South Korean Society and Multicultural Citizenship

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of South Korea's economic growth, the collapse of socialist blocs, and the rise of globalization, foreign workers and overseas Koreans are migrating to South Korea in large numbers, creating large settlements of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. As international marriages account for 12 percent of all marriages in South Korea, the myth of South Koreans' ethnic and cultural homogeneity is crumbling. In addition, the possible huge influx of North Koreans to the South could send shockwaves of unprecedented magnitude through South Korean society in the future.

In recognition of the increasing ethnic and cultural diversity in South Korean society, this paper aims to address how South Korean society should prepare itself in terms of ideology, institutions, and civil consciousness in order to utilize its growing plurality as a driving force for social development. Toward this end, this paper reviews the discussions over multicultural citizenship and assesses its applicability to South Korean society. A review of the ideology, principles, institution, civil consciousness, and virtues of multicultural citizenship developed in other countries such as the United States, Canada, and France reveals huge implications for dealing with the potential problems arising from the increase of cultural and ethnic diversity in South Korea.

Keywords: South Korea, multicultural citizenship, group-differentiated citizenship, postmodern citizenship, global citizenship, transnational citizenship, identity politics, minority rights

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Introduction

Cultural and ethnic diversity has been increasing rapidly in South
Korean society, as evidenced by the creation of conspicuous settle-
ments of various ethnic groups since 1990. This has occurred as
workers of foreign nationalities and ethnic South Koreans living in
former socialist countries migrate to South Korea in large numbers in
the midst of South Korea's economic growth, the collapse of social-
ism, and globalization.[1] Of special note is the growing number of for-
eigners who try to settle in South Korea, which include immigrants
via marriage and foreigners with permanent resident status who have
remained in South Korea for an extended period of time. Another
aspect that South Korean society must consider in relation to multi-
cultural citizenship[2] is a possible large-scale inflow of North Koreans
in the context of improving inter-Korean relations.

In recognizing the speedy increase of foreign immigrants coming
to South Korea in the age of globalization and witnessing how South
Korean society is coming a step closer to a peaceful reunification
amid thawing relations between North Korea and the United States
and between the South and the North, I believe that South Korea
needs to come up with a vision for a new form of polity that is toler-
ant of cultural diversity.[3] To be prepared for this change, South Kore-

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1. According to Giddens (1993), "globalization" is a general term for growing interde-
pendence in the international community. Globalization is not something new, but
nowadays it is progressing at a very rapid pace and in consequence, social, politi-
cal and economic linkages beyond national borders condition the life of humanity
across the world.

2. The term "multicultural citizenship" has different meanings in different countries.
In Canada and Australia this term refers only to the citizenship accommodating
immigrant groups, not for other ethnic groups like aboriginals. In the United
States, however, it often refers to all forms of group-differentiated citizenship not
only for ethnic groups but also for women, gays and lesbians, the handicapped,
and so on (Kymlicka 2002). In this paper, avoiding potential misleading, I use
"multicultural citizenship" to refer only to citizenship for ethnic groups (either
aboriginal or migrant). Yet I deal with other forms of group-differentiated citizen-
ship in discussing multicultural citizenship.

3. The possible forms of the reunification diverse from peaceful human exchange,

an society should take a close look at multicultural citizenship—its principles and institutions, as well as the civil consciousness that surrounds it—that has developed in countries that experienced multiculturalism ahead of South Korea and adopted multicultural citizenship as a means to resolve various problems arising from multiculturalism, for example, the United States, Canada, Australia, and several Western European countries. Multicultural citizenship has contributed to the social integration of socioeconomic and cultural minorities by broadening the scope of citizenship. Therefore, it may be applied to the issue of extending the rights and participation of not only racial and ethnic minorities but also social minorities of various types, such as women, the handicapped, gays and lesbians, non-regular workers, and unemployed people. The concept of multicultural citizenship has many implications for the design of a transnational peace community in East Asia, in the sense that it surpasses the framework of a nation-state pursuing cultural uniformity.[4] In my view, the review and adoption of the principles and institutions of multicultural citizenship and civic virtues suitable for multicultural society may help South Korean society to eventually make a qualitative take-off. In this context, this paper attempts to examine the concept, history, principle, institution, and requisite civic virtues of multicultural citizenship and to contemplate the implications for South Korean society.

