

Outlooks on a Civil Society-Initiated Unification of the Korean Peninsula

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Abstract

The theory of civil society-initiated unification is a unification paradigm that reflects the changes in civil society following global social change and the democratization of Korean politics at the historical conjuncture of post-Cold War market-centrism. The statist paradigm of unification of the previous historical conjuncture now shows clear limitations as a practical and effective unification discourse. In the new historical conjuncture, trends such as the expansion of non-political civilian exchange and peace movements, civic-led unification movements, and a unification governance of civic participation are new practices that broaden the horizons of the theory of civil society-initiated unification. When differentiating between civil society as a realistic mode of existence versus a normative community, the theory of civil society-initiated unification focuses on the aspect of civil society as a normative community oriented towards the values of peace and equality, a green environment, autonomy, and co-existence. These norms and values of civil society are implemented through civic nationalism, which goes beyond the narrow scope of Cold War nationalism and will consequently be able to expand the conditions for the realization of unification-oriented civil society.

Keywords: theory of civil society-initiated unification, theory of state-initiated unification, division-statism, post-Cold War market-centrism, civic nationalism, historical cycle approach

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Introduction: Beyond the Theory of State-Initiated Unification

Although the Sunshine Policy was a government-led unification policy practiced by the Kim Dae-jung administration (1998-2003) and later the Roh Moo-hyun administration (2003-2008), it greatly expanded the involvement of the private sector in inter-Korean cooperation and exchange. Since then, the role of civil society began to hold greater significance in inter-Korean relations and expanded into the unification discourse. As inter-Korean economic cooperation and the doctrine of cultural exchange widely unfolded, methods of integrating the peace movement and the unification movement gained attention. Moreover, other topics of attention included the exploration of citizen participation in unification movements, the theory of civil society of the Korean peninsula, and civic identity in the unification movement. These broad discussions on unification can be regarded as part of the variety of trends forming the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

Since the division of the Korean peninsula in 1945, most of the unification perspectives discussed in South Korean society have focused on building a unified nation-state from an incomplete nation state or adopted the theory of state-initiated unification, where state power would be the main agent in unification efforts. However, the theory of civil society-initiated unification is a new tendency of the unification debate that became significant with the development of the civil society following the democratization of South Korean politics. Previously, prospects for state-initiated unification long dominated the unification discourse.

Nevertheless, most arguments within the theory of civil society-initiated unification had a tendency to stop at fragmentary concerns, limited to the civil domain or non-governmental exchange. Even when attempting a theoretical approach, the perspective was limited by the lack of a North Korean civil society and could advance no further than a mere exploration, stopping at providing appropriate and long-term outlooks for establishing a civil society in North

Korea.¹ With the expansion of non-governmental exchange, the theory of civil society-initiated unification—albeit on a limited level—seemed to be significant in the development of a new unification discourse that could replace the theory of state-initiated unification.

However, inter-Korean relations, which have recently been rapidly curbed due to the Lee Myung-bak administration's reciprocity-based approach towards North Korea and the Cheonan Incident (the sinking of the naval ship *Cheonan*), are weakening the once expanding role of civil society. The theory of civil society-initiated unification, which was born after the long labor pains of democratization, suddenly faced a crisis. However, despite these recent political changes in Korean society, the following conditions also add to the timeliness of the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

First, since the problems of division and unification are rooted in history, it is necessary to approach the resolution of these problems by ameliorating the aftermaths of division that have accumulated over time. These historical wounds persist in both South and North Korea, at levels ranging from individuals and families to whole communities. The civil society is an arena where these traces are clearly visible. After the 1990s, Korean civil society grew not only in terms of quantity but also in its ability to face the historical legacies of division.

Second, the norms of civil society go beyond national values to encompass the values of global publicness. Since the 1990s, Korean society has shifted its historical conjuncture² from division-statism to post-Cold War market-centrism. This shift required a change in focus from a unification perspective devoted to excessive nationalism and statism in the construction of a nation state to a solution of the issue

1. These discussions have focused mainly on the role of civil society, especially South Korean civil society, in inter-Korean relations and unification. The discussions were brought up at the conference and policy debate organized by the Peace Sharing Center of Korean Sharing Movement. For more information, refer to Chung (2008), W. Lee (2008a; 2008b), D. Cho (2008), Koo (2008), S. Lee (2008), P. Kim (2008), Ha (2008), H. Park (2008), and Y. Kim (2008).

