

# The Impacts of the “*Berliner Mauerfall*” and the Unification of Germany for the Tasks of Korean Unification

- Focused on the Northern Policy of Roh Tae-woo and  
the Sunshine Policy of Kim Dae-jung -\*

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\* This paper was supported by the 2009 research fund of the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. This paper was presented originally in the conference with the theme “Le Monde face à la Chute” of 27-27 November 2009 hosted by Cergy-Pontoise University of France. After that it has been modified and supplemented.

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## I. Introduction

Europeans discuss the meaning of the fall of Berlin Wall as a European experience and a critical momentum for creating of European identity. In this paper I want to underline that incident as a world experience with the case of Korea.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the ensuing collapse of the eastern block in 1989-91, and the unification of Germany in October 1990 all had a significant impact on North and South Korea, albeit in different ways.

For South Koreans the event of the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized also the collapse of apparently real-existing socialism. Over the long-term view it symbolized positively the unification of Germany too.

These world historical – not only European – changes made Koreans on either side of the divided peninsula very conscious of the challenging task of attempting the unification of their divided country. The fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification interested South Koreans especially because they looked to the experience of West Germany as a possible model for the reintegration of the two Koreas. At the climatic moment of the fall of the Berlin Wall, South Korea already associated West Germans with the fostering of peaceful cooperation and exchanges between the West and the East as embodied in the programmatic orientation of West German *Ostpolitik*. Because the South Koreans had experienced the unification of Vietnam through, it was very impressive to observe the peaceful fall of Berlin Wall and German unification.<sup>1)</sup>

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1) 채구묵, 「한국통일을 위한 독일통일의 교훈」, 『한국사회학』 제 30집 (겨울호, 1996), (Goo-Mook Chai, "German Lessons for Korean Unification", *Journal of Korean Sociology*, Vol. 30), pp. 841-871. p. 841-842.

Against this historical background, in this paper I will address the following questions:

- 1) What concrete impacts did the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification have on Koreans – South and North?
- 2) How were such impacts possible?
- 3) How did these impacts affect the movement and policies for unification in the South and North?

In this paper I will focus on the Northern Policy of Roh Tae-woo government and the Sunshine Policy of Kim Dae-jung regime.

## II. The social movement for reunification and the northern policy of the Roh Tae-woo government since the democratization of 1987

### 1. Democratization and the social movement for unification since 1987

Firstly, then, to respond to the above raised questions it is necessary to consider the popular and radical movement for democracy and unification in South Korea following the Gwangju uprising and brutal massacre by military dictatorship of 1980. This gruel incident caused and motivated the strong and fierce democracy movement in the long term view.

In 1987 the democracy movement in South Korea achieved its goal.

Through the so called “non-bloody revolution” of the 10. June of that year popularly known as the “6.10 uprising” the South Korean people brought the military regime to an end. From that moment of radical political change to the present South Koreans have had four democratic presidential elections and have increasingly enjoyed freedom of expression.

Also since that regime-changing conjuncture the movement for the reunification of the two Koreas among civilians has become very active. During the military dictatorship South Korean civilians could not call for a national unification movement as it was effectively prohibited by the national security law. However, from June 1987 people began to get involved in the unification movements as the new democratic climate made possible the active movement for reunification. Undoubtedly, democracy was the most salient factor in the emergence of a unification movement in the South. The progressive political outlook was that unification should be pursued on the basis of the exchanges and cooperation as in the case of the two Germanies under the umbrella of *Ostpolitik*.

The small but active leftist group of critical intellectuals and the student unification movement identified their arguments with those of the North Koreans. They thought that North Korea represented the real Korea in terms of a state ideology that emphasized independence from the influence of external powers. Therefore, their opinion was that reunification had to be achieved centered on North Korea. To them, the communist system offered a viable alternative to the capitalistic order. This leftist orientation was the result of the historical fact that, since the Gwangju massacre of 1980, the democratic movement in the South had become ideologically very rigid and radical.<sup>2)</sup>

## 2. The Northern Policy of the Roh Tae-woo government

The "July 7 Declaration" launched in 1988 by President Roh Tae-woo aimed at achieving Korean unification by building confidence through inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation. Essentially this was a neo-functionalistic idea whose main element was the stress put on spillover effects. Apparently Roh government gathered lessons from the experience of European Integration and West German Ostpolitik, gradual integration of sector by sector.<sup>3)</sup>

The result of the popular democratization revolt of June 1987 was free direct elections. To the great disappointment of the people, however, the opposition party (led by Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam) was split into the two camps and Roh Tae-woo, one of the core members of the military dictatorship, won the presidential election. Roh was responsible for Kwangju massacre. So despite the facade of electoral democracy there was no effective change in the nature of political leadership.

In the changed political context the government of Roh Tae-woo was very weak. Roh intended to overcome this weakness through pursuing a unification policy towards the North with the aim of responding to initiatives both internally and externally.<sup>4)</sup> He initiated the so called

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2) Hyun-Back Chung, "Fall of Berlin Wall, Collapse of real-existing socialist Countries and South Korean social Movement", The paper presented at the International Conference with the theme "20 Years after the Collapse of the Berlin Wall and Lessons for the Unification for Korea" hosted by Institute for Peace Studies, Korea University, September 10-11th 2009. The proceeding I of the conference, p. 21-22.