The Concept and the Significance of Citizenship

It is very difficult to translate citizenship in the languages of countries that use Chinese characters, such as South Korea, China, Japan, and Taiwan. This is because the term incorporates two different

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market integration, federal reunification, to the annexation of North Korea by the South, all of which are enabling free human exchange between North and South Korea.

4. See Choe (2007) for a detailed discussion on researches on citizenship and its relationship with local community.

meanings—citizenship as legal status and citizenship as desirable activity, as Kymlicka and Norman (1995, 284) point out—and such a term entailing both meanings does not exist in the Chinese-character cultural sphere. South Korean scholars translate citizenship as either *simingwon* (literally citizen's rights) or *siminseong* (citizenhood)."[5] In this paper, I use citizenship as a concept that refers to both, defining it as "the status which a particular state (or a political community equal to that) endows to its members (citizens), rights and duties associated with it, and consciousness and activity of such members." According to this definition, citizenship has various facets as follows:

1. "Citizenship as legal status":
   a) Nationality, or membership in a specific country
   b) Rights and duties of citizens holding that nationality; and

2. "Citizenship as identity and desirable activity"
   a) Public ethics and virtues of citizens
   b) Participation of citizens in political community activity (Choe 2006; Joppke 1999; Klusmeyer 2001; Kymlicka and Norman 1995; Turner 1993)

In *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* (1964), a classic work in the study of citizenship, T. H. Marshall argued that in England citizenship developed in quantity and quality through class conflicts, and during the process, it displayed potential as a core institution for resolving social conflict. Although his study focused on the role played by the working class, it noted that citizenship was a key sociopolitical institution adopted by liberalist modern society with a view to constructively absorbing conflicts. This implies that citizenship can make a great contribution by responding to the demands of diverse groups and preventing potential confrontation in modern pluralist society. After Marshall's study, however, the topic of citizen-

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5. In South Korea, most scholars translate citizenship into *simingwon* (citizen's rights), while Seo (1996), Kwak (2004) and Kim-Hong (2005) use the term *siminseong* (citizenhood) instead of *simingwon*.

ship failed to draw the attention of socialists and political scientists for about thirty years until the 1990s when it was revisited as a noteworthy subject. Then, immediately, it became one of the most popular research topics in political sciences, sociology, and other related disciplines, and garnered great academic achievements (Kymlicka 2002, ix). In the background of this change lay the emergence of two contradictory but identical phenomena in real life. On the one hand, there has been an unprecedented expansion of cultural diversity in nation-states due to globalization and international migration, and the formation of the European Union, a transnational political community transcending the ideal of nation-state as the guardian of national culture. Advanced democratic societies under this transformation are faced with the problem of fostering democracy and human rights and accepting cultural diversity concurrently. On the other hand, countries that remained unified for several decades have undergone ethnic conflicts of various forms—the most extreme being "ethnic cleansing"—since the end of the Cold War, and have been divided into several independent states. These examples show that cultural conflicts within a nation-state can bring a catastrophe even in the void of external threats. The two conflicting/contradictory phenomena put forth a common agenda, that is, a solid establishment of the ideology, institution, and political culture that would promote tolerance of cultural diversity. As a means to achieve this, scholars retrieved the concept of citizenship from storage, and breathed new life into it. Now, let us review the history of citizenship.

