Mobilized Spontaneity: The Park Chunghee Regime’s Conversion of College Student Volunteer Activities for Rural Communities as Observed Through the Taehan News*

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Introduction

This paper aims to reveal the Park Chunghee (Pak Chŏngghi) government’s intentions and its influence on college students’ perceptions of themselves. This article also asserts that the Park regime propagandized students’ activities in the rural areas differently from the students’ intention using films, and shows students’ spontaneity by examining the students’ consciousness. As the meaning of the word, “spontaneity” shows, this is different from government mobilization during this period. In this article, spontaneity means the students’ voluntary fervor for social development, and mobilization means the way of the government to make the people follow them.

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There is much research on the mobilization process carried out by the Park regime.\(^1\) Also, there is research that examines the influence of films to mobilize people or construct the state.\(^2\) As these studies show, after the 1961 military coup, the Park regime tried to mobilize people to support or follow the government’s leadership while being forced to transfer political power to an elected government. However, we can consider another way the Park regime attempted to influence the people to maintain their political power. Especially, the newsreels produced in this period played a supplemental role due to the lack of capacity of the government to carry on governmental work. This can be seen through the government’s attempts to manage or control the college students and rural problems (Nongch’on Munche) with newsreels.

The college students were the main actors to reform society and the rural problems stood out as a main issue which needed to be solved for changing society after the “April 19 Student Revolution” in 1960. The Park regime tried to coopt the students’ fervor to reform rural problems through the films to appear as an active and effective government. That is because the rural problem could be one example to prove the superiority of the

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1 These studies examines this period in which Park’s cabinet mobilized the people, emphasizing their superiority and the people’s inferiority to legitimize their domination over the rural people. In this context, the people either agreed with the government or resisted against the government. The representative research papers include Kim Yongmi. Kũtũlũ Saemaũl Undong (Their Saemaũl Undong). (Seoul, P’ulũnyŏksa: 2009); Cho Hiyŏn, Tongwondo’in Kũntaehwa: Pak Chunghi Kyebaltongwŏnch’ejeūi Chungch’l Sahŏijŏk Yichunsŏng (Mobilized Modernization: Sociopolitical Duplicity of Park’s Mobilization System for Development). (Seoul, Humanitas: 2010); Hwang Pyŏngchu, “Yushinch’ejeūi Taechunginsikkwa Tongwŏn Tamnon” (The Mass Perception and Mobilization Discourse of Yusin Regime in 1970’s), Sanghŏhakbo 32 (2011): 142-186; Kong Chewuk and etc. Kukkawa Yilsang: Park Chunghi sidae (State and Everydaylife: Park Chung-Hee Period). (P’aju, Hanwul: 2013).

state system in the Cold War period (especially in competition with North Korea), but the governmental measures were not effective in solving the rural problems.

As Althusser argued, interpellation assigns individuals with ideology through their designated social roles, which individuals recognize as their own roles. Following this concept, ideology can be explained as the ruling ideology from the government which emphasized national security and social stabilization. And the college students witnessed themselves in the films which were designated by the government. The process of the Park regime to mobilize the students’ fervor and their efforts for solving the rural problem shows how individuals can be manipulated and recast during the Cold War period and the division situation in the Korean Peninsula.

The Cold War infiltrated the individuals’ daily lives and influenced their memories. Kim Wŏn discussed this aspect with the concept of the “Subaltern.” In his research, Kim focused on the fact that the people hid or censored themselves so as not to defy the ruling ideology since this could potentially put one at a severe disadvantage. In contrast to Kim’s research, this article focuses on how the Park regime made individuals recognize themselves in the way the regime wanted them to by obscuring the individuals’ original objectives.

This article focuses not only on the films’ plots but also on the composition or camerawork, regarding them as critical elements that reflect the characteristics of the film. In particular, this article focuses on the “Taehan News,” one of the representative government-made films, produced from 1953 to 1994, totaling 2,040 episodes. Among these films, this article

5 For example, in the period of Park Chunghee, the people who were having family members who had participated to the left were hard to find a job or being governmental official.
reviews a total of 12 films related to college students’ activities, produced between 1961 and 1969. These films account for 26 percent of the total related films among the films produced until 1989. It could be a small portion compared to the total of 16 films, produced between 1970 and 1972. However, college students entered into an official alliance organized by the government to perform volunteer activities in 1970. Therefore, the films from the 1960’s are more significant in that they show the students conducting activities for the rural community following the government’s lead, even though that was not quite the disposition of the students at the time.

In addition, this article uses Chachin Kŭnlopan Paeksŏ (white paper of Chachin Kŭnlopan), newspaper, and magazines, and focuses on the period from 1961 to 1970, when the official students’ alliance was organized.

The Cold War and Agricultural Issues

To examine the reason the Park regime focused on college students, particularly on their agricultural activities, it is important to understand the agricultural issues at the time. The Rhee Seungman (Yi Sungman) regime maintained low prices for agricultural products to support the urban economy, so naturally the rural communities suffered from poverty. As a result, many people (especially young people) left their rural hometowns in search of jobs and moved to the cities. Finally, only elderly people and women were left in the rural communities and this situation brought about low rural productivity and created a ‘vicious circle of problems.’ Since these problems in total were eventually the reason for the collapse of the Rhee regime, the first policy created immediately after Park Chunghee’s military government took power was targeted at solving the rural problem.6 Rural issues were not negligible for two reasons. First, most of the

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6 The Park Chunghee regime proclaimed “agriculture as the most important” aspect of South Korea upon seizing the power through a coup in 1961. Specifically, the
Korean population lived in rural areas, and most of the land in Korea was agricultural at the time. This meant the potential power of the rural areas could influence the national economy. Second, the rural areas were critical to the mobilization of the people to spread government propaganda since most Koreans lived in rural areas.