3) 박찬봉, 「7·7 선언체제의 평가와 대안체제의 모색: 기능주의에서 제도주의로」, 『한국정치학회보』, 제 42집 제 4호, pp. 340-344. (Chan-bong Park, "Appraisal on the 7·7 Declaration System and Searching for Alternative: from Functionalism to Institutionalism", *Journal of Korean Association of Political Science*, Vol. 42-4.)

4) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, 청명문화재단편, 『통일서론』 5호 (1999, 12), pp. 131-143, p. 133. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime

Northern Policy. This Northern Policy was an associational concept of the West German Ostpolitik. The economic superiority of the South to the North (four times its GDP) also motivated Roh's Northern policy.

In the middle of the 1980s the worldwide détente began, initiated by Gorbachov of the Soviet Union. Roh responded geared to exploiting this international detente environment for his political own purposes. As South Korea was scheduled to host the Olympic Games in Seoul in 1988, Roh realized that it was necessary to deepen the détente atmosphere in Korea also.<sup>5)</sup> So he declared on July, 7 1988 that he would change South-North Korean relations dramatically and fundamentally in the direction of reconciliation and cooperation to relieve the cross-border atmosphere of hostility, fraught as it was with the possibility of military confrontation. In this declaration Roh emphasized the need to avoid armed aggression and to work towards ensuring the lessening of tension and the establishment of peace. Pragmatically speaking he suggested starting up multi-faceted exchanges and fostering cooperation to promote the common interests and prosperity of all the Korean people north and south of the divided border. And as to practical measures he proposed initiating correspondence between and the coming together of separated families through the mediating activities of the Red Cross in the South and North.

In a speech to the National Assembly on September 11, 1989, President Roh unveiled a new formula for achieving national unification, officially known as the "Korean National Community Unification Formula" (*hanminjok kongdongch'e t'ongil pang'an*). This was only the

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Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

5) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 134. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

second time in the history of the Republic of Korea that a comprehensive blueprint for national unification had been published. The first had been produced by Roh's predecessor, Chun Doo-hwan, in January 1982.<sup>6)</sup>

In reality, this declaration helped the successful Olympic of 1988 on a large scale. The communist countries participated in this world festival. This contributed to the change of the Cold War mentality of Koreans. After the Olympic game the government of Roh began to conclude the treaties with the countries of the Eastern Block for the normalization of the state relations. The first treaty came into being in February of 1989 with Hungary.<sup>7)</sup>

### 3. Kim Dae-jung and Unification Policy

Kim Dae-jung was originally very interested in the West German *Ostpolitik*. In 1971 he proclaimed that he supported the *Ostpolitik* of the Chancellor Willy Brandt in the national press club in Washington D.C. of the USA.<sup>8)</sup> He developed and proclaimed the unification policy based on reconciliation and cooperation between the South and the North. Because of this kind of unification policy, he was accused frequently as pro-North Korean communist by Park Chung-hee regime and its supporters.

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6) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 135-136. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

7) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 135. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

8) Kim Dae-jung, "Willy Brandt and Me, *Ostpolitik* and Sunshine Policy", Key-note Lecture of the International Conference with the theme "The Vision of an East Asian Community and the Tasks of Korean Unification viewed from the Experiences of the European Integration and German Division and Unification" hosted by Institute of History and Culture of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies on May 20-23. 2009.

During the presidential election campaign 1971 he as the candidate of the opposition party argued for the solution of Korean question in international context. His emphasized the importance of maintaining peace on the Korean peninsula as a result of the concerted effort of the four big neighboring powers. Namely he stressed 'Four Power Guarantee of Peace in Korea'.

He observed the developments of the peace and cooperation between the East and the West in Europe. So he expressed the following aspect at the press conference held on January 30, 1972:

"The New Era is more clearly heralded in European countries. As the peaceful coexistence between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. is being worked out, Germany, England, France, and other countries have begun also to take positive attitudes in the opening of dialogues between East and West. Thus, the European peoples have even now reached the stage of considering the possibility of concluding a pan-European collective security system with the participation of communist nations in Europe."<sup>9)</sup>

This endeavor in Europe concluded the treaty on the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Helsinki in 1975. He focused on this treaty with great interests. He has also been observing the very positive impacts of the European Integration on the stability of the divided Germany and for its future aspect of the unification.<sup>10)</sup>

He thought that this kind of external structure around the Korean Peninsula had to be created. In this context he thought and maintained

9) This citation comes from the report of the German Embassy in Seoul to the Foreign Ministry in Bonn, PAAA, Bestand 37, Band 684.

10) 임동원, 『피스메이커. 남북관계와 북핵문제 20년』 (임동원 회고록), 중앙 books, 2008, p. 335. (Dong-won Lim, Peacemaker: *The South-North Relations and the 20 Years of the North Korean Nuclear Weapon Issue*, Joongang Books 2008).



that the system of peace and cooperation in Asia Pacific region. He established Asia Pacific Peace Foundation in 1994.