The Historical Development of Citizenship

Premodern Citizenship[6]

What we are interested in is modern citizenship, but understanding

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6. Pearson (1998) identifies five historical forms of citizenship in the contexts of "Greece, the Roman Republic and Empire, cities in the Middle Age and the Renaissance, nation-states, and global cities [world cities]." According to him, the first

ancient Greek citizenship will help us understand the characteristics of modern citizenship better. Aristotle deals with premodern citizenship based on Greek experience in Chapters 1-5, Volume 3 of *Politics* (1996). He defines a citizen as "one who shares in the administration of justice and in offices" (Aristotle 1996, 92). Because a polity depends on citizens, he excludes from the category of citizens those who are incapable of conducting public offices, such as slaves and women. To him, citizenship is the "ability to rule" (govern) and the "ability to obey," which is attained by participating in organized military activities, and thus, it is a special status and right granted only to men of those abilities.[7] In this regard, Greek citizenship is markedly different from the universal citizenship of modern times.[8]

Although Aristotle's notion of particularistic citizenship is unacceptable to modern citizenship, his view presents three points which are helpful in understanding the issue of today's citizenship. The first is that the true criterion for distinguishing citizens from non-citizens is the ability to "share in the privilege to govern." Paradoxically, this provided the foundation for universalistic citizenship, in which those who have such ability cannot be discriminated against. Secondly, Aristotle presents the view that an analysis of citizenship must address civic virtues as well as the institution by saying that the presence of a number of citizens who share in the privilege to rule is critical to democracy. This view helps us understand why democracy and human rights are not realized in countries where citizen's rights are

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three are premodern forms of citizenship. Here, my focus is on Greek citizenship, which is a classic form of particularistic citizenship.

7. Refer to Pocock (1998) for the relationship of Greek citizenship and military service. Military service and citizenship were closely related even in modern states. Modern states needed a strong army to defend sovereignty and citizens of sovereign awareness were indispensable to the military. Moreover, the army operated as an institution cultivating citizens, or modern subjects (Ikegami 1996; Van Gunsteren 1998; Weber 1976). In this context, women were justifiably excluded from citizenship as they had no military duty in the early modern period.

8. Modern citizenship excluded the working class and women initially. This was a violation of the modern principles of universality and equality and faded out gradually in history. In this regard, the model of modern citizenship was universalistic (Turner 1997).

guaranteed institutionally based on the constitution. The third one is that each citizen must help their fellow citizens acquire civic virtues in order to prevent the abuse of power by individuals or groups and enjoy civil rights by maintaining the soundness of polity. Citizens must help each other to be civilized by fully utilizing opportunities of education and high-quality life. This has a more significant meaning in a modern state where citizenship is offered to all adult men and women based on universalism.

Modern Citizenship

In Europe, when the term citizen (burger, bourgeois) first came into use, it referred to a "city dweller." Gradually, its meaning changed to "a member of the bourgeoisie or state" (Smith 2002). In Korean, too, the original meaning of citizen was a city dweller; with the growth of capitalism, it came to refer to the bourgeoisie class which emerged with capitalist development. Nowadays, however, it is widely used to signify "a person as a modern sovereign subject," or "a member of a modern state." In China and North Korea, the term "public person" is used instead of citizen of the latter usage. This shows that the meaning of citizen has changed and developed according to different historical contexts. Also, the concept of citizenship, which is derived from the term citizen, is closely related with the growth of modern cities, centers of capitalist economy, and the emergence of the capitalist class. Modern citizenship developed on the presupposition of a firm establishment of equality and universalism from the collapse of hierarchical social structures and the creation of horizontal human relations. The new social system and interpersonal relations obtained a dominant position as the growth of market and exchange relations undermined particularistic regulations of people. The rich, cultivated, and city-dwelling bourgeoisie which emerged with capitalism retrieved from Christianity—the doctrinal basis for the justification of feudal class systems—Abraham's universalist conception that all humans are equal before God and the notion of a contract, which cemented people around God, and developed the principle and insti-

tutions of modern citizenship grounded on universality and the social contract (Turner 1997; Pearson 1998).

