Energy Transition in South Korea: Ecological Democracy Perspective

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National Taiwan University, RSPRC

Ku Dowan (具 度完)
Environment and Society Research Institute
dwku2@hanmail.net

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- Developmentalism and Eco-democracy
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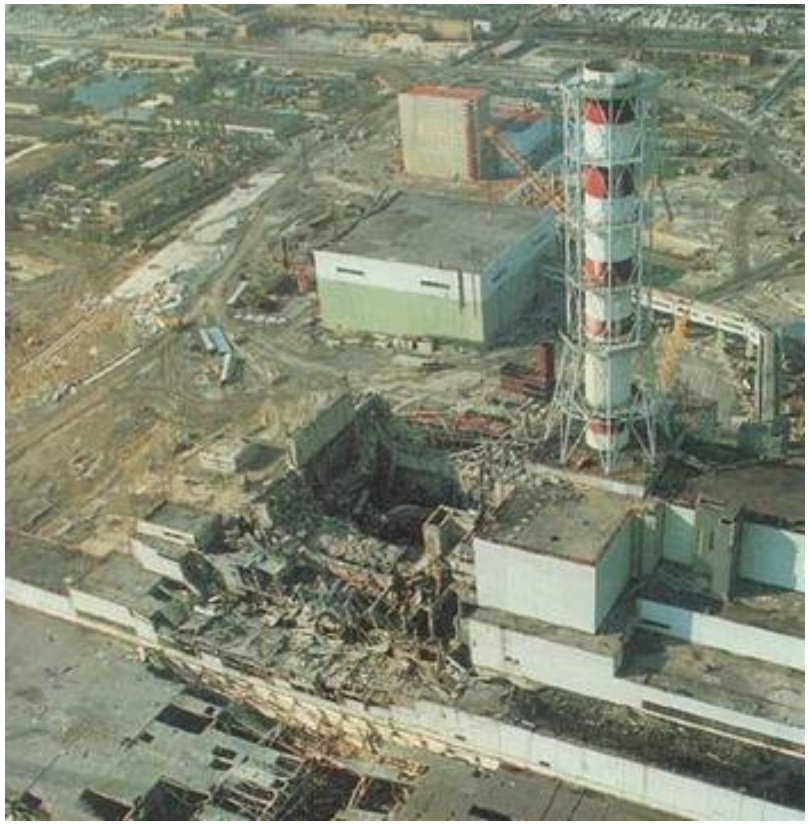
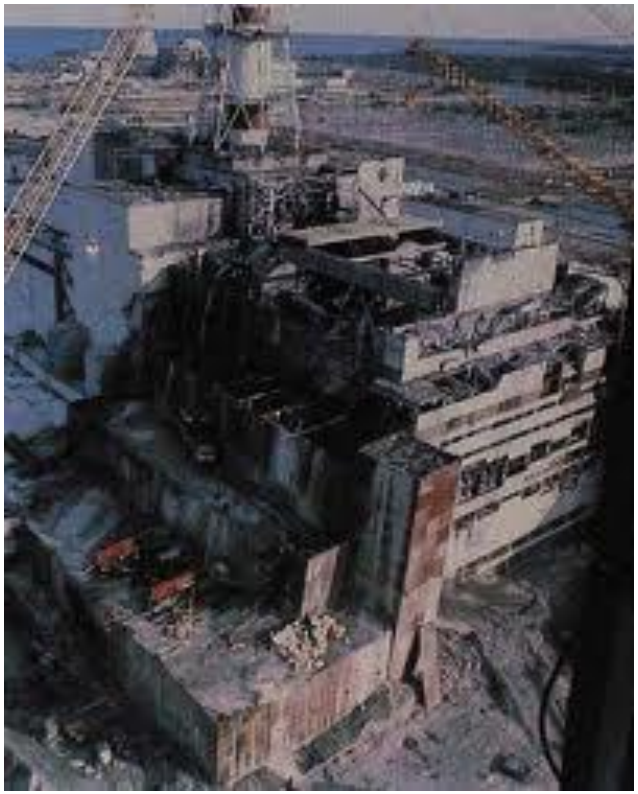
Research Questions

- What is the structural challenge of energy transition?
- What are the important social factors of energy transition?