During the 1971 presidential campaign he maintained that the "Gradual and Peaceful Unification of Korea through the Improvement of Relations between the Two Korea by inter-Korean Peaceful Exchanges and Other Appropriate Measures" should be achieved.<sup>11)</sup> Hereby he emphasized that reunification of Korea should be pursued and realized on the three basic principles of self-reliance, peace and democracy.<sup>12)</sup>

For the achievement of the peaceful unification he stressed the importance of the expansion of the exchanges in all social areas, for instance reporters, people of sports and cultural fields.<sup>13)</sup>

In the following year he suggested 'the three stages for the unification', namely 'peaceful coexistence, peaceful exchange, peaceful unification'. The formula of these three stages evolved later into the formula of 'the South-North Confederal stage, Federation stage, and the completion of unification'.

At a major press conference of the Seoul Foreign Correspondents Club in July 13, 1972, he suggested the simultaneous membership of the two Korea in the United Nations.<sup>14)</sup> Although this suggestion was

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11) Kim Dae-jung, *Three-stage approach to Korean Reunification. Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage*, (translated by The Center for Multiethnic and Transnational Studies of University of Southern California) 1997, p. 300.

12) Kim Dae-jung, *Three-stage approach to Korean Reunification. Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage*, (translated by The Center for Multiethnic and Transnational Studies of University of Southern California) 1997, p. 10.

13) Kim Dae-jung, *Three-stage approach to Korean Reunification. Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage*, (translated by The Center for Multiethnic and Transnational Studies of University of Southern California) 1997, p. 300; Chosun-Ilbo, July 14, 1972.

14) Kim Dae-jung, *Three-stage approach to Korean Reunification. Focusing on the South-North Confederal Stage*, (translated by The Center for Multiethnic and

proclaimed after the July 4. Joint Communiqué of 1972, it caused the shockwave like a major earthquake. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the Soviet Union came to the agreement in August 1970 that West Germany and East Germany should be the member of the United Nations simultaneously. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) developed that idea. They were going to be the member of the UN in 1973. It seems that Kim Dae-jung was influenced by these key ideas and developments of the *Ostpolitik* of Willy Brandt.

Based on this position, he as the leader of the opposition party agreed with the Northern Policy of the Roh Tae-woo government.

### III. The impacts of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany on Korea

#### 1. The General Impacts on South Korean Society

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany contributed in accelerating way, above all to reducing the anti-communism in South Korea and to strengthening democracy and unification movement. The military dictatorship had been based on the ideology of anti-communism; but now the real-existing communism of Eastern Europe had disappeared, the cause of anti-communism became very weak. Therefore the chance for the democracy became bigger.

Through the fall of Berlin Wall and German unification, the moderate

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Transnational Studies of University of Southern California) 1997, p. 309.

group on the side of Korean unification confirmed the validity of the West German model. They were convinced that West German democracy, a strong economy, and a superior welfare system played a decisive role in German unification.<sup>15)</sup> The upshot was their call for cooperation and exchanges between the South and the North based on the socialization education.<sup>16)</sup> Kim Dae-jung shared this kind of reception on the epoch-making events of Germany. The then President Roh Tae-woo deepened his Northern Policy in this sense to some degree.

Koreans who pursued reunification centered on North Korea believing that East European countries had lessons for the Korean peninsula got a great shock. They had to realize that the reality of the really-existing socialist countries had suddenly undergone a drastic historical transformation, which for the democratic movement block had vindicated its critique of the limitations of socialism being the best political ideology to liberate mankind. In retrospect they had to swallow the bitter pill that they had adhered uncritically to the North Korean approach to reunification. The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the radical turnabout of the really-existing socialist countries in Eastern Europe afforded opportunities for the Korean democratization movement to rethink its beliefs and activities. Undoubtedly the collapse of soviet-style communism played the decisive role as the turning point in the history of the unification movement in South Korea.<sup>17)</sup>

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15) 채구묵, 「한국통일을 위한 독일통일의 교훈」, 『한국사회학』 제 30집 (겨울호, 1996), (Goo-Mook Chai, "German Lessons for Korean Unification", *Journal of Korean Sociology*, Vol. 30), pp. 841-871. p. 863.

16) Socialization education means the mutual understanding of other part's system, value and reality etc. Ibid., 864.

17) Hyun-Back Chung, "Fall of Berlin Wall, Collapse of real-existing socialist Countries and South Korean social Movement", The paper presented at the International Conference with the theme "20 Years after the Collapse of the Berlin Wall and

The conservative group, for its part, began to think about the costs of unification. Indeed, they began to worry about the economic price of unification for the South. Those who still clung to the established life under the division system still hoped to perpetuate the status quo through a calculated management of the North-South division. They also dreamed of North Korea's collapse one fine day and so of unification via absorption by the South, which they thought would magnify their vested interests. The then President Roh Tae-woo deepened his Northern Policy in this sense to some degree.

