its early membership. Nosamo members played a big role in Roh's nomination in the MDP's primaries in 2002. Nosamo "managed to generate backing for their candidate among electors who would otherwise have had little interest in the election" (Walker and Kang, 2004: 842). At the outset of the 2002 presidential election campaigns Nosamo significantly boosted Roh's popularity, which later spread to other age groups.

As the 386 generation became increasingly mobilized behind Roh Moo-hyun's candidacy, they called for reforms to get rid of the lingering legacy of anti-communism. However, since the older generation vehemently protested against this, the generational conflict was intensified. The line of the generational conflict is drawn between people in their thirties and in their fifties. Thus, the 386 generation effectively triggered a battle of generations, and the key battleground was over the legacies of the past, which included both those of the authoritarian era and that of the libertarian–authority dimension.

In order to understand the characteristics of South Korean electoral politics in 2002 and 2004, a combination of these divisions should be considered. We can locate the ideological positions of political parties and their supporters in the 2002 and 2004 elections as seen in Figure 3. The horizontal axis represents the libertarian–authority dimension while the vertical axis stands for the negation–preservation of the authoritarianism. The positions of conservative Lee Hoi-chang in the 2002 presidential election and the Grand National Party in the 2004 National Assembly elections are located on the upper right. Older voters, especially those in their fifties and older, are similarly located. By contrast, ideological positions of Roh and the Uri party are located diagonally on the opposite side. The 386 generation and younger voters are grouped with them.

Voters of each bloc are also polarized. People in their forties stay more or less in the middle. Even though they slightly lean toward the pro-authority position on the horizontal axis, their ideological position does not appear distinctive. This figure succinctly illustrates the relationship between ideology and generation and shows this dynamic was at work in the elections of 2002 and 2004.

Conclusion

A main question of this paper was to identify the underlying characteristics of the generation gap in recent elections and of the ideological divisions in the South Korean context. Two relevant ideological dimensions of represent different assessments of the authoritarian period and its inheritance. These two dimensions led to the generation gap. Young voters in

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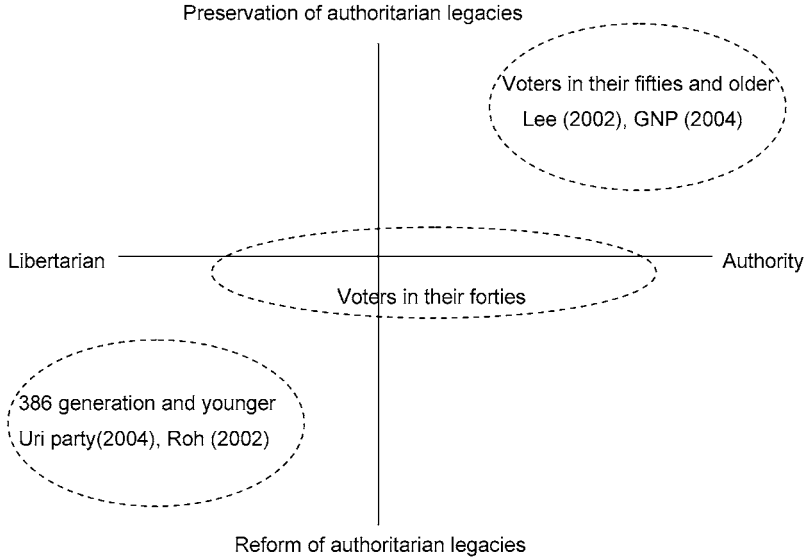
FIGURE 3
Ideological divisions and generation in the 2002 and 2004 elections



their twenties and thirties tended toward a libertarian view and to a negative assessment of the authoritarian era, while older voters, especially in their fifties and older, were likely to prefer authority and law and order, and they retained a positive attitude toward the authoritarian legacies. Roh's victory can be attributed to his successful mobilization of young voters' generational rebellion. A transitional situation of electoral dealignment also provided Roh with a favourable condition since it made many electorates anticipate changes and reform.

Given the consistent and unambiguous effects of ideology on voting, the two elections in 2002 and 2004 ushered South Korea into uncharted territory. However, ideology represented the generational aspiration, particularly of the 386 generation. Once their aspirations are fulfilled, it remains to be seen whether the division will be maintained. In that sense, South Korean electoral politics may continue to be in flux.

Notes

1 The Uri Party was launched after the 2002 presidential election. It was a splinter party that was split from the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP). Roh Moo-hyun was a candidate from the MDP in the 2002 election and joined the Uri Party later.