2. A historical conjuncture refers to a specific historical period, usually denoting a number of decades in the context of hundreds of years of long-term history.

of national unification coupled with the task of achieving global publicness. New times and shifting paradigms demand an approach to inter-Korean relations based on civil society values including peace, autonomy, a green environment, and human rights.

Third, the Lee Myung-bak administration's policy of reciprocity towards North Korea can be understood as stemming from a highly statist view of the Cold War era in that it encompasses politico-military and international policy approaches. This policy is a regressive unification perspective that goes against the predominant post-Cold War trend of globalization. Given that the issue of unification is not confined only to the political sphere but is also linked to the market economy and civil society, it is necessary that this government position be held in check by new alternative perspectives on unification. Beyond the theory of state-initiated unification, the theory of civil society-initiated unification is a timely civil discourse that acts as a force of resistance against the reciprocity policy.

From a macro-historical perspective, under the premise that Korean society has switched from the historical conjuncture of division-statism to post-Cold War market-centrism, this paper aims to go beyond the theory of state-initiated unification to explore the theory of civil society-initiated unification within the new historical conjuncture. As aforementioned, various discussions have already been attempted regarding the role of civil society in inter-Korean relations, but the theory of civil society-initiated unification is fragmentary and requires a more systematic conception. This paper can therefore be considered a commentary of sorts to help shape this conception. Additionally, by diversifying and enriching the discourse on unification, this paper will also contribute to reaching beyond the perspective of the unification of national systems to explore the possibility of a more fundamental social integration of North and South Korea.

The Shift in Historical Conjuncture and the Theory of Civil Society-Initiated Unification

After World War II, the world order shifted into an East-West Cold War system centering on the Soviet Union and the United States. In the process of change, a peculiar historical conjuncture emerged on the Korean peninsula. As a result of the ideological competition between the East and West and a world order based on the international division of global capitalism, a divided system was established on the Korean peninsula. Over the course of the Korean War, this division became permanent and this historical conjuncture constructed a unique historical social formation³ through a combination of elements such as political power, economic systems, class order and conflict, the cultural composition of society, social needs, and social movements within the world order as well as the domestic political and economic structures of the time (D. Cho 2010a, 5-6).

By this definition, the time period from the establishment of a government after liberation in 1948 to the late 1980s can be considered one historical conjuncture. This period can be defined as a historical conjuncture marked by division-statism, dominated by an anticommunist and statist ideology through combination of the “divisive situation,” in which national division became permanent and foreign control was maximized, the oppressive statism of authoritarian political power spanning from the private sector to the military (D. Cho 2010a, 7-8).

Although the Korean peninsula remains divided, post-Cold War period trends and the global marketization that rapidly unfolded after the collapse of Eastern European socialism in the late 1980s and the transition of domestic politics to democracy since the 1990s have shifted the historical conjuncture of division-statism into a new historical conjuncture. The collapse of Eastern Europe greatly weakened the ideological foundations of the division of the Korean peninsula.

3. Social formation is a Marxist concept referring to the concrete, historical articulation between the capitalist mode of production, persisting precapitalist modes of production, and the institutional context of the economy (http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/social_formation.aspx).

In addition, exchanges such as the inter-Korean summit and following June 15 Joint Declaration of 2000 and the 2007 inter-Korean summit greatly broadened inter-Korean exchange. The predominant trends of democratization, globalization, marketization, and informatization quickly dismantled the order of statism; this was especially the case after the IMF intervention in 1997, when global market ideology was widely adopted. In this regard, it can be said that recent global social changes shifted the established historical conjuncture from division-statism, which had been the norm for about 40 years since the liberation from Japan in 1945 until the early 1990s, to a historical conjuncture built upon post-Cold War market-centrism (D. Cho 2010a, 32).