## 2. Deepening of Roh Tae-woo's Northern Policy

After the fall of Berlin Wall and German unification, Roh deepened his policy towards the North. In some way he and his government forecast the imminent collapse of the North Korea. The chance for the normalization of the interstate relations with the Soviet Union and East European countries, as well as China, became higher. The change in international climate issued forth in the Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between South and North Korea (henceforth referred to as the Basic Agreement) that was concluded on December, 13, 1991, and came into force on February 19, 1992. In this sense the Northern Policy of Roh government was very successful.

The Basic Agreement was designed to promote reconciliation and nonaggression through the work of four joint commissions: South-North economic exchange and cooperation; cultural and social exchange;

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Lessons for the Unification for Korea” hosted by Institute for Peace Studies, Korea University, September 10-11th 2009. The proceeding I of the conference, p. 20-22.

reconciliation; and military affairs. In order to promote the integrated and balanced development of the respective national economies and the welfare of the peoples in the South and the North, the normative imperative of the Basic Agreement stated that the two states should engage in economic exchanges and cooperation, including the joint development of resources and the trade of goods via intra-Korean commerce and joint ventures. Also, South and North Korea should carry out exchanges and promote cooperation in various fields such as in science and technology, education, literature and the arts, health, sports, the environment, journalism and media including newspapers, radio, television broadcasts, and printed publications.

The 1992 agreement inherited the July 4 Joint Communiqué signed two decades earlier in 1972. In particular, it reaffirmed the three basic principles of unification set forth in the earlier communiqué, namely self-reliance, peace, and democracy.

According to this agreement the South and North should recognize and respect each other's system. They should not interfere in the other's internal affairs and they should not slander or defame each other. On the security front both should refrain from any acts of sabotage or insurrection against each other. South and North Korea should together endeavor to transform the present state of armistice into a firm state of peace between the two sides, and so work concretely to switch the Military Armistice Agreement into a Peace Agreement. Above all, the South and the North had to recognize that their relationship was not a normal interstate one but rather was a special one constituted temporarily along the road towards unification.

Roh Tae-woo also declared the Non-Nuclear Korean Peninsula Peace Initiatives on November 8, 1991. The North Korea accepted this

proposal and so the Agreement on the Non-Nuclear Korean Peninsula Peace between the South and the North was concluded on December 31, 1991.

### 3. The Impacts of the fall of Berlin Wall on the North Korea as the source for the success of the Roh Tae-woo policy

Hereby we need to pay attention to the situations of the North Korea after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the really-existing socialism countries, and the unification of Germany as an important source of the success of the Northern Policy. Because, for the successful realization of Roh's North Korean policies the changed position of the North played an important role. The North Korean regime felt acutely threatened in its very existence after the Berlin Wall was dismantled and the ensuing collapse of the eastern block countries. At that time the economy of the North Korea was being worsened severely. Thus it had to seek ways to secure its existence and for that purpose time was needed. Thus the regime willingly accepted the offer from South Korea to improve inter-Korean relations. Henceforth, reunification was not the pressing goal; rather it was maintaining the status quo of the divided peninsula. Above all, the imperative was to secure the existence of the regime and to keep intact the North's social system.<sup>18)</sup>

18) Hak Soon Paik, "North Korea's Unification Policy", in: Tae-Hwan Kwak (ed.) *The Four Powers and Korean Unification Strategies*, Kyungnam University Press 1997, p. 122-123; 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 133-134 (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5); 김용현, 「북한 내부정치와 남북관계: 7·4, 남북기본합의서, 6·15 비교」, 『통일문제연구』 2004년 하반기호 (통권 제 42호), p. 285-286. (Yong-hyun Kim, "The Domestic Context of North Korea's Strategy toward South Korea: From 7·4, Joint Communique to Summit Talk 2000", *Research on Unification Affairs*, Vol. 42).

On the international front, the unification of Germany in 1990 and the establishment of diplomatic relations by South Korea with the Soviet Union 1990 and China 1992 were taken as a serious threat by the North Koreans. For its part, North Korea tried to establish diplomatic relations with Japan and the United States. In this radically altered international context, many fruitful dialogues, agreements, and exchanges between North Korea and the South came into being. At the same time North Korea began to cling to the development of nuclear weapons.<sup>19)</sup>

The North Korea became very hypersensitive about the so called absorption unification after they had observed the process of the German unification.<sup>20)</sup> North Koreans made clear that unification by "swallowing up (i.e., absorbing) the other party or by being swallowed up" could not be allowed.<sup>21)</sup>

It was in this more agreeable situation that, in September 1991, the North and the South entered the United Nations separately. For the North this confirmed that it should maintain the status quo for the purpose of its continued existence.<sup>22)</sup> This major event showed that how

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19) Hak Soon Paik, "North Korea's Unification Policy", in: Tae-Hwan Kwak (ed.) *The Four Powers and Korean Unification Strategies*, Kyungnam University Press 1997, p. 122.

20) 백학순, 「대남전략」, (세종연구소 북한연구센터 엮음), 『북한의 국가전략』, 한울 아카데미 2003, pp. 146-218, p. 183-184. (Hak Soon Paik, "Strategy towards the South Korea", *National Strategy of the North Korea*, Hanwool Academy 2003).