The French Revolution played an important role in the development of the principle of citizenship, despite its various limitations. First, the French Revolution realized abstract human rights in the form of national citizenship. Although the notion of inalienable rights (i.e. the notion that every person is born with rights bestowed by heaven) existed before the revolution, human rights had never been guaranteed by heaven or god. Now human rights were manifested in the form of citizenship guaranteed by the state. *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*, which was proclaimed as the result of the French Revolution, affirmed human rights in the form of citizenship of the French people. Secondly, citizenship came to take solid roots based on the idea that "humans are equal" after the revolution, and it was connected with the notion of universal community grounded on the principle of fraternity in society. As a consequence, the French Revolution gave birth to universal citizenship. Thirdly, universal citizenship gradually eradicated particularism and connections, in which people were defined and treated in accordance with their family background and regional origin, and generated individualism whose vanguard was to admire legal men and women based on universalism. Alsacean Germans who took part in the French Revolution out of sympathy for the principles of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" rejected ethnocultural particularity from the universalist perspective and decided to become French. Fourthly, the French Revolution associated citizenship with the pursuit of political emancipation, with even Jews obtaining political freedom and citizenship (Turner 1997).

Despite all this, however, as Balibar points out, the citizenship secured by the French Revolution had many inherent contradictions. First of all, the French Revolution pitted the ideal of open community founded on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity against national citizenship. Although the revolution replaced the particularistic social principle of treating people based on their ascriptive traits, such as family, region, or skin color, with a universalistic one focus-

ing on their voluntaristic traits, the open community of France was fixed as a nation-state defined by culture, language, and blood, while human rights were gradually regulated within the bounds of "national citizenship" after the revolution. As a result, children of French citizens obtained citizen status irrespective of their civic virtues, which meant that citizenship emergent in the name of universalism incorporated particularism as an important part of the principle, instead of shaking it off completely. Although the citizenship certified by the French Revolution showed that liberty and equality could coexist with fraternity, it could not prevent social inequality engendered from individual differences in wealth and ability, as property rights gained in importance after the coup of 9 Thermidor in 1794 (Balibar 1994). This revealed the contradiction of capitalism and citizenship. Capitalism strengthened individualism and universalism as well as politically equal citizenship, but it also produced great economic inequality. People were unequal not only in their position in market, workplace, and income but also in social status, educational opportunities, and political power. In this condition, citizenship, which could only develop through the securing of equality among citizens and participation by equal citizens, was inevitably subject to serious limitations and threats. In addition, because the citizenship endorsed by the French Revolution equated civic virtues with male virtues, it could not prevent gender inequality resulting from physical and cultural differences between men and women (Turner 1997). This, in turn, encouraged social minorities—including the working class, women, the handicapped, and immigrants—to try to expand citizenship to tolerate differences in sex, body, talent, and culture through political action, and economic, and social resistance.

Marshall's study (1964) presents a case of how the struggle of social minorities expanded citizenship, particularly, how the working class contributed to the development of citizenship in England. According to him, the contents of citizenship in England developed through three historical periods. Citizenship only meant civil rights in the eighteenth century. Then, during the nineteenth century, it was extended to political rights. Finally, citizenship of the twentieth cen-

tury incorporated social rights. Particularly, the extension of social rights in the twentieth century produced a considerable change to its basic principles. Until the nineteenth century, citizenship was confined to ensuring that citizens as individuals engage in free competition, and that capable citizens emerge from that competition, to monopolize political and economic power. Then, it evolved to respond to the demands of citizens situated in unequal social relations during the twentieth century. While citizenship unquestioningly endorsed individualism and universalism during the nineteenth century, it introduced some policies surpassing them, due to the demands of reality, beginning in the mid-twentieth century. The individualist-universalist idea of citizenship developed through oppositions against privileged classes and played a progressive role in history by prohibiting discrimination based on class, region, race, and sex. In the mid-twentieth century, however, people discovered that citizenship is problematic as it forces social minorities to accept disadvantages (Young 1998). Policies of individualist-universalist citizenship changed to some extent in response to working-class demands, one example being the introduction of social rights, but a fundamental challenge to it was left out as a future task.

Multicultural Citizenship and Global Citizenship for Postmodern Citizenship

Following in the footsteps of the working class who thought they were excluded from citizenship even after the guarantee of basic rights and provision of voting rights to all adult men and women based on universalism, social minorities such as women, immigrants, and indigenous people engaged in political and ideological struggle to expand the scope of citizenship to include them. This led to the development of group-differentiated citizenship that transcended individualist-universalist citizenship. According to Van Gunsteren (1998), this new form of citizenship regards citizens not as individuals who are calculative of personal interests, but as actors in competi-

tion with each other, having different economic and cultural backgrounds and a sense of responsibility for political community.