Within the historical conjuncture of post-Cold War market-centrism, the growth of civil society was particularly remarkable as autonomy in the fields of the state, civil society, and market order expanded. Furthermore, there was also an expansion in activities such as inter-Korean economic cooperation and sociocultural exchange geared towards unification based on the autonomous growth of areas such as civil society and the market. The unification discourse centered on state power, which was formed in the historical conjuncture of division-statism, can be defined as a theory of state-initiated unification characterized by the exclusion of civil society as it pursues occlusive national strategies and policies, mobilization of people, and ruling power-oriented approach although it aims for national integration in the form of accomplishment of the national community. However, during the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations, the role of civil society in inter-Korean relations showed significant progress and provided an opportunity to expand the horizons of the theory of civil society-initiated unification, which was notably different from the theory of state-initiated unification.

In order to differentiate between the state and civil society, they should be considered as the two different pillars supporting the social order of integration.⁴ If the unification of North and South Korea is a

4. Unlike the state, civil society is often understood to include the economic sector.

form of social integration, it follows that the difference between the state and civil society can be consistent standards for the theory of state-initiated unification and the theory of civil society-initiated unification, respectively. The strongest pillar of social integration in modern society is the publicness of the state. State publicness is a key element of forced social integration in which elements such as the constitutional effect of the legitimacy of state establishment, strong nationalistic ideology, mobilization via political power, oppression by official authorities (e.g. the army, the police force), and consensus through state welfare are combined. In contrast, civil society serves as a pillar of autonomous social integration by establishing diverse levels of publicness in a number of different areas. There are many values that act as the building blocks of the publicness of civil society such as: peace and equality, autonomy and the environment, human rights, etc. Additionally, various social associations, social movements for public interest, voluntary civic participation, and communication in places of public discussion are also elements of the voluntary and practical mechanism of social integration. Whereas national principles of social integration are characterized by unity, publicness, force, and constitutional legitimacy, the integration principles of civil society that should be emphasized are plurality, autonomy, and civic publicness.

Based on these functions of the state and civil society regarding social integration, the main points of comparison between the theory of state-initiated unification and the theory of civil society-initiated unification are shown in Table 1. First, the theory of state-initiated unification played a leading role during the division-statism historical conjuncture and the national democratic movement cycle, while the theory of civil society-initiated unification expanded during the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture and the civil society movement cycle.

In this case, the civil society can be divided into two fields: the economic field of global markets and trade and the moral/ethical field of cooperation and participation (S. Park 2008, 24). However, this article emphasizes the field of civil society, which is analyzed separately from the market.

Table 1. Theories of State-Initiated and Civil Society-Initiated Unification

	Theory of state-initiated unification	Theory of civil society-initiated unification
Historical conjuncture	Division-statism	Post-Cold War market-centrism
Movement cycle	Cycle of national democratic movements	Cycle of civil society movements
Perception of division	Imperfect nation-state	Unstable civil society (the instability of life)
Identity	Cold War national identity (progressive nationalism and conservative nationalism)	Post-Cold War citizen identity (civic nationalism, global publicness)
Institutional measures	State policies and state mobilization	Voluntary participation of civil society organizations and NGOs
Non-institutional measures	Radical national-democratic movement	Radical peace movement
Ideology and values	Anticommunism (liberalism) / socialism	Pluralistic values (nationalist values + global values): peace, human rights, the environment, and women
Political process	Politics of confrontation, politics of ideology	Politics of reconciliation, politics of difference (diversity)
Status of unification	Goal-oriented (national unity)	Process-oriented (the process of national integration)
Conditions of unification	Limited situations	Everyday situations

Taking a closer look into the understanding of a state of division, the theory of state-initiated unification is built on the premise that South and North Korea are both fundamentally incomplete as nation-states since the division between them was the result of the break-up of one nation-state system, which is a general trait of modern social formation. Therefore, this concept of unification is based on the perception that a single state power must be established on the Korean peninsula. By contrast, the theory of civil society-initiated unification focuses on the fact that a state of division results in an unstable civic life. The main values of civil society, such as peace, human rights, the environment, and women's rights, function as the public norms of civil society, and these ethical norms ensure a higher quality of civic life. A state of division is a factor that impedes the stability and improvement of such civic life.