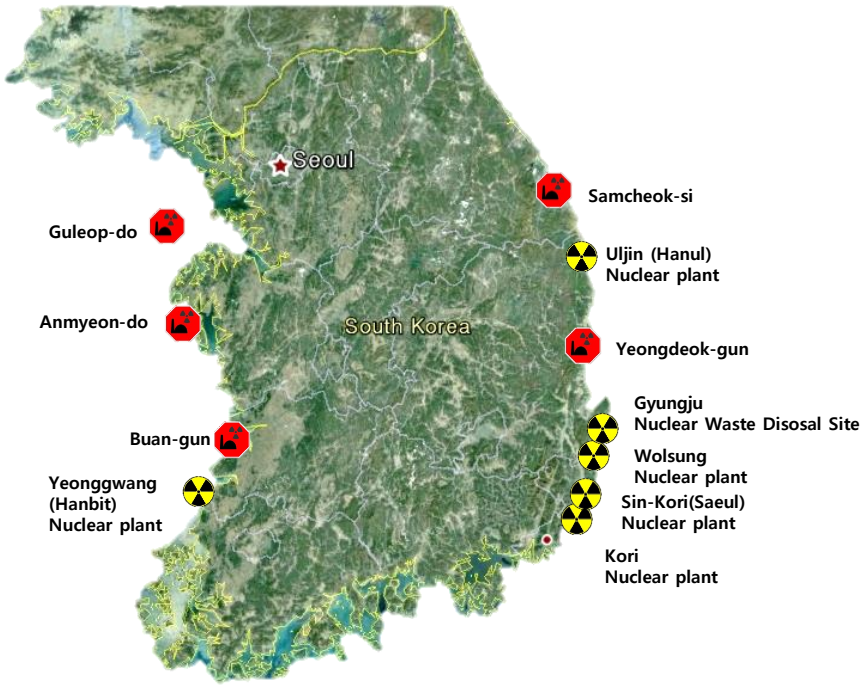
- Structure of Nuclear Risk
- Governance Type of South Korea

Chernobyl, 1986





Fukushima 福島, 2011



anti-nuclear movement sites

nuclear power sites

Nuclear Power Plant in East Asia

Source: Dong-A Ilbo, 2011. 4. 5

"Korean Penninsula will be closed by 272 nuclear reactors of China and Japan"

Decision Makers of Nuclear Risk: Nuclear Power Alliance 1

- 1950s-60s: US Government
- 1970s

  - Park Administration's desire for nuclear weapon development

  - Oil Crisis in 1973, 1979.

- 1980s – Present

  Public enterprise group system of electric power (KEPCO) : risk reduction of economic investment

  - standardization and localization of nuclear power

Decision Makers of Nuclear Risk: Nuclear Power Alliance 2

- Nuclear Power Alliance (‘Nuclear Mafia’)
  - Bureaucrats of economy, energy, science
  - Nuclear power companies(KEPCO, KHNP)
  - Construction companies
  - Pro-nuclear politicians
  - Conservative mass media
- Risk Distribution
  - Local residents around nuclear power
  - Future generations
  - Non-human beings

Political Economy of Nuclear Risk

- Industrialism
- Capitalism
- Nationalism

- Developmentalism

The practices and discourses in which nation states initiate and intervene capitalist market economy with strong industrial policies such as regulation and planning

- Authoritarianism

Ecological Democracy

- Can we survive ourselves under the Liberal Democracy or Anthropocentric Democracy?
- Deliberative Democracy
- Ecological Democracy

'The political culture and practice in which the rights of social minorities, future generations, and non-human beings can be deliberated and realized in the open and participatory public sphere and policy process'

Governance Type

	Authoritarianism	Democracy
Developmentalism	Developmental Authoritarianism	Developmental Democracy
Ecology	Ecological Authoritarianism	Ecological Democracy

- Park Jung-hee, Chun Doo-hwan (1961-1987): DA
- Kim Dae-jung, Roh Moo-hyun (1998 – 2007): DD
- Lee Myung-bak, Park Geun-hye (2008 – 2016): DA
- Moon Jae-in (2017 -)

  DD or Ecological Democracy?