In particular, multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka 1995) and feminist citizenship (Jones 1998; Young 1998) formed the two axes of the theory and practice of group-differentiated citizenship. In addition, global citizenship was actively explored and studied, with the realization of transnational citizenship via the creation of the European Union and the acceleration of globalization (Baubock 1995; Jacobson 1997). Discourse on global citizenship and research of group-differentiated citizenship developed mutually. Global citizenship adopted much research on group-differentiated citizenship during its development, as it had to surpass cultural differences. In contrast, as transnational institutions were created and the seeds of global citizenship emerged from the realization of transnational citizenship via the formation of the European Union and the progress of globalization, multicultural citizenship and group-differentiated citizenship were recognized not as exceptional forms of citizenship but as universal models for future citizenship.[9] Therefore, group-differentiated citizenship garnered even more attention and support from researchers. Below, I discuss the actual demands that stimulated the development of research related to group-differentiated citizenship and global citizenship and their outcomes.

Social Inequality and Group-differentiated Citizenship

As mentioned previously, citizenship is both a system of defining the relationship between the state and citizenry, and the public activity of citizens. Thus, the growth of citizenship is an indicator of how free and active citizens are in a given country. Humanity has developed many different forms of citizenship for over two centuries since the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. Initially, citizenship began in the form of guaranteeing basic human rights

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9. See Kriesberg (1997), Chatfield (1997), and Smith (1997) for discussions on the growth and relationship of transnational institutions and global civil societies.

such as equality before the law, voting rights, and freedom of expression. Then, it developed as a core institution to eradicate social inequality—to which social minorities such as women, the working class, the handicapped, ethnic minorities, and gays and lesbians are subjected—and incorporate them into state and polity (Walzer 1983). As I mentioned before, the effort to reduce and eradicate social inequality by expanding citizenship helped broaden social rights and introduce affirmative action. Individualists criticize affirmative action as violating the universalism of modern citizenship, producing cross-discrimination, and weakening equal rights. They also assert that the affirmative action separates social minorities from the state by reinforcing their collective consciousness instead of promoting integration. But group-differentiated citizenship does not mean reverting to attaching importance to one's private connections as in premodern times; instead, it helps realize the universal values of "freedom and equality" beyond individualistic universalism. While it reinforces collective awareness and discloses the gaps that result from inequality in the short term, it contributes to social integration by reducing unfair inequalities in the longer term (Kymlicka 2002; Eller 1997; Young 1998).

Ethnic Strife and Multicultural Citizenship

After the dismantling of socialism in Eastern Europe, people who had lived next to each other as citizens in a nation for several decades became divided over ethnic conflicts and began slaughtering each other. Western society, which was then marching towards the European Union, confirmed the dangers of ethnic strife, and extensive studies were conducted on the relationship of national identity and nation-state. This was followed by empirical research on the roles and limitations of citizenship in forming a sense of national identity (Kymlicka 2002; Brubaker 1992; Joppke 1995). The studies revealed modern citizenship was a powerful tool of nation-building. However, modern citizenship, which was negligent of ethnic minorities, could not control ethnic strife in that it let ethnic minorities feel alienated,

frustrated, and angry. A new form of citizenship that was more sensitive to and tolerant of ethnic minorities' demands was needed in countries with ethnic diversity. By necessity, multicultural citizenship emerged in the 1990s (Eller 1997; Kymlicka 1995, 2004).

Multicultural citizenship as ethnic minority rights includes three main components: (1) self-government rights, (2) multiethnic rights, and (3) special representation rights. Self-governing rights grant ethnic minorities some form of political autonomy or territorial jurisdiction, in order to ensure full and free development of their cultures and the best interests of those minorities. Multiethnic rights help ethnic minorities express their cultural particularity and pride without risking their success in the economic and political institutions of the dominant society. Special representation rights compensate ethnic minorities for political under-representation or systemic disadvantage. For example, ethnic minorities by necessity have a certain number of seats in legislature in some countries (Kymlicka 1995, 26-33).