Second, the necessity of North-South unification is justified by the idea of national identity as a unit of belonging. National identity or being part of the same national community is a core value in the theory of state-initiated unification. In the division-statism historical conjuncture from liberation to the late 1980s. When anticommunism functioned as the state ideology, national identity overlapped with statist ideology both for the left and the right. Thus, politics was divided into conservative versus liberal nationalism, albeit in asymmetric proportions. In the sense that the nationalism of the time is characterized by ideological division, it can be considered as giving rise to the so-called "Cold War national identity." The theory of civil society-initiated unification in the historical conjuncture of post-Cold War market-centrism focuses more on a civic identity that surpasses ethnic nationalism. This type of civic identity points to the idea of civic nationalism. Most societies today are not homogenous, and, even if they are, an emphasis on homogeneity does not eliminate the differences and discriminations that divide them (Ignatieff 1994, 7). Therefore, civic nationalism enters the limelight as a new form of nationalism; it redefines the nation to include all members of one single political system within one national territory based on citizenship, regardless of ethnic nationality. In the current unification process in

which a foundation of shared civil rights does not exist, there is a need to set up a civic nationalism that encompasses the value of global publicness as a new identity.

Third, concrete methods for approaching the problem of unification can be divided into the institutional and noninstitutional spheres. In the institutional sphere, a concrete unification policy, public support for this policy and mobilization are employed in the theory of state-initiated unification as means to obtain the goal of unification, since the theory fundamentally relies on the support of government power. In the noninstitutional sphere, radical unification movements such as the radical people-oriented national-democratic movement, which unfolded in the division-statism historical conjuncture, exemplify an approach to the unification problem. The goal of the radical national-democratic movement is to create a new unified state power. It is categorized as a type of state-initiated unification in that it struggles against the existing state power, which is considered an obstacle to the movement's objective.

In the case of the theory of civil society-initiated unification, there is active participation by various NGOs in the institutional sphere of civil society, including civic organizations. In general, as most NGOs and other relatively stable organizations have legal and administrative bases, they can be considered as belonging to institutionalized areas of civil society. These NGOs can sometimes serve as pillars of resistance against state policy, but on the other hand may also become the main agents of participatory governance through partnerships with the government in the promotion of national policies. Most NGOs involved in humanitarian aid to the North were an axis of the participatory governance. Even though the ultimate goal of the theory of civil society-initiated unification may be the eventual integration of the two Koreas, it gives much more importance to these processes of civic participation as compared to the theory of state-initiated unification. The class-oriented radical peace movement can be classified in the noninstitutional sphere. Peace movements of a moderate nature may be included in the unification process. However, radical movements can be either independent from the government or private

companies or confrontational in their activities.

Fourth, in terms of ideology and values, the theory of state-initiated unification is based on an anti-communist and liberalist ideology in right-wing nationalism and on a socialist ideology in left-wing nationalism. However, in the theory of civil society-initiated unification, the pluralistic values of the civil society are emphasized. Of course, the civil society is not without traces of Cold War ideological conflicts. In particular, the conflict of the left and right ideologies inherent in civil society, especially in the case of Korea, is a remnant of Cold War state ideology. Ideally speaking, civil society is composed of a variety of values. These include not only the value of the nation inherent in civic nationalism but also the values of global publicness, peace, human rights, the environment, and women's and children's rights.

Fifth, the theory of state-initiated unification regards the domestic political process not only as the confrontation between the two Koreas but also as ideological conflicts in domestic politics. In contrast, the theory of civil society-initiated unification emphasizes a political process of difference, which seeks conflict resolution through recognizing the different values and traits of various groups. The public sphere of communication has utmost significance for civil society. Considering the fact that even individual or nonpolitical issues are transformed into public issues by the public, issues related to North Korea and unification are very important and highly public issues. The politics of communication and the politics of reconciliation through communication, in which unification-related issues are shared, are significant political processes at work in the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

Sixth, when separating the notion of unification aiming for national integration from the process pursuing that goal, the theory of state-initiated unification is goal-oriented while the theory of civil society-initiated unification is process-oriented.⁵ Above all, the theory of civil

5. The process-oriented propensity of the theory of civil society-initiated unification is similar to the perspective of "unification as a process" emphasized by Paik Nak-chung (2006).

society-initiated unification considers the process itself to be meaningful—the implementation and operation of pluralistic values, such as peace, human rights, and the environment, the politics of communication, and the politics of voluntary participation.