For these reasons, the rural problem was not regarded simply as an internal problem but rather as a strategy against the national crisis during the Cold War. For example, the “Chaegŏn Kukmin Undong” (The National Reconstruction Movement), which was started by Park’s military government, was not a simple mobilization for modernization, but a “movement to mobilize people in the divided state,” which began to combine the army and people under the major premise of “sŭng kong” (victory against communism).\(^7\) Compared to “pan kong (anti-communism),” which was the catchphrase of Rhee’s cabinet that meant “disagree with communism” “sŭng kong” focused on the systemic competition between the “bloc of the free world” and the “communist bloc,” or specifically, South and North Korea. In other words, South Korea became more active in order to triumph over the communist system economically and militarily, and as a result, “sŭng kong” was related to protecting national security. In this context, “Chaekŏn Kukmin Undong” focused on strengthening rather than dissolving the division, since the Park regime needed an “enemy”, which was helpful for mobilizing the people and strengthening the existing gov-

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7 Heo Eun (Hŏ Ûn). “‘5.16Kunchŏngki’ Chaekŏn Kukmin Undongŭi Sŏngkyŏk” (the character of peoples movement for reconstruction in the period of 5.16 military government). Yŏksamuncheuyŏnku 11 (2003): 44.
ernment’s power.\(^8\)

An interesting point is that the rural areas were commonly regarded as the critical region for the structure that maintained the Cold War system in East Asia since the Cold War spread to that area. East Asian governments used films in particular to mobilize the rural population for the development of the rural area or for solving the rural problem. For instance, the Taiwanese government established the “Broadcasting Corporation of China” with the support of U.S. aid, and made drama films, newsreels, and folk music films, which contained information about agriculture as well as stories of successful farmers.\(^9\) The Filipino government established the ideal model for farmers through propaganda films. For example, the film *Factory Worker Tunes Farmer* (1952) depicted an ignorant farmer becoming successful through modern education, and *Farmer of Tomorrow* showed that the rural areas could only be improved by the revolutionary farmers who were willing to accept scientific approaches to agriculture.\(^10\)

All of these East Asian nations were in the same situation, as they had been liberated from Japanese colonization and faced the task of rebuilding the government and the nation-state after the Second World War. They recognized that the rural problems were caused by the farmers’ ignorance and pre-modern lifestyle. As a result, they regarded the rural area as places that had to be modernized through enlightenment (kyemong, 啓蒙).\(^11\) For

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11 It is a similar term with Kaehwa (開化), which was used from the early nineteenth
the most part, these East Asian nations regarded the US as their standard for modernization and believed that they would become part of the free world once the rural area were modernized like the U.S. In other words, modernization of the rural area was the way to solve the rural problem and to ensure security during the Cold War. In addition, they tried to use the rural economy to support industrialization in the cities. As newly born governments, the East Asian nations needed to improve their national economy, and normally it was largely based on the sacrifice of the rural areas, such as the low prices of agricultural products.12

The newly established government tried to modernize the rural area to manage social compliance and to shape the state to fit the identity as a member of the free world during the Cold War era. Fundamentally, this might have been the way to ensure the stability of the state in the Cold War era, as the war clearly separated friend and foe according to ideology, and a stable and developed society was a strong weapon to triumph over the other system.

The Perception of the Rural Area under the Park Regime: The Emphasis on Elites

The elites in the 1960’s regarded the rural areas as a pre-modern and ignorant environment. This separated the “modern” urban area and urban people from the “pre-modern” rural area and rural people. The elites re-

century and also translated into ‘enlightenment,’ in the sense that both emphasize modernization as their goal. However, it is different because Kaehwa focused on the beginning of the opening of ports as the opportunity for structural change in Chosŏn, but Kyemong more focused on education as the opportunity of individual change. Also, Kaehwa was scarcely used in the period of the 1960’s.

garded the rural problem as something that could be overcome and cured by modernization. The Park Chunghee regime also shared this view on the rural problem, and reflected the elites’ perspective of the rural problem. The Park’s cabinet assigned the elites with the mission for the modernization of the rural areas. These elites were called the “warriors” of modernization.

The government disseminated this message through government-made films, such as culture films. “the culture film” was defined as a “films based on facts that were produced to illustrate and explain social customs as well as educational and cultural effects in all occurrences in the society, economy, and culture” in the first law on films in 1962. Even though culture films were created based on facts, most of them contained specific scenarios and actors like fictional films, which reflected the government’s intentions more directly through dramatized propaganda. This shows that the films reflected the government’s motives, which had to be transferred to the people, more clearly than any documentary film. The film law stipulated that the theater manager should screen culture films at the screenings of commercial films, meaning all moviegoers were subjected to watching the culture films in movie theaters. At the time, only a limited number of people who could afford to go the theaters went to see movies: mainly the urban population and college students. Of course, the Park regime created a ‘Mobile Screening Club (Yitong Yŏngsapan)’ to expand showing the newsreels while emphasizing the propaganda for the rural people. However, the facilities for mobile screening was only 85 mobile screening vehicles, 58 16mm motion picture projectors, 35 generators, and 35 recorders in 1966 which was definitely not enough to cover all small


14 Ham, Ch’ungbŏm. “1960nyŏndaeh’o Hankuk NewsYŏnghwawa Munhwayŏng hwaae kwanhan Yŏnku” (The Study on Korean Newsreels and Culture Films in
villages in South Korea. Based on this, it can be said that culture films targeted those people as “opinion leaders,” and Park’s cabinet wanted to impose social tasks on them, such as the modernization of rural areas.