21) Kim Il sung, "Sinnyonsa" (New Year's Address), Rodong Sinmun, Jan. 1, 1991; Hak Soon Paik, "North Korea's Unification Policy", in: Tae-Hwan Kwak (ed.) *The Four Powers and Korean Unification Strategies*, Kyungnam University Press 1997, p. 123; 백학순, 「대남전략」, (세종연구소 북한연구센터 엮음), 『북한의 국가전략』, 한울 아카데미 2003, pp. 146-218, p. 184. (Hak Soon Paik, "Strategy towards the South Korea", *National Strategy of the North Korea*, Hanwool Academy 2003).

22) Hak Soon Paik, "North Korea's Unification Policy", in: Tae-Hwan Kwak (ed.) *The Four Powers and Korean Unification Strategies*, Kyungnam University Press 1997, p. 123.

fundamentally the North's policy towards the South had changed. Unlike East Germany, originally North Korea strictly opposed the concept of the separate entry of the North and the South into the UN because they saw this as perpetuating the division on the Korean peninsula and, according to their logic, so making unification impossible.<sup>23)</sup>

However, the Roh government was not able to pursue a unification policy of the reconciliation and cooperation it had adumbrated as it was based on the support of the anti-communist forces in the country. Roh's victory in the presidential election of 1987 was based on the anti-communist vote. So his policy orientation did not aim at real exchange and cooperation between the North and the South, but rather at overcoming the weakness of his government. Roh's administration was very uncomfortable about any efforts at exchanges and cooperation with the North carried out by civilians. Thus Roh did not permit the visits of activists and representatives of the civilian unification movements to the North. In fact, his government arrested civilians who visited the North Korea without official permission.<sup>24)</sup>

This, then, was the true countenance of the dual face of his government towards unification endeavors. It meant that Roh's Northern

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23) For example, the president of the Republic of Korea Park Chung-hee proclaimed a new concept of South-North relations on June 23, 1973, to North Korea and all the nations of the world. This 6.23 declaration adopted from Germany the idea of South Korea and North Korea entering the U.N. separately. But, the North Korea refused this proposal with the ground that it meant the permanent division. The North Korea had been clinging to the position. So, the change of their position of 1991 implied a revolutionary one. As mentioned above, Kim Dae-jung suggested already in July 13, 1972 the simultaneous association into the United Nations. Chosun-Ilbo July 14, 1972.

24) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 139-140. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).



Policy was not based on real exchanges and cooperation of the civilians between the North and South. His government worked to monopolize the unification discourse and the contacts with the North. As a core member and the successor of the military dictatorial regime, Roh Tae-woo there were definite limits on his pursuit of unification based on sincere exchanges and cooperation between the North and the South. It was natural fact that the military dictatorship found its legitimation originally in anti-communism.

The Northern Policy of Roh intended, in part, to contain North Korea through the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, East European countries, and China.<sup>25)</sup> Meanwhile, North Korea clung intransigently to the development nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union could no longer control the North Korea's nuclear aspirations after establishing diplomatic relations with South Korea.

So, in late 1992 already the North Korean nuclear issue halted progress of the Agreement.<sup>26)</sup> The North's commitment to a nuclear program caused the Northern Policy of Roh and the hitherto South-North dialogues fundamental problems. The North Korea regarded the Northern Policy of the South as a type of the absorption unification policy. They were alert.<sup>27)</sup> North Korea tried to establish dialogue and

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25) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 135. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

26) The USA unveiled the problem of the North Korean nuclear weapon issue after the signing of the Basic Agreement for the purpose of the direct involvement. 김용현, 「북한 내부정치와 남북관계: 7·4, 남북기본합의서, 6·15 비교」, 『통일문제연구』 2004년 하반기호 (통권 제 42호), p. 287. (Yong-hyun Kim, "The Domestic Context of North Korea's Strategy toward South Korea: From 7·4, Joint Communique to Summit Talk 2000", *Research on Unification Affairs*, Vol. 42).

27) 김용현, 「노태우 정권 시기의 통일론」, p. 143. (Yong-hyun Kim, "Discourse of Unification of Roh Tae-woo Regime Period", *Discourse of Unification*, Vol. 5).

diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan with the intention of isolating the South from the negotiation table and on the international stage. The Kim Young-sam government (1993-1998) inherited critically Roh's commitment to continue engaging in dialogue with North Korea and, at the same time, to isolate it on the world stage. However, it was very difficult for Kim's government to initiate inter-Korean relations because of the nukes issue with the North. The United States and Japan were partial to negotiating with North Korea directly or to applying sanctions.