Finally, there are differences between the two perspectives regarding the realistic conditions that may enable unification. The theory of state-initiated unification, taking into consideration North Korea's political and economic conditions such as unification resulting from financial collapse of the state or war and revolution, presupposes "limited circumstances for unification." However, the theory of civil society-initiated unification, in giving meaning to the process itself, presupposes everyday circumstances for unification.

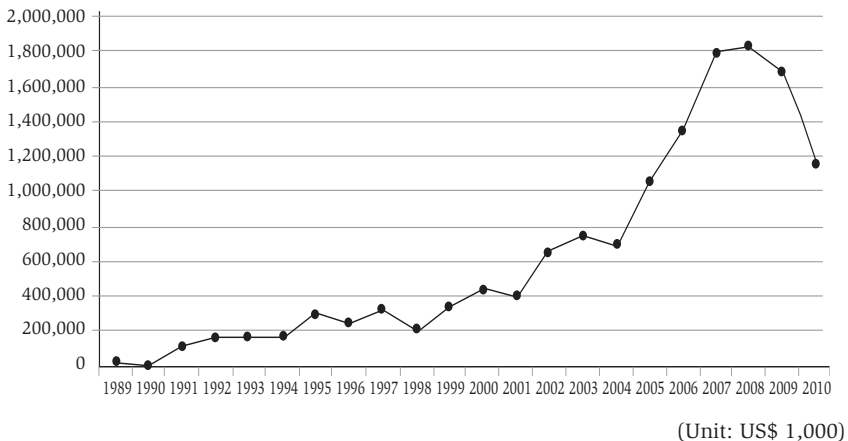
The Post-Cold War Market-Centrism Historical Conjuncture and Changes in the Unification Frame

Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

In any given historical conjuncture, the major contemporary social constituents combine to form a unique historical frame within that historical conjuncture (D. Cho 2010a, 6). A historical frame refers to an interpretation framework that enables individuals to perceive, locate, differentiate, and identify what is happening in their living space and the world (Goffman 1974). Because a historical frame reflects the most important contradictory structure of society at a given historical conjuncture, it is formed as a composite structure of meaning inherent in the contemporary institutions, movements, consciousness, etc. As a historical frame, the unification frame can also be described as an interpretation framework for understanding inter-Korean relations and unification, consisting of the main characteristics that appear in the institutional, movement, and consciousness spheres. In accordance with changes in its institutional, social movement, and consciousness spheres in the face of the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture, the theory of state-initiated

unification as a historical unification frame was replaced by the theory of civil society-initiated unification as a new unification framework.

In the institutional sphere, inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects have continually expanded since the 1990s, within the post-Cold War historical conjuncture. Until recently, the total volume of trade between the two Koreas has increased consistently. In the 1990s, following the collapse of Eastern Europe and the democratization of domestic politics, Korean civil society experienced a remarkable growth, accompanied by a growth in the market. Accordingly, trade with North Korea rose significantly in the market areas where autonomy expanded. Trade growth was particularly large in 2000 as a result of the inter-Korean summit and the June 15th Joint Declaration of 2000. Figure 1 illustrates the significant increase in overall trade with North Korea. Since the inter-Korean summit in 2000, the scale of economic cooperation has greatly expanded through projects such as the construction of the Seoul-Sinuiju railway and the road connecting Kaeseong and Munsan, the Imjin River Flood Prevention Project, and



Source: Ministry of Unification (2010).

Figure 1. Annual trade between South and North Korea

the construction of the Kaesong Industrial Complex (Ahn 2010, 49). Along with economic exchange, aid from NGOs and sociocultural exchange also greatly expanded. Aid from the private sector increased steadily in the early 1990s, and, based on data from the late 1990s and early 2000s, the level of support is still growing rapidly (Ministry of Unification 2007, 140). From 1998 to 1999, the government implemented measures to promote private sector aid to North Korea. Accordingly, many highly supportive private aid groups, such as the Korean Sharing Movement, the Emergency Measure Headquarters for Helping North Korean Brethren, the National Reconciliation Committee (Catholic), the Christian Alliance for Aid to North Korea Brethren (Protestant), etc., were able to bypass the Korean National Red Cross to directly engage in aid negotiation with North Korea as well as send goods to the North and monitor their delivery and distribution (Ahn 2010, 49). This kind of exchange through the private sector also gained momentum following the agreement reached at the 2000 inter-Korean summit and the following June 15 Joint Declaration of 2000, which expanded economic exchange to a wide range of fields including society, culture, sports, health, and the environment.