More specifically, the culture film  *Urimaul* (Our Town)\(^{15}\) depicted the rural population as lazy. In the film, stones were stacked in a disorderly manner, and sheds were left collapsed with no one taking care of them. Youths in rural villages were gambling or drinking in a Korean-style pub with women during the agricultural off-season (Fig.1-1). These were intended to lead the viewers to think that rural people were not doing their best to improve their lives and their livelihood, that they didn’t know how to improve their lives or simply didn’t want to know how. The rural people in this film were changed by “home economics agents” (Nongch’on Saenghwal Chidosa) from the advisory center for agricultural extension, who were government officials sent to rural areas to teach people the scientific way of farming. The advisory center for agricultural extension was a governmental institution established to spread cutting-edge scientific farming methods and to improve the rural people’s way of living. This implies that the government regarded the rural people as incompetent, unable to solve their own problems, requiring the help of the elites who knew how to make improvements.

This perception of the rural people was represented in  *Urimaul* through contrasts. For example, in this film, home economics agents are wearing western-style suits, while the rural people are wearing traditional clothes—white cotton clothing and *hanbok* (Korean traditional clothing). Clothing symbolized the differences between modernized agents and pre-modernized rural people. Also, when the agents visit the rural community, and teach the rural people, the camera shows agents literally looking down on the people, and the people looking up at the agents <Fig.1-2>. This composition represented the hierarchic order between the agents and the rural people, the benefactor and the beneficiary of modernization.

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This film emphasized the role of home economics agents in the lives of the rural people, showing the government’s effort to resolve the rural problem and implying the modern knowledge of elites was the most effective way to improve the rural area. Needless to say, this film can be said to have targeted the elites or urban people who went to the movies to make them recognize themselves as the agents burdened with the task for modernization of the rural areas.

Another culture film *Nong’t’onùn Purùnta* (The Farm Calls)\(^\text{16}\) emphasized the role of the elites more directly. The main characters of the film are a husband and wife who give up their lives in the legal profession and go to a rural village to realize their dream of improving the rural area through scientific and systemic agricultural methods. Their family holds them in contempt for turning to farming, and even the rural people ridicule them because the rural people are unable to understand their farming methods. For example, the husband and wife build a modern poultry farm and raise chickens <Fig.2>.

At the time, farmers did not raise livestock commercially, and only had a small number of livestock. However, the government wanted them to increase their livestock to raise farm income. Therefore, the government introduced the poultry farm as an innovative and modern measure.\(^\text{17}\) The

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\(^{16}\) Culture Film. *Nong’t’onùn Purùnta* (The Farm Calls). Produced in 1963.

\(^{17}\) The government emphasized to raise livestock with giving the people subsidy (Kach’ukch’ungsikt’оû (Discussion on Proliferation of Livestock). *T’onga ilbo*. October 11, 1962).
rural people who laugh at them in the beginning of the film slowly change their attitudes and accept the new methods, starting with the youth. Finally, the husband and wife’s farming method spreads throughout the whole town, and their family commends them for their activities.

As we saw above, Park’s cabinet showed their own perception of the rural area—a pre-modern and ignorant environment, which had to be changed through modernization and enlightenment. This idea persisted until 1972, when “Saemaül Undong” (New Village Movement) began, emphasizing the role of the rural people themselves. That is, generally, the rural areas were recognized as an uncivilized primeval sphere, and the people who could solve the rural problems were the elites and the city people with modern techniques. Before the state secured agricultural governance and tried to mobilize the people by stimulating their “spontaneity,” the rural area was represented as a problematic space, which awaited the benefit from the modern urban area by Park’s cabinet.

The Park Regime’s Perception of College Students

Even though the government recognized the role of elites, it was not easy to procure manpower at the beginning of the military government’s rule. Amidst these difficulties, Park’s cabinet focused on college students. Of course, this was not the first time college students were used as a means
for such purposes. But the difference was that the students began to practice rural activities more ardently to spread the fervor of “April 19” for social change, and the scope of activities was also expanded in comparison to the period before the 1960’s. The government intended to jump on the bandwagon of this fervor of social change led by college students, and propagandize it as the government’s will to solve rural problems. Practically, the representative college students’ organization, “Chachin Künlopan” (working group for reconstruction) was supported by the “Chaekŏn Kukmin Undong Ponpu” (Headquarter The National Reconstruction Movement), and the Minister of Agriculture attended the conference for the reporting of the results of activities’ in 1961, the first year of “Chachin Künlopan.”

Even though there is a connection between the government and students, it is difficult to say that the students’ movement was under the government’s control. In the 1960’s there were many kinds of student activity clubs: 1) volunteer activity clubs in each university, 2) volunteer activities of college students in 4H Clubs, 3) Buddhist students’ clubs for volunteer activities, 4) UNESCO students club for volunteer activities, 5) Catholic

18 The article in 1958 addressed college students, advising them to give up their dreams to be salary men, and to go back to their hometowns to help the reconstruction of rural communities (‘Sae Chŏropsaengkwa Chikchang’ (New Graduates and the Work Place). Tong-a Ilbo. 1958.2.28).

19 College students organized the rural activities groups, aiming to build an ideal community as the constant plan not as the temporary enlightenment movement (‘Kyŏulpanghakŭl Yiyong Taehakkyemongtae Ch’uldong Kaja! Nongch’onŭlo!’ (The College Students’ Rural Activities using Winter Holiday Started! Move to the rural!). Kyŏnghyangsinmun. 1961.12.24).

20 The fervor and the scope of the revolution was extended to the extent that most students went to the rural areas when the student council of SNU organized “Kukmin Kyemongdae” (group for enlightenment of people) with the promising the process of “Sinsaenghwal Undong” (movement for people’s new life) (O Cheyŏn. Ibid. 100-101).

students clubs for volunteer activities, 6) Red Cross college students club for volunteer activities, 7) volunteer clubs supported by Chaekŏn Kukmin Undong Ponpu, and 8) students activities for enlightenment on legislation supported by the Ministry of Justice.