Globalization and Global Citizenship

Globalization and the increase in international migration thereof brought chaos to national citizenship. Globalization is blurring the traditional boundaries of nation-states in many places around the world, including Europe. Dual citizenship holders are growing in number and the human rights issues of foreign workers and permanent residents are being raised. With the creation of international or transnational institutions and NGOs and the enactment of international human rights norms, citizenship, which used to be a domestic issue, has become a transnational one. Witnessing the growth of citizenship that transcends national boundaries, people have tried to realize global citizenship by promoting this trend (Jacobson 1997; Joppke 1998, 1999).

The three forms of citizenship under development may be termed postmodern citizenship in the sense that they entail elements that lie beyond the confines of modern citizenship. First, modern citizenship was a citizenship of the nation-state; thus, it was a closed

form of citizenship given only to certain kinds of people based on particularism, for example, *jus sangunis* and *jus soli*. Meanwhile, global citizenship is a citizenship of open community, which is bestowed according to the universal principles of humanity and civic virtues. It transcends the closedness of modern citizenship and the limitations of particularism. Secondly, multicultural citizenship is postmodern in the sense that it overcomes particularism, or national culture, which is embedded in modern citizenship. Lastly, group-differentiated citizenship goes beyond formalism in the universalism of modern citizenship. The new form of citizenship does not try to dump the principles of universal freedom and equality and return to a premodern emphasis on personal connections or particularism. It is postmodern in that it rectifies modern citizenship to realize the values of "freedom, equality, and life" on a universal scale, by being more considerate of minorities who had been excluded from modern citizenship based on formal universalism.[10]

South Korean Society and Multicultural Citizenship

In this section, I would like to discuss the implications of the discourse on citizenship developed in the United States and Western Europe for South Korean society. In the previous section, I examined the notion of multicultural citizenship in the context of the formation of postmodern citizenship. Here, I give focus to multicultural citizen-

10. See Kymlicka (2002) on how the concept of justice developed by Rawls (1971, 1998) and Walzer (1983) adopts modernity and advances it, and on the proximity of group-differentiated citizenship and their concept of justice.

11. As mentioned above, multicultural citizenship is often treated as part of group-differentiated citizenship due to its direct implications for economic inequality and gender discrimination. Shin Kwang-Yeong (2005) addresses worsening inequality in South Korea after the economic crisis of 1997, while Kwon Seon-mu (2004) deals with the relationship of economic inequality and educational inequality. I would like to point out that multicultural citizenship is called for to solve social and educational inequality, which is deepening in South Korea nowadays.

ship in explaining its implications.[11] There are three broad issues in South Korean society to which the Western conception of multicultural citizenship may be applied.

Long-term Resident Foreigners and Citizenship

Achieving rapid economic development from 1961 to 1990, South Korea became the world's ninth largest economy at the beginning of the 1990s. Since 1987, the nation has experienced a large inflow of foreigners. According to a press release from the Ministry of Justice, the number of foreign residents reached 1,000,254 as of August 24, 2007, breaking the one million mark. Of that number, 724,967 people stayed more than 90 days, establishing long-term residency (Ministry of Justice 2007). In 1995, there were only 110,028 long-term resident aliens in South Korea, accounting for a mere 0.24% of the population on the resident registry. The number grew almost seven times in a 12-year period, reaching 1.48% of 49.1 million persons on the resident registration file. Although the percentage of long-term residents among the population remains very low, it is growing at a dramatic pace. Immigration of people is different from import of merchandise in that they bring their own cultures with them and create families in the host country. Plus, above all, they are human beings whose cultures and families must be protected somehow.

The increase of foreign immigrants produces two problems in relation to citizenship. The first is the rights of long-term resident aliens. Long-term residents contribute to the South Korean economy, pay taxes, and participate in the local community. This raises the question of to what extent their rights should be protected. Is it fair to only protect some basic human rights and social rights? What about their voting rights in local communities? The Japanese government does not grant voting rights to Korean residents in Japan, and the South Korean government may soon deal with the same situation. There must be an answer to these questions. When a foreigner who has lived in South Korea several years wants to be naturalized in South Korea, or their children, who are culturally South Koreans,

want to obtain South Korean citizenship by naturalization, they confront many obstacles.