- Energy Transition to Just and Sustainable Energy System
- Eco-democratic energy transition

3 Dimensions of Energy Transition

- Civil society: social movements
- Public sphere: deliberation and communication among publics
- Political opportunity structure: legal and political power to decide and change policies

Social Movements

The Beginning of Anti-Nuclear Movement (1987-1989)

- Fishermen around Yeonggwang nuclear plant organized protests against fisheries damage by hot drain water from the plant in 1987.
- Illegally wasted nuclear wastes were found around Gori (Gyeongsangnam-do province) in 1988.
- Local residents around Gori, Yeonggwang, and Wolsung plant (Gyeongsangbuk-do province) organized anti-nuclear demonstrations in 1988.
- On the basis of these movements, National Headquater for Nuclear Plant Banishment Movement was organized by several environmental health movement organizations and local resident's committees in 1989.

Success of anti-nuclear waste disposal movement (1990-2004)

- Anmyondo (Chungcheongnam-do province, 1990)
- Gulupdo (Incheon-si, 1994)
- Buan (Jeollabuk-do province, 2003-04)

Anmyun-do, 1990

Local Anti-Nuclear Movement

安眠島Anmyun-do 1990

1990. 11. 8
사진 정대희,
출처: 오마이뉴스 2010. 11

扶安Buan 2003-2004

扶安Buan 2003-2004

扶安 住民投票 管理委員會 開所式

2004. 1. 25 (투표 2. 14)

ⓒ참소리, 출처: 프레시안

Retreat of Anti-nuclear movement (2005-2007)

- Ground-breaking ceremony of Gyeongju Radioactive waste mangement facility 2007. 11. 9.
- Source: Sindonga 2007. 12. 1

Competition for Mid-Low Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility

- Reduce Risk
- Increase Compensation
- Suspend High Level Radioactive Waste
- Residents' referendum

✓Risk Frame ➪ Money Frame

- Risk-Money Deal at the cost of risk of present and future generations.
- No Deliberation on Policy

Nuclear Power Renaissance (2008-2010)

- Lee Myung-bak administration carried out nuclear power enlargement and export policy.
- Lee administration declared 'Low Carbon Green Gro wth Policy' as a national development policy in 2008. In this policy program nuclear plant was justified as a policy tool for climate change mitigation.
- Lee administration made a contract with UAE (United Arab Emirates) to export Korean style nuclear plant in 2009. This contract provoked nuclear plant export competition between Korea and Japan

Anti-nuclear movement and policies after Fukushima (2011- Present)

- Local Movement
- National Movement: Coops, Housewives and Citizens
- Movement by professionals
- Democratic Party (民主黨): Policy Change
- Green Party Formed
- Kori No.1 reactor was decided to be closed.
- Voluntary residents' votes for anti-nuclear movement were successful in new nuclear power sites, Samcheok and Yeongdeok.
- Energy Transition of Local Government:
  One Less Nuclear Power Plant Policy of
  Seoul Metropolitan Government

Anti-nuclear Movement after Fukushima

Seoul, 2013

Gori, 2013

Local Anti-Nuclear Movement

- Strong Residents' movement
- Weak Energy Policy Transformation
- Temporal Success of Local Move.
- Failure of Risk Reduction of Future generations and non-human beings
- Failure of Participatory Deliberation

Alternative Energy Movement

- Risk Reduction for Minorities, Future Generations, and Non-human beings
- Participation and cooperation of citizens and making sustainable community
- Little effectiveness to the official policy process

Consensus Conference on Electricity Policy, 2004

- Deliberation of citizens
- Ecological Decision making by citizens
- No effect, No legislation of Nuclear Phasing Out Policy in Government Side.