Among them, volunteer activity clubs in each university, 4H Clubs, and UNESCO students clubs for volunteer activities continuously carried out their activities. With the exception of the 4H Clubs, none of these students groups were related to the government. Also, they organized their own alliances, such as “Chŏnkkuk Taehaksaeng Nongch’onyŏnkuyŏnhaphŏe” (The College Students Alliance for Study on the Rural). This alliance was not supported from any government organization, and was managed spontaneously. The members of the alliance studied the ways to carry out their activities for the rural areas by inviting prominent professors or scholars on rural issues.\(^{22}\)

Then, how can we understand this connection between the government and the students? The government intended to take part in the students’ fervor for social change. The evidence can be found in Hankugŭi Taehak (Korea’s Colleges), a culture film produced in 1962, which depicted the college students’ volunteer activities as a spontaneous movement and declared that it must be developed in connection with the Department of Agriculture for the development of rural communities. Also, this film emphasized the role of college students in the movement, stressing the fact that the students who received education on agriculture must contribute to agricultural production (Fig.3-1) while pointing out the fact that there was an increased number of college students able to contribute to society compared to that in 1945 (Fig.3-2).

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Furthermore, the government led the college students to receive “Haksaeng T’úksu Ch’eyuk” (Special Physical Education for Students) to improve their strength under the slogan “A Healthy body can have a Healthy Mentality (Kŏnkanghan Sinch'gae Kŏnkanghan Chŏngsinyi Kittŭnda).” In this sentence, “healthy mentality” means the will of national security and adjustment to the government for social stabilization and modernization. This 9’ 14” film shows students studying in the library (Fig.4-1), and students being trained in “Haksaeng T’úksu Ch’eyuk” (Fig.4-2).

According to the narration of this film, this training program was supported by the army, marines, and the air force to implant the “mentality of the people of a healthy nation” in the students’ minds. As seen in <Fig.4-2>, both male and female students participated in “parachute drills” and “motor boat training” upon entering the training school, which was essentially the same as the army, and also received training in climbing and swimming. The narration further explained that climbing was for the “intense power for conquest,” and praised it as the source of international pride and the only such training program in the world. In addition, the narrator remarked, “the future of this state was stable” thanks to the trained students. This meant that the goal of the government was aimed at the college students to promote them as manpower armed with knowledge and strength and to utilize them for the modernization and the preservation of national security during the Cold War.

23 Culture Film. ‘Haksaeng Tüksu Cheyuk’ (Special Physical Education for Students). Produced in 1963.
The Park Chunghee administration’s perception of the college students changed at the onset of explosive demonstrations in 1963—the “June 3 Siwi” (student movement on June 3)—against a treaty was signed between Korea and the U.S.. After this, the government began to describe the students who participated in the demonstrations as rebellious and threatening insurgents in society. Park Chunghee expressed this directly through films. In 1965, Park declared to disband political groups in colleges in a press conference. He also remarked that “students chronically come out to the streets after ‘April 19’” in a special discourse. Through films, Park emphasized the violent aspects of students who participated in demonstrations and described them as “cancerous cells of the society who hate to study and take tests.”

There were two ways in which Park’s cabinet criticized the students through films. First, the government generalized students’ nonpolitical activities, such as sports and university festivals as “typical student activities,” implying that these were “normal” student activities, while political demonstrations were not. This argument was supported by “Hakwŏn News” (School News), which were segments of “Taehan News.” “Hakwŏn News” was screened until October 1962, when it was stopped. It was picked back up in 1964 and, in 1965, three installments were pro-

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duced within one year.\textsuperscript{26} The main contents of “Hakwŏn News” included the 80\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the founding of Yonsei University, May Queen, the festival to celebrate the 60\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the founding of Korea University, mass games of female students, and regularly scheduled sports competitions between Korea University and Yonsei University. These films depicted the college campuses and student lives as the “romance of the youths” through the narration and inserted marching music in the background to stress the healthy and animated image of students compared to those who participated in political demonstrations.

Second, the government described the student demonstrations as ‘abnormal’ activities and limited it to a small incident incited by a few students by contrasting the images of protesting students with the images of students studying hard in school (Fig.5-1) and (Fig.5-2). Such contrasts highlighted and exaggerated the violent character of protesting students.

It needs to be pointed out that the efforts of the Park regime’s use of films were effective for college students to think of themselves as model students, which the government intended through the screening of the films. It would have been possible because most of the viewers would have been adults living in cities or college students since the films were

\textsuperscript{26} Oct. 17, 1964(vol.490), April 21(vol.516), May 15(vol.519), October 30(vol.543), 1965. Afterwards ‘Hakwŏn News’ was screened one more time in October 23, 1966 before ceasing completely. These films were produced again in 1971.
played mostly in theaters in cities, as mentioned above. This meant these films targeted college students and aimed to make students shape their own identity to fit the government’s motives.

It is also important to understand the government’s intention in producing these films. When the students saw themselves in films, they identified with the main characters. In these films, the main characters were students who studied hard, maintained good physical health, and made efforts for rural development. The film also included students protesting against the government. The students who watched the films were able to separate the protesting students in the films as “abnormal” from their own identity as students.

This was possible because students were able to view and experience the film iteratively whenever they went to the theaters, even though the films did not contain particularly interesting content. Also, Pak Ŭkpong who worked in related film production testified that “People were expecting to see “Taehan News” because it was the only mass-media showing and explaining the events happening within the state,” and Yi Chiwan who also worked in related film production gave testimony that “the “Taehan News” was the absolute media” which enjoyed the broadest distribution. Therefore, it can be said that the influence of “Taehan News” on the consciousness of students was considerable.