This increase in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, including private sector aid to the North as well as social and cultural exchange, brought about a significant increase in a more physical sense of exchange as well. The number of visitors from South Korea to North Korea has greatly increased since the late 1990s, increasing more than twofold from 7,280 people in 2000 to 15,280 people in 2003; by 2008 that number rapidly increased to 186,443 people (Ministry of Unification 2009, 236). Among them, the number of visitors associated with the social and cultural spheres also increased significantly, as did the number of visitors in the fields of media, broadcasting and publishing, religious activities, and arts and culture, who journeyed to the North on the occasion of large-scale joint North-South events, academic debates, and more.

Thus, changes in North-South relations in the areas of government, markets, and civic institutions resulted in an overall expansion of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. North-South relations were

previously monopolized by the government in the division-statism historical conjuncture. The expansion of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation is a good example of how to dismantle the international structure in which the government is the only channel of contact with North Korea. The Kim Dae-jung administration's Sunshine Policy enabled the inter-Korean summit and the June 15 Joint Declaration of 2000. Alternatively termed as an "engagement policy," this policy has limitations in that it promotes a government-led exchange. However, the civil society orientation of such a policy designed to engage North Korea has groundbreaking significance to the theory of civil society-initiated unification in the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture. The Sunshine Policy managed conflicts arising from the South's North Korea policies through communication with civil society, and separated economic cooperation from political and military sectors by emphasizing that inter-Korean problems should be resolved by none other than the two Koreas and accordingly expanded the range of sociocultural exchange (D. Cho 2009, 53). These effects provided the possibility of expanding the unification movement within the institutional sphere of civil society by increasing opportunities for contact with North Korea. Above all, the humanitarian or moralistic orientation inherent in the engagement policy towards the North was an important factor that could ensure affinity towards civic groups involved in exchange and cooperation with the North, which had a complex structure including both liberal and conservative political groups.

Differentiation of the Unification Movements and the Civic Peace Frame

The social movements deployed from liberation until the 1980s in the division-statism historical conjuncture fall under "the cycle of the national-democratic movement" (D. Cho 2010a). Events such as the April 19 Revolution of 1960, the June 3 Struggle of 1964 (demonstration against the Korea-Japan Meeting because of the humiliating diplomacy of the Park Chung-hee government), the anti-Yusin move-

ment from 1973-1979 (movement against President Park's authoritarian Yusin regime), the Busan-Masan Protest Movement of 1979, the 1980 Gwangju Democratization Movement, and the June Uprising of 1987 were the movements that composed the cycle of national-democratic movements. The unification movements of the time were an extension of the democratic movement; within the trend of the radicalization of the democratic movement, the unification movement was also based on progressive nationalism as well as oriented towards the radical unification movement.

In a more open social atmosphere immediately after the April 19 Revolution of 1960, the camps of the student movement formed the Alliance for National Unification (Minjok Tongil Yeonmaeng), and progressive civic youth organizations pursuing national revolution took the lead in the unification movement. Meanwhile, in 1961, the National Council for National Autonomous Unification (Minjok Jaju Tongil Hyeobuihoe) organized as the largest coalition of civic organizations, including most of the groups that had been active since the April 19 Revolution of 1960. In the 1970s, unification movement organizations took the form of illegal underground organizations. Although the opposition camp also created a movement that openly pursued unification, it was unable to emerge as a prominent issue in the democratic movement.