While the South Korean government has not changed much in this aspect, South Korean citizens seem to have adapted to the changing social scenery. According to a survey conducted by the South Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI) in July 2007 with a sample of 1,500 people 19 years of age or older, 78% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that foreign workers should have the same labor rights as South Korean workers. Over 50% of them agreed or strongly agreed with permitting the entry of migrant workers' families into South Korea, on seeking immigrants' opinions in forming policies that affect them, and protecting their human rights. Of special note is that 54.9% agreed to the idea of granting South Korean citizenship to children of immigrants, regardless of their parents' race or nationality. Only 15.7% disagreed, which is rather surprising (Korean Women's Development Institute 2007). Yet none of the policy ideas studied in the survey were adopted in actual government policies, with the exception of labor rights.

Multicultural Family and Citizenship

The number of marriage immigrants tripled in just five years, growing from 34,710 in 2002 to 104,749 in August 2007, while that of long-term residents rose 2.5 times from 6,022 to 15,567 during the same period (Ministry of Justice 2007). Today, 12% of all marriages of South Koreans are with people of foreign nationalities and thus, many children are born into multiethnic families. This has shaken the myth of ethnic and cultural homogeneity, which used to be regarded as the foundation of South Korean society. The demand for foreign brides is likely to grow for some time in the future, considering the unbalanced sex ratio of youngsters caused by a preference for sons over daughters and the difficulty rural men have in finding marriage partners. Moreover, as firms and the government try to attract foreign investors and highly qualified workers to South Korea to bolster an open economy and international competitiveness, foreigners with

long-term resident status will continue to rise in number. The increase will inevitably blur the demarcation of nationality and citizenship, as it has done so in the United States and many Western European countries. Fortunately, South Koreans do not seem as insistent on ethnic homogeneity as they are believed to be. Jeong Gi-seon (2004) shows this in her study, and the KWDI survey results (2007) support it as well. In these studies, on average, a higher percentage of respondents reported that blood is an important condition for citizenship endowment. But when it is broken down by age group, people in their twenties and thirties responded that respect for the political system and the laws of South Korea are more important than blood (KWDI 2007). In addition, research has shown that South Koreans feel distant from people of other races, and that in this respect, power relations seem to be more of a factor than race (Jang 2001). South Koreans are said to feel closer to Americans than to Chinese and Japanese, because they believe the former has been more powerful than the latter two. Taking this into account, we must look at the issue of multicultural families in terms of not just race but also economic inequality. Government policies relating to multicultural families need to consider adopting group-differentiated citizenship in order to address the economic dimension of the issue.

Reunification and Citizenship

A large-scale influx of North Koreans into South Korea has not occurred yet, but should it happen in the future, South Korean society would sustain a cultural and social shock on a scale incomparable to what it has experienced thus far in terms of immigration. South Korea must be prepared for that. Although North Koreans use the same language and have a similar cultural background, it must be acknowledged that, having lived under different social conditions for several decades, they have different values and a different mode of life. To achieve reunification, we must adopt the principle of multicultural citizenship and pursue affirmative action for North Koreans. Especially, if reunification takes the form of the South absorbing the

North, or it is otherwise achieved under economically unequal conditions, it can be easily anticipated that our Northern brethren would become second-class citizens. This does not seem an entirely groundless concern, judging from existing discrimination against Korean-Chinese people and North Korean defectors. Having no experience of capitalism and weathering a different culture, North Koreans would face great difficulties in trying to survive the intense competition in South Korean society. If they are required to compete on a par with South Koreans in the name of equality, it will lead to frustration and anger.