✓ Deliberation can result in ecological decision making, but it cannot be effective in policy arena without political power.

Evaluation of ANM

- Local Residents' Anti-Campaign
- Alternative Energy Movement
- Deliberative, Discursive Public Sphere in Civil Society
- Closed but Partially opened by new post-nuclear movement after Fukushima

<Table 2> Evaluation of Nuclear Politics in terms of Ecological Democracy

Years	1987-89	1990-2004	2005-2007	2008-2010	2011-Present
Periods	Beginning of ANM	Success of ANM	Retreat of ANM	Nuclear Power Renaissance	New Beginning of ANM
Rights of Minorities	Not Protected	Self-protected by grassroots movements	Trade off of Money and Risk	Risk Increased	Protected by residents, citizens, and politicians
Rights of Future Generations	Not Protected	Protected at the local level	Not Protected	Risk Increased	Risk slightly reduced
Rights of Non Human beings	Not Protected	Protected at the local level	Not Protected	Risk Increased	Risk slightly reduced
Participation of Minorities	Excluded	Informal participation by direct action	Partial and Pseudo participation	Excluded	Partially included by local government
Participation of Future Generations	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded
Participation of Non-human Beings	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded

Public Sphere: Social Deliberation

- Deliberation on nuclear policy and energy transition by ENGOs : 1980 - Present
- Deliberation on the safety of local people around nuclear facilities by local residents: 1988 – 2004
- Dominance of nuclear alliances and little deliberation on nuclear risk: 2005 – 2010
- Serious deliberation on nuclear safety by citizens, housewives and lay people: 2011- Present

Pro-nuclear : conservative press; Chosun, Dong-A, etc.

Anti-nuclear : progressive press; Hankyoreh etc.

Political Opportunity Structure

Period	Polity's Political Openness to the Minorities	Position to Environmental Movements
1961-1986	Closed	Positively Exclusive
1987-1997	Partially Open	Passively Exclusive
1998-2007	Open	Passively Inclusive
2008-2016	Closed	Positively Exclusive
2017-	Open	Positively Inclusive?

2017 Presidential Election Campaign

- Four major political party candidates except the Liberty Korea Party (the former ruling party) agreed to phase out nuclear power plants.
- Anti-nuclear movement activists mobilized political pressure to the candidates.

Discussion 1

- What is the structural challenge of energy transition?

- Developmentalism, specifically developmental authoritarianism
- Nuclear Mafia: Strong political economical alliances of capital, nuclear technocrats, power company and conservative mass media

Discussion 2

- What are the important social factors of energy transition?

- Strong anti-nuclear and energy transition movements
- Open and deliberative public sphere
- Political regime change to open and positively inclusive governance

Discussion 3

- ✓ Eco-democratic transition in Germany
- **Local Anti-Nuclear Move.**
- **Alternative Energy Move.**
- **Green Public Sphere**
- Institutionalization of eco-democratic governance
- Post-nuclear policy decision making

- ✓ East Asian eco-democratic transition ?
- Partial niche and regime change to phasing out nuclear and increasing renewables (Taiwan and S. Korea)
- Hard to create landscape of ecological democracy because of export oriented developmentalism and strong development alliances

Conclusion

- Environmental movements are driving force for eco-democratic transition. When they mobilize public support of public sphere, open and positively inclusive polity regime can change energy regime.
- Political opportunity structure change is essential for energy transition, but not enough. When strong social movement for energy transition can create green pubic sphere, and sustainable and just energy alternative can be deliberated and accepted by people, legal and political power can create alternative eco-democratic hegemony.