As discussed above, the Park regime mobilized the spontaneity of the students built up by the fervor after “April 19” as a power force for rural modernization. However, after 1963, the government began to criticize this force. That is, Park revealed his contradictory recognition of the college students’ spontaneity by criticizing student demonstrations. This kind of perception was found in the perspectives on the student activities for the rural area as well. The films about student activities for the rural area produced in 1965 showed positive and effective aspects despite the criticism against college student activities raised in other media, such as

27 Ham, Ch’ungbŏm. Ibid: 201.
newspapers which criticized student activities in the rural areas, reasoning that the students were doing the activities for fun or that they were not working hard.\(^{28}\)

It is true that not all students joined in on the activities for the rural areas with a strong will for rural development. In particular, one survey showed that 46.5 percent of male students and 55.8 percent of female students participated in the activities for the sake of experience.\(^{29}\) However, this did not mean the students’ activities were ineffective or unhelpful to the rural people, nor did it mean the students didn’t have any interest in the rural problem. Also, this did not mean that they were mobilized by the government. Rather, the rural people did not trust the government. For example, when the Catholic Students from Ch’ungang university club visited Nakp’ungli in Kangwŏndo (Kangwŏn Province), one person asked them, “Are you the myŏn?” (meaning, the government myŏn office, the smallest administrational region), and added that if they were from the myŏn office they would not be welcomed into town because the government officials always collect money from the people for the improvement of the town, which the rural people did not want. Also, he expressed his gratitude for the students’ visits to the rural communities.\(^{30}\) This exemplifies the rural people’s dissatisfaction with the government, and their gratitude for the students’ volunteer activities. It also shows the reason the Park regime wanted to utilize the college student activities for the rural areas as a way to propagandize the government’s achievements there.

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28 ‘Taehakwaeng Pongsahwaldong Sŏm Ŭlīni Kyoyukae’ (The University Students Activities for the Rural for Children’s Education in Island). \textit{Dong-a Daily}. July 14, 1966


To sum up, the government criticized student political demonstrations, but distinguished between the students partaking in the demonstrations and “normal” students to secure the students’ manpower for rural activities implicitly and continuously. For doing this, college student activities in the rural areas were described as the “pillar of modernization” under the government’s direction.

The Mobilization of College Students by the government and the Emphasis on Security

The military government established in 1961 after the successful coup suggested the resolution of the rural problem as one way to legitimize their government. They regarded the problems in the rural areas as an utmost priority, which had to be resolved, as these problems had motivated the April 19 Student Movement and led to the resignation of Rhee Syngman. However, there was a lack of manpower to resolve the rural problem. This led the Park Chunghee regime to focus on college students, since the students were bringing about progress through spontaneous rural activities after April 19 by organizing enlightenment (kyemong, 啓蒙) groups.

As mentioned above, the Park regime wanted to make use of the students’ push for modernization even when they strongly protested in 1963 against the government’s attempt to sign a treaty between Korea and Japan. The Park regime stressed their image of ideal students on the students, and criticized those who participated in demonstrations against the government, through propagandas that blatantly asserted that only a small group of students participated in the protests. In this process, the Park regime took away the meaning of “enlightenment” as asserted by the students. While “enlightenment” for Park’s cabinet was for building labor for modernization and economic development, the students’ “enlightenment” was for political change through elections and developing political consciousness. Yet, despite these differences, the government imposed its meaning of enlightenment onto students’ activities, negating the students’
appropriation of the meaning of enlightenment.

The news clip titled ‘Haksaeng Nongch’on Kyemongdae’ (the enlightenment group of students) in “Taehan News” vol. 324 (produced in July 29, 1961) shows Park Chunghee and the people of the May 16 military government, supervising student rural activities. Park looks down at the students from his seat on the stage, like a major leading the students (Fig.6-1), and the students look up at Park as they stand in line (Fig.6-2). These films strengthened the impression that the student activities for the rural areas were led by the government. Park represented the leader of modernization, and the students represented the sub-agents of the government.

Nevertheless, it would not be correct to say that students’ activities in this period were led by the government, since there were many independently-operated volunteer groups for the rural areas, which didn't follow the government’s suggestions. Especially, students needed consistent financial support to continue their activities, because the government did not provide students with financial support. \(^3\) The government only made the student activities appear as government led-activities. <Fig.7-1> shows the scene in which the “Chaekönpan” (Reconstruction Team) visits the

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32 Publication Committee for the Anniversary of Voluntary Activities. Ibid: 25.
students participating in rural activities and giving them towels with the words “Ch’ŏngwadae” (the Blue House) printed on the bottom. <Fig.7-2> is a close-up of the towel, which was put around the necks of the female students.33

These scenes symbolize the connection between students who were performing the rural activities and the government.34 In addition, the students who participated in the student activities for the rural areas were imagined in this film as occupying the lower end of the hierarchic order under the government's control. In other words, the government attempted to change the nature of the student activities in the rural areas from voluntary to mobilized activities.

In this way, the Park regime only showed their relationship with the

34 Even documentary films cannot be regarded as “real” films that only display the “facts” in the way events happened because it can be edited at the will of the director to show the public what the director wants to show them. Therefore certain standards are required to evaluate whether the film has been manipulated or not. One of these standards was the difference in focal lengths in scenes. In other words, the change from distant view to a close up in the film means that there is something the director wanted to show or emphasize, which implies the motive and the intention of that particular film (Marc Ferro. Chu Kyŏngch’ŏl trans. Yŏksawa Yŏnghwā (History and Film). (Seoul, Kkach’i: 1999): 107).
students who participated in rural activities at the point of agreement, depicting the students as the workforce that contributed to the rural community without providing active support for them. Consequently, students’ activities became the mechanism through which to convince people that the government was involved in the process of solving the rural problem due to the public screenings of official films made by the government.

An important point to note is that Park’s cabinet stressed the aspect of national security to fabricate the rural activities of students. <Fig.8-1> is a film made in 1969 about the opening ceremony of “Haksaeng Nongǒch’on Kaebal Pongsatan (student union for development of the rural areas)” held in the Anti-Communism Alliance Square.35

The difference between this film and others was that it showed U.S. army personnel, who seemed to be high officials, attending this ceremony for rural activities in South Korea. This film included a close-up of their features (Fig.8-2), which is reminiscent of <Fig. 6-1>, in which Park Chunghee looks down on the students. In another aspect, this film is different from others related to rural activities in that other films focused on showing the working student in the rural community.