#### 4. The Government of Kim Dae-jung and the Sunshine Policy

The Kim Dae-jung (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) government (1998-2003) inherited the Northern Policy deriving from Roh Tae-woo's government and so attempted to pursue real and sincere exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North.<sup>28)</sup>

Kim's policy was called the "Sunshine Policy." Kim stressed that the Basic Agreement between the South and the North in the period of Roh Tae-woo had to be realized as the basis of the Sunshine Policy.<sup>29)</sup> In his

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28) Lim Dong-won played a decisive role for the development of the Northern Policy of Roh Tae-woo. At that time he took the various concepts of Kim Dae-jung on unification for the Northern Policy. Afterwards Lim Dong-won became the aide of Kim Dae-jung. He played a decisive role for the development and executing the Sunshine Policy of Kim Dae-jung. So in fact the Northern Policy and the sunshine Policy could possess the common features. However, two governments have different characters: the one as a successor of military dictator regime, the other as one of main stream of democracy movement. 백학순, 「김대중정부와 노무현정부의 대북정책 비교」, 『세종정책연구』 2009년 제 5권 1호, p. 307-308. (Hak Soon Paik, "The Comparison of the North Korean Policy between the Kim Dae-jung Government and the Roh Mu-hyun Government", *Sejong Policy Research*, Vol 5-1).

29) 백학순, 「김대중정부와 노무현정부의 대북정책 비교」, 『세종정책연구』 2009년 제 5권 1호, p. 308. (Hak Soon Paik, "The Comparison of the North Korean Policy between the Kim

policy we can trace the similarities and the common features with the West German *Ostpolitik* of Willy Brandt regarding both motivation and performance. Kim developed his own ideas and policies on unification and thereby he got often inspirations from the developments of intra-German relations. For Kim the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification confirmed the effectiveness of the West German *Ostpolitik*. Indeed, Kim saw the reason for the fall of the Berlin Wall mainly in the success of *Ostpolitik*. He pointed out that West Germany possessed democracy, a strong economy, and an advanced welfare system, and had contributed to the reform of the former socialist East.

Kim tried to secure the disablement of the North Korean nuclear facilities in exchange for specific compensations whilst guaranteeing the continued existence of the North's system. Although he was deeply impressed by the West German *Ostpolitik* and the momentous fact of German unification, he refused to envisage quick unification through absorption of the North by the South. He stressed that his 'softly' approach could also reduce the costs of the unification. He observed that North Korea became very hypersensitive against the absorption unification of German style after the fall of Berlin Wall. Kim underlined his refusal of absorption unification even in his inaugural address for Presidency of 1998.<sup>30)</sup> The Joint Communiqué of June 15, 2000, between

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Dae-jung Government and the Roh Mu-hyun Government", *Seijong Policy Research*, Vol 5-1).

30) Kim Dae-jung realized the problematic of the absorption unification of Germany very keenly. Hereby he confirmed the validity of his 'three stages unification' for Korea. He emphasized his will to oppose the absorption unification. He took the main concern of the North Korea after the unification Germany into account. 통일부, 『국민의 정부 5년: 평화와 협력의 실천』, pp. 10-11 (Unification Ministry, *5 Years of People's Government: Practicing and Executing of Peace and Cooperation*); 백학순, 「김대중정부와 노무현정부의 대북정책 비교」 p. 307. (Hak Soon Paik, "The Comparison of the North

the South and the North had agreed that the Korean peninsula would pursue its unique way of a gradual, step-by-step unification process. He stressed that Korea has to envisage and realize the unification way corresponding to Korea's different reality from that of Germany. That was his way of reflection on the fall of Berlin Wall and the German unification.

Significantly, the unification movement of citizens through exchanges and cooperation converged with the unification policy of Kim Dae-jung, namely his Sunshine Policy. He encouraged the citizens of South Korea with their unbridled passion, initiative, and creativity to make full use of any possibilities for participation. Lamenting that a large-scale creative civic participation had not been directed towards the goal of reunification, he emphasized the need to cultivate "participatory reunification." In this changed political atmosphere those citizen groups who had identified their unification policy with the North rapidly lost their influence. But anti-communism in South Korea had been strong in comparison to West Germany, because Korea had experienced the civil war in 1950-53. Kim Dae-jung regarded the reducing of anti-communist sentiments and the promotion of democracy as the most salient factors which most directly and powerfully could provide favorable

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Korean Policy between the Kim Dae-jung Government and the Roh Mu-hyun Government", *Seijong Policy Research*, Vol 5-1). Kim Dae-jung pointed out the problematic of the absorption unification in the talk with Willy Brandt of 1991 and Brandt agreed with the position of Kim. Kim Dae-jung, "Willy Brandt and Me, *Ostpolitik* and Sunshine Policy", Key-note Lecture of the International Conference with the theme "The Vision of an East Asian Community and the Tasks of Korean Unification viewed from the Experiences of the European Integration and German Division and Unification" hosted by Institute of History and Culture of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies on May 20-23, 2009.

circumstances for the development of an effective unification movement.

On the wider historical stage, Kim realized sufficiently that German unification has been possible in the context of the much wider European integration. Explained already, he assessed the meaning of the Helsinki Process and system for Korean question very positively. He underscored that Korean unification should be pursued in the context of the cooperation of East Asian countries.<sup>31)</sup>

Kim Dae-jung's lot, as is well known, is that he was always persecuted by the successive military regimes in South Korea in the name of anti-communism. He was frequently accused of being a card-carrying communist. In this context, the fact that Kim was elected as president and set about acting concretely on his Sunshine Policy implied that the anti-communism had weakened in the South. Indeed, this was possible mostly owing to the democratization since 1987 and the fall of Berlin Wall 1989, the collapse of communism in the eastern block countries, and the unification of Germany.