2 This survey was originally designed to compare ideological attitudes of political elites (legislators) and citizens. These surveys were conducted by the Korean Political Sci-

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ence Association/*JoongAng Ilbo* (*Daily Joong-Ang*) between June 15–16, 2004, among citizens, and June 1–July10, 2004, among legislators in the National Assembly. The sample size of the survey for citizens is 1,026.

3 For more details, see W-T Kang (1998: 96–99).

4 In South Korea, a president serves for a five-year single term. He/she must not seek re-election by law.

5 In October 1972, the then president Park Chung Hee declared the state emergency, and established the dictatorship. Park called the creation of the new regime Yusin.

6 "Nosamo" is a Korean abbreviation meaning "People who love Roh Moo-hyun."

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Appendix 1. Generation and voting choices in 2002 and 2004 elections

(A) Voting choice by age in the 2002 presidential election

Age	Roh Mu-hyun	Lee Hoi-chang	Others	N
20s	67.6	24.6	7.9	293
30s	61.1	32.6	6.3	334
40s	48.5	44.8	6.7	299
50s +	45.7	49.5	4.8	184
	Pearson chi-square = 74.8 $p < 0.01$			

Source: calculated from Korea Election Survey 2002 (KES02 hereafter).

(B) Voting choice by age in the 2004 legislative election

	Constituency					Party list				
Age	Uri	GNP	DLP	MDP	N	Uri	GNP	DLP	MDP	N
20s	62.6	22.2	7.6	7.6	198	58.5	18.0	18.5	5.0	200
30s	62.7	25.1	7.4	4.8	271	58.9	20.7	15.6	4.8	270
40s	43.5	42.8	5.2	8.5	271	37.2	39.7	15.9	7.2	277
50s +	41.3	50.0	1.2	7.6	344	38.3	47.2	6.2	8.3	339
	Pearson chi-square = 97.9 $p < 0.01$					Pearson chi-square = 81.3 $p < 0.01$				

GNP–Grand National Party; MDP–Millennium Democratic Party; DLP–Democratic Labour Party
Source: calculated from Korea Election Survey 2004 (KES04 hereafter).

(C) The proportion of voters in each age group and the actual voting rates (2002)

Age	The proportion of voters in each age group (%)	The actual voting rate
20s	23.2	56.5
30s	25.1	67.4
40s	22.4	76.3
50s	12.9	83.7
60s+	16.4	78.7
The total number of eligible voters: 34,991,529 the average voting rate: 70.8%		

Source: National Election Commission (June 17, 2003)

Appendix 2. Ten questions for analyzing ideology

(1) Do you support chaebol reforms(conglomerates)?
(2) Do you agree with the introduction of class action?
(3) Do you think that social welfare should be expanded or cut?
(4) Which you think that high school education reforms should pursue: standardization or competitiveness?
(5) Do you support the revision of the patriarchal family registry system in favour of women's rights?
(6) Do you support the abolition of capital punishment?
(7) Do you think that environmental policy should be tightened or loosened?
(8) Do you think that South Korea should expand or reduce aid to North Korea irrespective of its nuclear programs?
(9) Do you think that the relationship with the US should be further strengthened or completely re-examined?
(10) Do you think that the National Security Law should be maintained or repealed?

Appendix 3. Post hoc test (Tukey HSD)

	Age (I)	Age(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error
Libertarian vs. authority	20s	30s	−0.02	0.18
		40s	−1.08*	0.20
		50s & older	−2.09*	0.18
	30s	20s	0.02	0.18
		40s	−1.06*	0.20
		50s & older	−2.06*	0.18
	40s	20s	1.08*	0.20
		30s	1.06*	0.20
		50s & older	−1.01*	0.19
	50s & older	20s	2.09*	0.18
		30s	2.06*	0.18
		40s	1.01*	0.19
Developmental state	20s	30s	0.10	0.17
		40s	−0.36	0.19
		50s & older	−1.36*	0.18
	30s	20s	−0.10	0.17
		40s	−0.46	0.19
		50s & older	−1.46*	0.18
	40s	20s	0.36	0.19
		30s	0.46	0.19
		50s & older	−1.00*	0.20
	50s & older	20s	1.36*	0.18
		30s	1.46*	0.18
		40s	1.00*	0.19
Left vs. right	20s	30s	0.39	0.17
		40s	0.04	0.18
		50s & older	0.20	0.17
	30s	20s	−0.39	0.17
		40s	−0.35	0.18
		50s & older	−0.20	0.16
	40s	20s	−0.04	0.18
		30s	0.35	0.18
		50s & older	0.16	0.18
	50s & older	20s	−0.20	0.16
		30s	0.20	0.16
		40s	−0.16	0.18

*$p < 0.01$

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