These scenes featuring the U.S. military personnel were not shown before 1968, so it can be regarded that it was closely related to the year of

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1968. In 1968, the national crisis in South Korea was reaching its height with the capture of the USS Pueblo by North Korea, the attack on Ch'ŏngwadae from armed espionage agents, and the strained relationship with the U.S.. Considering these events during this time period, this film also reflected the realities of the Cold War in the background. That is, the resolution of the rural problem was not simply an internal issue but connected to security under the Cold War, and the government tried to impart to its viewers that it was the students’ duty to contribute to resolving these problems.

To this end, the Park regime called college students “workers” for their contributions to overcome the national security crisis, instead of “rebels” who protested meaninglessly against the government. In fact, there was a student club, which taught the rural people about the “ideology of anti-communism” as part of their program of students’ activities during this period. It is not a coincidence that “Taehak Pongsan Yŏn'haphoe” (the alliance of volunteer groups in universities) was organized as a government-led group under the central leadership system in 1970, the very next year after this film was made.

As we have seen until now, the reason Park’s cabinet tried to show the students’ activities for the rural areas in connection with the government was because the government’s policies for the rural areas were not successful in general and also because even the rural people did not trust the government’s activities. In other words, since the Park regime was unable to obtain good results from their way of handling rural problems, which was critical for the Park administration and social stabilization, they mobilized college students’ spontaneity and their efforts to the areas where the government’s policies were ineffective, pretending to have had a hand in the students’ activities.

37 Publication Committee for the Anniversary of Voluntary Activities. Ibid. 2.
The College Students’ Perception of Rural Activities in 1960’s and Mobilized Spontaneity

The students’ rural activities in the 1960’s shared the same goal as the policies on the rural areas put forth by the Park regime in terms of “rural development.” The difference was that the students supported the “rural development” for political change, while Park supported it for the continued existence of the government and national security. Also, Park’s cabinet wanted to utilize the student workforce as laborers who had modern knowledge and techniques. The Ministry of Education explained that the goal of students’ activities for the rural areas as follows:

The student activities for the rural areas is the practice of agricultural education and science, as well as creative activities reflecting the students’ volunteer activities club which were promoted by the role, region, and students’ majors in colleges. Volunteering for the rural areas doesn’t simply mean physical labor. The students utilize their education for the development of the rural areas. Sometimes, the professional studies on the rural areas will be required for the students, but that is an exception. It can not be said that [rural activities] is not related to science. The scene of volunteer activities can be the educational material itself, and performing volunteer activities can be an educational process.38

The Ministry of Education argued that the students’ volunteer activities were not simply physical activities, but a way to study scientific ways to farm the land. However, the important part is that the ministry remarked that the students’ volunteer activities involved utilizing their knowledge of science for rural development. In other words, the fundamental goal of student activities was securing the labor force with professional knowledge to teach the rural people. The ministry emphasized that student

activities were not simple physical activities, but they also did not want the student activities to go beyond the boundary into the political sphere. The ministry gave the students a mission to improve the rural areas, and it was related to the development of knowledge about the rural areas. It was not much different from the way in which the government gave the elites the mission to modernize the rural areas. Students were agents who transferred the modern farming knowledge and techniques to help the farmers.

Specifically, students studied ways to breed trees, how to store kimch’i without altering their taste, good environmental conditions to raise livestock, and professional studies on the constitution of farmland ecosystem. These students were educated in school or in student clubs. They utilized their knowledge of agricultural life in the rural communities, and examined the subjects of their studies in the rural regions. The Ministry of Education believed this was the way to improve the conditions of the rural communities. This was the government’s way of enlightenment for the rural people.

In contrast, the college students who volunteered for the rural areas focused more on the political meaning of enlightenment. They did not believe that problems in the rural areas occurred because the rural people were ignorant. Rather, they regarded this as a systemic problem, and as a result it had to be solved in the political area. In the economic hierarchy, which called for the sacrifice of the rural economy to support the urban economy, the situation in the rural areas could not but worsen. College students emphasized this point and went to the rural communities to help people recognize that the problems they faced had been caused by government policies, not their ignorance. In addition, the college students discussed the way for political development or the ideal political system for Korea, and the rural activity was the one way of practice for achievement of it.39

Nevertheless, the only single common point between Park’s cabinet and

students was magnified because the government posed students’ activities as a government attempt to solve the rural problem. In particular, college student activities in the rural areas in the 1960’s were dismissed as “government-led activities” or “simple labor service,” losing the focus on spontaneity and will, as official government organizations for rural activities began to appear in the 1970’s, and these organizations were fixed on the “rural movement” in the spirit of democratization in the 1980’s. O Cheyŏn also assessed the student activities after the military coup and concluded that the activities lost their spontaneity and were mobilized by Park’s system.40 However, if we look more closely at the students’ consciousness, we can find their own direction and spontaneity regarding the activities for the rural communities.