The fundamental difference of the unification policies of Roh Tae-woo and Kim Dae-jung lay in Kim's emphasis of participatory unification movement and opposing of the absorption unification way. Roh, in contrast, had aimed to pressurize North Korea through his Northern

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31) 임동원, 『피스메이커: 남북관계와 북핵문제 20년』, 중앙 books 2008, pp. 334-335. (Dong-won Lim, *Peacemaker: The South-North Relations and the 20 Years of the North Korean Nuclear Weapon Issue*, Joongang Books 2008); 백학순, 「김대중정부와 노무현정부의 대북정책 비교」, 『세종정책연구』 2009년 제 5권 1호, p. 307. (Hak Soon Paik, "The Comparison of the North Korean Policy between the Kim Dae-jung Government and the Roh Mu-hyun Government", *Seijong Policy Research*, Vol 5-1). Nowadays (2009-2010) the vision of the East Asian integration with the reflection of European Integration is very popular theme in Korea and the whole East Asia. The new Japanese minister Hatoyama proposed officially to establish East Asian Community. Hereby I want to make a footnote that we need to pay attention to the question: what kind of role does the experience of European Integration play outside Europe?

policy, which had been premised on the exclusion of the citizens' movement for unification. Roh's policy was designed to absorb the North.

Bringing the picture up to date in a telescoped way, the unification policy of the Roh Mu-hyun government (2003-2008) (the Joint Communiqué of October 4, 2007, between the South and the North) can be understood as extending line of the Kim Dae-jung (the Joint Communiqué of June 15, 2000, between the South and the North).<sup>32)</sup>

#### IV. Conclusions

The fall of Berlin Wall, the collapse of eastern block, and unification of Germany contributed to reducing the anti-communism and strengthening of democracy and unification movement in South Korea, meanwhile making North Korea feel extremely threatened and clinging to maintaining status quo and developing nuclear weapons. The reaction of North Korea to the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification we should note that the Basic Agreement between the South and the North and the Agreement on the Non-Nuclear Korean Peninsula Peace came into being because North Korea, which changed its policy from unification to maintaining the status quo, accepted the proposals of Roh.

**In the South impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification** was to help the success of the North Korean policy of the

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32) On the common points and differences of the unification policies between the two governments, see 백학순, 「김대중정부와 노무현정부의 대북정책 비교」, 『세종정책연구』 2009년 제 5권 1호, pp. 277-354.

Roh Tae-woo government. However, Roh aimed to monopolize the unification policy for the benefit of his own regime. He either excluded or controlled the citizens' unification movement. In practice his policy was not realized in true exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North, even though his "Northern Policy" had the West German *Ostpolitik* as its reference. But Roh's Northern Policy aimed to put pressure on North Korea through the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union, China, and other eastern block countries.

For the most part Kim Dae-jung inherited the Northern Policy of Roh. However, Kim emphasized civil participation in the unification movement and the need to try to engage the North in constructive dialogue. He stressed that the two Koreas must avoid any rapid moves towards unification absorbed, as he was, with the differences between German and Korean situations.

**Finally the author of this paper stresses that** it is against these changing policy orientations of successive presidential administrations in South Korea and the continuing hard line regime in the North that the value of the various communiqués should be understood: the July 4 Joint Communiqué of 1972 to the Basic Agreement of 1991; the Declaration for Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula of 1992; the June 15 South-North Joint Declaration of 2000; and the October 4 Declaration of 2008. Among these the last four Joint Communiqués were influenced by the historic events of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification directly and indirectly.

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Chosun-Ilbo, July 14. 1972

<국문초록>

## 베를린 장벽의 붕괴와 독일통일이 한국의 통일과제에 미친 영향. - 노태우의 북방정책과 김대중의 햇볕정책에 초점을 맞추어 -

노명환

1989년 11월 8일 베를린 장벽이 붕괴되었다. 많은 동독인들이 동독을 탈출하여 서독으로 넘어갔다. 동독에서는 혁명이 이루어지고 동독체제가 무너지고 1990년 10월 3일 동독이 서독에 흡수됨으로써 독일통일이 달성되었다. 다른 사회주의 국가들도 붕괴되었다. 이러한 모습이 영상 전파를 타고 한국인들에게 전해졌다. 본 논문에서 이러한 사건들이 분단국인 한국에 어떠한 영향을 미쳤는가를 살펴보았다.

베를린 장벽의 붕괴와 독일통일은 한국인들에게 큰 충격을 주었다. 무엇보다도 평화적으로 분단의 장벽이 무너지고 통일이 되는 과정은 놀라운 현실이었다.

그런데 지금까지 견지하던 '감상적' 차원의 통일회구를 넘어서서 통일과정의 현실적인 고통을 또한 인식해야 했다. 대량 실업문제와 엄청난 통일비용 그리고 그에 따른 사회적 동요가 그것이었다. 세계적 강국이고 민주주의 선진국인 서독이 동독을 흡수했을 때 저 정도인데 남한이 과연 과연 붕괴되는 북한을 무탈하게 흡수할 수 있을까 하는 의구심을 깊게 갖게 되었다. 그러나 동시에 독일의 이 사건들은 남한 사람들에게 평화통일이 가능하다고 하는 실제의 상을 심어 주었다.