If we are to ultimately achieve reunification, we must understand why multicultural societies, such as the United States, Australia, and France, strive for social inclusion of minorities and spend a large amount of national resources on it. By learning from the histories of how those countries have extended the concept of citizenship and implemented policies of preferential treatment for minorities, we will be able to formulate a new vision of citizenship in a reunified Korea. Some empirical studies have found that South Koreans react very negatively to the idea of extending affirmative action to cultural minorities (Yun and Kim 2003). According to Yun In-jin and Kim Sang-hak's study (2003), 80% of respondents supported offering affirmative action to the handicapped in employment, university admission, and scholarships, whereas more than half opposed the same action for North Korean refugees. The KWDI study also surveyed people on whether they support affirmative action in college admissions for North Korean refugees, and found that a great majority were against it. Yun and Kim's study had a similar finding. The large difference in people's attitude towards the handicapped vs. North Koreans may be because they think that "affirmative action" means giving unwarranted benefits to the disadvantaged. This perception can operate as a barrier to the adoption of a multicultural citizenship policy. People need to share the idea that affirmative action promotes social fairness by ensuring equal opportunities.

East Asian Community and Citizenship

Discourse on East Asian community is very active these days. Most of the discussion, however, revolves around the presence of cultural commonalities and the long history of close relations and does not go any further than that (Kim Gyo-bin 2006; Kim Seong-guk 2006; Yi Yu-seon 2006). Baik Young-seo and his colleagues take the discussion a step further by examining East Asian nation-states and their relations; however, it only presents a what-should-be situation, urging the improvement of international relations, overcoming the shortcomings of the nation-state, and beefing up its strengths (Baek et al. 2005). In consequence, in South Korea, the discussion on East Asian community echoes that of peaceful coexistence, which is unsuitable for its grand title. Insightful investigation of the close relationship between modern nation-state and citizenship presents the true path to reach the conditions needed to form a regional community. East Asian community will be attainable to the extent that South Korea realizes transnational citizenship. In other words, East Asian community will not be realized unless we tolerate cultural diversity by expanding nation-state-based citizenship, and offer the principle and policy of transnational citizenship, which extends a high quality life to potential minorities. Therefore, the development of multicultural citizenship is pivotal for the realization of East Asian community.

Conclusion

This paper has reviewed the significance of multicultural citizenship in the development of citizenship and examined the implications of discourse on postmodern citizenship (e.g., multicultural citizenship, group-differentiated citizenship, and global citizenship) for the current social problems in South Korea. It has also examined the problems that could arise in applying multicultural citizenship to South Korean society in terms of people's attitude and government policy. Just as Kymlicka (2004) asserts that multicultural citizenship requires

both multicultural citizens and a multicultural state, South Korean society needs both to achieve multicultural citizenship.[12] Although more in-depth research is needed, the existing survey results show that, surprisingly, South Korean citizens are ready to proceed to a multicultural state. It is time for the government to more actively adopt a multicultural policy.

Although they are open to multicultural citizenship, South Koreans do not seem to accept it as a principle. This is evidenced in their negative attitudes towards affirmative action, which is an important part of multicultural citizenship. Efforts should be made to help people understand that multicultural citizenship and group-differentiated citizenship have not developed as preferential treatment of minorities, but as a principle of justice by ensuring equal opportunities for a broader range of people. Also, South Korean multicultural citizenship is one that has been actively importing the cultures of powerful nations such as the United States, but lacks the zeal to learn from those of weaker countries. In Kymlicka's (2004) terminology, South Koreans are multicultural but not intercultural. It is necessary to spread the idea that we should accept diverse cultures of foreign settlers in South Korea and expand our capacity to effectively respond to globalization.

It is not a curse for South Korean society to become culturally diverse through the settlements of foreign immigrants, multicultural families, and North Korean refugees. Instead, this experience can provide South Korean society with the opportunity to ponder the adoption of avant-guard forms of human citizenship, such as multicultural citizenship and group-differentiated citizenship, and to contribute to its development. This opportunity can also serve as an impetus to work for the growth of postmodern citizenship, which is necessary for East Asian community and beyond.

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12. "The term "citizenship" refers to membership in a political community, and thus designates a relationship between the citizen and the state. Any conception of citizenship, therefore, will inevitably make assumptions about both poles of this relationship, i.e. about the individual and the state" (Kymlicka 2004, 147).

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