Symposium

Positions on Economic Democracy
Progressive Concepts and Approaches in Korea and Germany

Monday, 8th of October 2012
Franciscan Education Center
Seoul, South Korea
Positions on Economic Democracy

It has been the discursive keyword “market” which has led and coined politics and society of Korea since the beginning of the 1990s. The democratic governments that came to power with their promise to abolish the autocratic Yushin military regime, have all embraced “market transparency”, “market discipline” or “market-driven economy” as main tasks in their respective economic and social reforms.

Today, politics and society in South Korea pay more attention to the phenomenon of the gradual erosion of justice and social welfare, which resulted from the neoliberal-inspired economic and financial policies following the Asian financial crisis in 1997/98. As a result, there is a growing interest in the political discourse for social market economy. In recent years, keywords such as “social welfare and justice/fairness” have emerged and have played a major role in the political debates since then. During the local elections in 2010, the concern for “free school meals”, a welfare issue, developed into the most heated election campaign topic. At the same time, a book by Michael Sandel “Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?” (2009) hit the bestseller list in South Korea. This reflects the underlying problem that Korea’s society lacks of justice and welfare/fairness.

In the light of this year’s parliamentary and presidential elections, the main interest of Korea’s society and its politicians focuses on questions concerning justice and welfare, which can be concretized with the terms “economic democracy” and “social welfare state”. Most political parties, be it conservative or progressive, treat “economic democracy” and “social welfare state” as main concern in their political programs.

But this also implies that the interpretations of the content as well as the target courses of economic democracy and social welfare strongly differ depending on the respective underlying philosophy (ideology) and political position. The time has come to discuss in depth which kind of economic democracy and which kind of social welfare state, including its specific content, ought to be aspired. This discussion will decisively shape Korea’s societal and political development in the future.

The European, but especially the German experience with the “social market economy” can serve as an important reference for Korea. But also in Germany different positions exist: Ordoliberalism and social democracy, despite many similarities, have different interpretations and orientations towards social market economy. Furthermore, the terms “economic democracy” and “economic democratization” are understood differently in Korea and Germany.

This symposium aims to contribute to the clarification of terms and concepts related to economic democratization and social market economy in Korea from a progressive perspective through the comparative analysis of German and Korean theoretical and policy approaches as well as concrete economic policy experience.

Monday, 8th of October 2012
Franciscan Education Center, Jeong-dong, Seoul, South Korea

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<td>14:00 – 14:20</td>
<td><strong>Opening Ceremony</strong></td>
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<td>Welcoming remarks by</td>
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<td>- CHOE, Byung-Mo, Representative WSS</td>
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<td>- Christoph Pohlmann, Resident Representative FES Korea Office</td>
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<td>- Member of Parliament</td>
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<td>14:20 – 15:50</td>
<td><strong>Section 1</strong></td>
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<td>Basic understanding of Economic Democracy in Germany and Korea</td>
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<td>14:20 – 14:40</td>
<td>Basic approaches and normative backgrounds of Economic Democracy in the German tradition</td>
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<td>- Prof. Dr. Arne Heise (University of Hamburg)</td>
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<td>14:40 – 15:20</td>
<td>„Fairness“ vs. „Solidarity“</td>
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<td>– The different emphasis on „justice“ as core value of Economic Democracy in the Korean discourse context</td>
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<td>- Prof. Dr. KIM Dong-Chun, Sociology, Sungkonghoe Univ. (PSPD advisor)</td>
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<td>- Prof. Dr. CHO Won-Hi, Economics, Kukmin Univ. (WSS)</td>
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<td>15:20 – 15:50</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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16:10 – 17:40  **Section 2**  
**Concrete Positions on Economic Democracy in Germany and Korea**

16:10 – 16:30  
Applied concepts of Economic Democracy in Germany in the fields of social partnerships, employee participation and relations between SMEs and LEs  
- Prof. Dr. Jochen Struwe, Trier University of Applied Sciences

16:30 – 17:10  
‘Economic Democracy’ from the perspective of „progressive“ liberalism  
- Prof. Dr. You Jong-II, Korean Development Institute (KDI)

‘Economic Democracy’ from the perspective of social democracy, and the status of „Solidarity“  
- Dr. JEONG Seung-II, Research Fellow (WSS)

17:10 – 17:40  
Discussion

17:40 – 19:00  
Break and Dinner

19:00 – 20:30  **Section 3: Paneldiscussion**  
‘Economic Democracy’ – on the way to more democratic participation and a fairer competition in the Korean economic model

**Central questions:**

- On which core elements of “Economic Democracy” could progressive forces in Korea agree?
- In what respect can concepts and approaches of German social democracy or of the German social market economy model be helpful?

**Lead Discussants:**

- JEONG Tae-In, Institute for a new Society or YOU Jong-II, KDI¹  
- JEONG Seung-II, WSS²  
- HONG Gi-Bin, Global Political Economy Institute³  
- MIN Byeong-Du, DUP or IN Jae-Geun, DUP⁴  
- Prof. Dr. Arne Heise  
- Prof. Dr. Jochen Struwe

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¹ From the camp of the so-called progressive liberalism  
² From the social democratic group  
³ Mediating position  
⁴ Politicians