독일에서 이루어진 이 사건들이 남한 사람들에게 영향을 미치는 방식은 양국 모두 분단된 경험을 공유하고 서독과 남한이 역사적으로 발전시켜 온 관계 양상에 기초하여 결정되었다.

베를린 장벽의 붕괴는 후속으로 일어난 동유럽 현실 사회주의권의 붕괴와 독일통일로 이어졌다. 독일통일은 동독이 서독에 흡수되는 방식으로 이루어졌다. 이 사건들은 남한의 반공의식을 완화시키는데 크게 기여하였다. 이러한 반공의식의 약화는

1987년 이후의 민주화를 더욱 심화시키는데 기여하였으며 통일운동을 확산시켰다.

1988년부터 추진된 노태우 정권의 북방정책은 더욱 탄력을 받게 되었다. 서독의 동방정책을 모델로 한 북방정책은 북한과 교류와 협력을 강조하고 소련과 중국 그리고 동유럽 공산국가들과의 관계개선을 표방했는데 큰 성과를 거두었다. 그런데 이렇게 북방정책이 큰 성과를 거둔 데는 부분적으로 베를린 장벽 붕괴, 동유럽 현실 사회주의 몰락, 서독에 의한 동독의 흡수 통일 이후 체제의 위협을 느낀 북한이 남한에 대한 정책을 변화시킨 데서 그 큰 원인이 있었다. 위의 사건들 이후 북한은 통일정책을 포기하고 분단된 현실 유지 쪽으로 정책의 방향을 선회하였다. 북한은 체제 안정을 꾀하기 위해 시간을 벌어야 할 필요가 있었으며 미국과 일본과 수교를 맺기 위해 남북 관계를 극적으로 개선할 필요가 있었다.

노태우 정부의 북방정책은 남한의 대북정책 역사에서 획기적인 것이었다. 그러나 북방정책을 실시하면서 시민들의 교류와 협력의 길을 차단하고 대북 대화 통로를 독점하는 한계를 드러냈다. 그의 통일정책은 명백하게 남한에 의한 북한의 흡수를 추구하는 것으로 나타났다.

김대중 정부의 햇볕정책은 노태우 정부의 북방정책과 많은 면에서 유사성을 보인다. 이 유사성은 오랜 동안 통일정책 개발에 헌신해 온 김대중의 통일정책 제안들이 북방정책에 수용되었기 때문이라고 보아야 할 것이다. 김대중 정부는 북방정책의 성과들, 특히 남북기본합의서 같은 합의 내용들을 적극 계승하였다. 그러나 김대중 정부는 시민들의 적극적인 참여를 권장하고 민주주의 신장을 통일정책 실현의 주춧돌로 본 점에서 그리고 흡수통일 반대를 명확히 천명함으로써 노태우 정부와 근본적인 차이점을 나타냈다고 할 수 있다. 김대중은 베를린 장벽 붕괴와 독일통일 과정에서 서독 동방정책의 적실성을 확인하였으며 북한이 동독의 몰락과 흡수통일 방식에 대해 갖는 공포감을 냉철하게 인식하였다.

주제어: 베를린 장벽, 독일통일, 현실 사회주의 붕괴, 북방정책, 햇볕정책

<Abstract>

## The Impacts of the “*Berliner Mauerfall*” and the Unification of Germany for the Tasks of Korean Unification

- Focused on the Northern Policy of Roh Tae-woo and the Sunshine Policy of Kim Dae-jung -

Noh, Meung-Hoan

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the ensuing collapse of the eastern block in 1989-91, and the unification of Germany in October 1990 all had a significant impact on North and South Korea, albeit in different ways.

For South Koreans the *event* of the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized also the collapse of apparently real-existing socialism. Over the long-term view it symbolized positively the unification of Germany too.

These world historical – not only European – changes made Koreans on either side of the divided peninsula very conscious of the challenging task of attempting the unification of their divided country.

**In the South impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification** was to help the success of the North Korean policy of the Roh Tae-woo government. However, Roh aimed to monopolize the unification policy for the benefit of his own regime. He either excluded or controlled the citizens’ unification movement. In practice his policy was not realized in true exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North, even though his “Northern Policy” had the West German

*Ostpolitik* as its reference. But Roh's Northern Policy aimed to put pressure on North Korea through the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union, China, and other eastern block countries.

For the most part Kim Dae-jung inherited the Northern Policy of Roh. However, Kim emphasized civil participation in the unification movement and the need to try to engage the North in constructive dialogue. He stressed that the two Koreas must avoid any rapid moves towards unification absorbed, as he was, with the differences between German and Korean situations.

Key Words: Berlin Wall, German Unification, Collapse of Really-existing Socialism, Northern Policy, Sunshine Policy

투고일 : 2010년 1. 25 / 심사일 : 2010년 2. 1 ~ 2. 15 / 게재확정일 : 2010년 2. 20

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