To examine the student consciousness, we need to study the student perspectives on the rural activities and their concerns regarding managing the activity groups in the 1960’s. Student activities for the rural areas began with the “Evergreens Movement,” an enlightenment movement to build the national consciousness under the Japanese imperialism.41 After the “April 19” student revolution in 1960, the student activities progressed with a more specific direction about overall social change, moving beyond the time of “volunteer assistance” and the “crusade against illiteracy.” Due to these changes, the 1960’s was evaluated as a time when “voluntary students clubs led the social and educational activities to understand the rural situation and assimilate with the rural people.”42 The student volunteer activities were considered to be highly valuable and well carried out,

40 Ibid: 176-177.
41 Of course, the Japanese colonial government tried to mobilize students with the purpose to use them for increased provisions. Please refer to this article; Sin Chu-baek. “Yilče ū Kyoyukchŏngch’aekkwa Haksan’u Kullotongwŏn(1943~1945)” (The Japanese Colonial Government’s Education Policy and Mobilization of Students’ Laborforce(1943~1945). Yŏksakyoyuk 78. (2001): 75-109. I didn’t focus much on it in this article because it's different from other voluntarily organized students’ activities.
42 Publication Committee for the Anniversary of Voluntary Activities. Ibid. 2.
not suffering in comparison with today’s student volunteer activities.\textsuperscript{43} Student activities in the 1960’s were planned under specific goals and were regarded as an alternative to the government’s activities to solve practical problems to the point that students remarked, “It was college students ourselves who were the pioneers of the Saemaeul Movement.” The students faced financial and systemic limitations because the government did not support them in practice. The students were already aware of this. Below is a retrospect of Chŏng Sikyun, who was an undergraduate student in 1961 and a member of “Chachin Kŭnlopan” of Korea University.

... “Saemaeul Movement” is what we already started to practice 10 years ago. We improved the land, designed a way to increase income as the government began to suggest these days, and requested specific policies to support the rural areas. Unfortunately, we...cannot mobilize the administrative power, so it failed. If the current atmosphere regarding the rural areas existed before, of course, today’s rural situation would have progressed in less than ten years, and the overall development of Korea would have been faster... This is the reliable truth.\textsuperscript{44}

As in the case above, the students requested the government to create policies based on their activities. The students did not come up with their volunteer activities under the leadership of the government. Students planned their activities through academic discussion. Of course, sometimes, student activities were managed by rural youth organizations, 4H Club, and other groups in the rural community under the supervision of the government. Therefore it would not be correct to claim that the government directly drew contents for the “Saemaeul Movement” from the students’ rural activities. However, the “Saemaeul Movement” was able to progress smoothly thanks to the student activities for the rural area, which

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid. 21.
\textsuperscript{44} Chachin Kŭnlopan of Korea University. Ibid. 146.
had laid the path for the movement. In addition, the students aimed for the political change beyond the development of the rural areas. The students organized knowledge and education as the most important activity among other programs.45

The College Students' Perception on Themselves and Their “Lost Name”

As such, students from the 1960’s who participated in the activities were concerned about the rural people and their critical minds because of the lack of support from the government or schools.46 The students were concerned about two different aspects of their activities. One of the aspects was the rural activities, and the other was the management of the organization. The former can be examined in terms of students’ concerns about enlightenment. “Chachin Kǔnlopan” of Korea University aimed to raise consciousness of the rural problem from a mere academic standpoint to the level of the society not to “enlighten” the rural people as the government intended. Specifically, the students tried to dissolve the system in which all social, cultural, and economic benefits were concentrated on the city and attempted to distribute these benefits to the rural areas through their activities. In contrast, the government tried to maintain the position of the rural areas as a region that supported the cities. This meant that the students did not simply regard the rural area as a subject of “urbanization” or an area that existed to support the urban economy.47

Moreover, the students tried to avoid using the term “enlightenment”

45 The knowledge education accounted for the biggest portion of the program at 37.2 percent of the activities the students focused on the rural activities (Chang Sǒnsuk. Ibid: 110).
46 The financial support from the government was very limited (The Ministry of Education. Ibid: ka10).
47 Chachin Kǔnlopan of Korea University. Ibid. 33.
because it reminded people of the hierarchy between enlightened students and un-enlightened rural people. Instead, they suggested using the term “Nongch’on Hyópcho” (rural cooperation) or “Nongch’on Hwaldong” (rural activities). They also regarded the rural people as an “excluded class” rather than as ignorant and pre-modern people, and saw them as marginalized people who are unable to receive the economic, cultural, and social benefits that are concentrated in the city. This was different from the government’s idea of enlightenment, which were the panacea for Korea that involved modernizing the rural people who are lazy and traditional. Of course, there are studies that discuss the college student attitudes as “enlightenment-oriented.” In this context, “enlightenment-oriented attitude” means the very basic nature of enlightenment, that the students had a sense of duty to teach and mobilize the rural people. This should be distinguished from the “enlightenment-oriented attitude” the government employed, considering the rural people ignorant.

The other aspect that concerned the students was the management of the student activity groups. College students were the agents to start and advance the rural activities and to manage the organizations, which carried out the activities. Managing the student activity groups was critical in deciding the failure or the success of student activities. Therefore, students had to discuss specific issues, schedule the activities, decide on the number of participants, manage funding and the relationship between members, among others. These might be regarded as trivial issues, but these issues had the potential to develop into serious problems and cause the group to disband altogether. For example, when “Chachin Kűnlopan” of Korea

48 Chachin Kűnlopan of Korea University. Ibid. 232.
49 Chang, Sŏnsuk. Ibid: 129.
50 It is difficult to look over the students’ reaction after seeing the films reflecting them differently from that they intended. However, based on the fact that the students were cautious to use ‘enlightenment,’ it could be supposed to that the students would try to differentiate from enlightenment movement done by the government.
University discussed funding, a senior student advised “getting help from the older and more experienced students” and stressed the good relationship between the members. The students who were concerned about solving the rural problem, regarded managing the group as an issue that was as critical as the activities themselves.

However, the rural activities in the 1960’s have not been assessed correctly yet. Chachin Kǔnlopan Paeksŏ written in 1985 described that “Chachin Kǔnlopan” cooperated with the school, “Chaekŏn Kukminhoe,” and had aspects of a government-made organization.51 As discussed above, it is true in part yet not completely, since the group did not follow the government’s lead and suggested the solution for the rural problem instead. They also did not receive financial support from the government. Nevertheless, the reason student activities in the 1960’s was included as part of government-led activities seems to be related to the government’s trials which made students identify themselves as government made-activists by propagandizing the student activities through films. “Taehan News” reported the students’ activities by grouping the students as “Haksaeng Nongch’on Kyemongtae” (students union for enlightenment of the rural), combining all the groups together, even though there were some groups, which differed in their usage of the term “enlightenment,” such as “Chachin Kǔnlopan.”52

These were the government’s attempts to put its name on the student activities, stealing the efforts of the students in the rural areas by propagandizing the students’ activities as results of the government’s modernization project. The government’s attempts were successful, as they placed

51 Chachin Kǔnlopan of Korea University. Ibid. 14.
52 Taehan News. vol.375. ‘Hwalyakhanŭn Haksaeng Nongch’on Kyemongpan’ (active students’ group for the rural enlightenment). July 25, 1962; Taehan News. vol.530. ‘Haksaeng Nongch’on Kyemongtae’ (students’ enlightenment group for the rural). July 31, 1965; Of course, there was ‘Haksaeng Nongch’on Kyemongtae’ which was a student’s club organized in the 1950’s, and it was closely linked to the government.
the goal of the government’s policies and the students’ efforts on the same line. In short, the government stole the “correct name” of the students’ activities in the 1960’s. As a result, the student activities were remembered differently from the way they were intended, which has affected the accurate depiction of their past.

Conclusion

For the East Asian nations that were burdened with the task of building a new government at the end of the Second World War, the Cold War was a structure and a framework, which regulated their identity, the legitimacy of their governments, home affairs, as well as diplomacy. In particular, the nations with a large amount of farmland—having been the food supply center under the Japanese rule—and a large population of farmers focused on solving the rural problem in line with the government. The military government headed by Park Chunghee also attempted to solve the rural problem in order to establish their legitimacy before the fervor for modernization that erupted after the April 19 Student Revolution cooled down. However, the government’s policies were not successful. Consequently, the Park regime decided to utilize the fervor of the college students. To this end, the government depicted the student activities as if it was part of the government’s policies, rather than providing direct support for these activities. The students of that time also recognized problems in the rural areas had to be solved under the fervor and the spirit of “April 19.” The problem was that the government erased the students’ interests and intentions regarding the rural activities, and only depicted the common point the government and the students shared—the “development of the rural area”—through government-made films, even though the characteristics and plans behind their goals were different.

As a result, the college students’ activities for the rural areas in the 1960’s were dismissed as “government-led activities” or “simple labor service,” losing the original spontaneity and will of the students. In other
words, the government’s attempts, which erased the concern of the students who participated in the rural activities in the 1960’s and showed them as the government’s movement through films, hugely influenced the evaluation of the student activities from the future students. The student activities for the rural community in the 1960's lost their “name,” and the standards to correctly evaluate the students’ activities as well as the identity of the students were stolen from them, resulting in the incorrect assessment of their past. In general, people came to forget the way to describe their own history under the Cold War system because of the new government’s goal of modernization as well as the dictatorial government's attempts to establish legitimacy.

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Mobilized Spontaneity: The Park Chunghee Regime's Conversion of College Student Volunteer Activities for Rural Communities as Observed Through Taehan News

This article aims to examine the Park Chunghee regime’s mobilization of college students, who were participating in the volunteer activities for the rural community, by erasing their original goal and characteristics using government-made films such as “Taehan News.” It is the process of excavating the people’s forgotten history under the Cold War system.

The rural problem in the 1960’s was the most important task for the military government of Park Chunghee to resolve during the Cold War. The Park regime turned to college student activities because the students were leading social movements to reform South Korean society after the April 19 Student Revolution. Using films, the government propagated that the college students’ activities were part of the government’s efforts and part of the government’s contingency plans for the rural community problems, even though the students’ goal for volunteer activities in the rural areas differed from the government’s policies. Consequently, the students’ activities for the rural community in the 1960's lost their “name,” and the standards to correctly evaluate their past as well as their rightful identity have been stolen from them.

Keywords: College student activities for the rural community, Taehan News, culture film, interpellation, Cold War, Park Chunghee Regime
동원된 자발성: 
대한뉴스를 통해 본 박정희 정권의 
대학생 봉사활동 전용(轉用)

금보운 (고려대 한국사학과 박사과정)

본 논문은 냉전체제 하에서 잊혀진 개인의 역사를 발굴하기 위한 한 시도로서
박정희 정부시기 대한뉴스에 반영된 대학생 농촌활동의 양상과 그 의미를 분석
하였다. 1960년대 농촌문제는 냉전과 분단을 배경으로 정권을 차지한 군사정부가
시급히 해결해야 할 과제였다. 이를 해결하기 위해 박정희 정부는 4.19 이후 분
출된 대학생들의 사회개혁을 향한 열망을 전유하고자 했다. 이는 학생들을 직접
적으로 동원하는 방법과는 달리 영상을 활용하여 4.19 이후 활발히 전개되고 있던
학생들의 농촌활동을 관제활동으로 보이게 함으로써 정부 스스로를 농촌문제
해결의 주도자로 위치 시키는 방식으로 전개되었다. 박정희 정부의 대한뉴스 활용
과 영상에 비추어진 대학생들의 모습은 대학생들이 농촌활동을 전개하며 수립했던
그들이만의 문제의식과 자발적인 전개, 그리고 계몽에 대한 반성을 반영하지 않
고 있었다. 이 같은 영상들은 1970, 80년대 대학생들이 1960년대 대학생들의 농
촌활동을 관제적이며, 그래서 수동적이라고 인지하고 이를 평가하게 하는데 영향
을 미쳤다. 결과적으로 1960년대 학생농촌활동은 그들이 가져야 할 정당한 “이
름”을 잃어버렸으며, 그들의 과거 및 원래의 정체성을 올바르게 평가 받을 수 있
는 기준을 빠앗게 버린 것이라 할 수 있다.

주제어: 대학생 농촌활동, 대한뉴스, 문화영화, 영상, 호명(呼名), 냉전, 박정희
정부