In the 1980s, organizations related to the unification movement began to emerge in conjunction with the progressive religious community, and a more aggressive unification movement spread to government opposition groups and the student associations. The launch of the Coalition of Popular Movements for Korean Unification (Minjok Tongil Minjung Undong Yeonhap) in 1985, the National Alliance for Democracy (Jeonguk Minjok Minju Undong Yeonhap) in 1989, and the Pan-Korean Alliance for Unification (Joguk Tongil Beomminjok Yeonhap) in 1990 included organizations from both Koreas and overseas, expanded the unification movement to all government opposition camps. In addition, the student movement camp, represented by the National Council of Student Representatives (Jeonguk Daehaksaeng Hyeobuihoe) and the National Federation of Student

Associations (Hanguk Daehaksaeng Chongyeonhaphoe), led the radical unification movement with the line of “National Liberation” (called the NL movement in South Korea), which constituted the mainstream of student movements after the mid-1980s. The radical unification projects of government opposition groups and the student movement drew national attention to the problem of unification in the late 1980s, especially as influential individuals such as Rev. Moon Ik-Hwan, student activist Lim Soo-Kyung, and Hwang Suk-young, the renowned novelist and spokesperson of the Korean People’s Artists Federation, visited North Korea (D. Cho 2010b, 167). These unification movements which unfolded during the cycle of the national-democratic movement were based on radical populism and progressive national identity.

The cycle of the national-democratic movement in the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture were replaced by the cycle of civil society movements in the 1990s. The Citizen’s Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ) was established in 1989, followed by the Korea Federation for Environment Movement (KFEM) in 1993 and the People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) in 1994. The citizens’ movement they represented emerged as a new social movement in Korea. In the cycle of civil society movements, the unification movement showed a tendency to diversify. While organizations following the radical people-oriented nationalism of the 1980s continued with their activities, unification activities by civil society organizations or civic humanitarian aid organizations followed a different direction. Above all, this new stream of the unification movement owed its rapid expansion to inter-Korean exchange in the late 1990s. Measures taken by the private sector in 1999 to increase aid routes to the North vitalized civic unification movement organizations. These civic organizations formed a partnership with the government for participatory governance, further highlighting the role of civil society in the unification process.

The peace movement constituted another new stream of unification movement in the 1990s. Although peace movements take various forms, peace is a universal ideal that surpasses the boundaries of

state, nation, and ideology. Therefore, peace movements are regarded as the most typical type of civic movement deployed in civil society as a sphere of autonomous communication. As they are also part of the wider scope of social movements in general, they clearly reflect the specificities of each society in which they operate (D. Cho 2010b, 169). In particular, the peace movements that emerged within the cycle of civil society-initiated unification movements of the Korean peninsula can be classified into the universal value-oriented global peace movement as well as the movement with the specific objective of peace on the Korean peninsula, depending on whether their short- and long-term goals are universal or not. Whereas the antiwar, anti-nuclear, and disarmament movement, the “life-peace movement” that links peace and the ecological value of life, the peace movement for the civil rights of social minorities, the women’s peace movement, the peace culture and education movement, and regional grass-roots peace movements, pursue a relatively universal peace movement, movements such as the North Korea aid movement and the anti-American unification movement can be defined as “Korean peninsula-specific peace movements” (Koo 2006, 10-11).⁶

6. Koo (2006) categorized the peace movement in various ways, noting the conformity of the organizations that participated in the 2004 Korean Peace Activist Workshop. Among these, the category based on the main agent of the movement is noteworthy. First of all, Koo divided the peace movement into the civil peace movement and the popular (class-oriented) peace movement. According to Koo, the civil peace movement postulates the universal human being as a victim of violence and war, while the popular peace movement focuses on the scenarios of nonpeace resulting from capitalism. In this distinction, both state and capital can be set up as the main agents exercising structural violence, so that the civil peace movement aims towards an “antistate peace movement” while the popular peace movement is closer to an “anticapital peace movement.” Secondly, considering the system of division particular to the Korean peninsula, we can divide the peace movement into the nationalist peace movement and the anti/nonnationalist peace movement. This issue is related not only to the main agent but also to whether the issues of unification and peace, which are set out as the main objectives of the peace movement, can be significantly combined (Koo 2006, 12). According to Koo, the civil peace movement, the nationalist peace movement, and the anti/nonnationalist peace movement are part of the civil society perspective of unification that is emphasized in this paper.

Peace movements specific to the Korean peninsula are directly related to the unification movement. Universal value-oriented peace movements can also be easily connected to the Korean unification movement in that peace on the Korean peninsula through the promotion of an anti-war and anti-nuclear state resonates with universal values. The peace movement within the cycle of civil society movements has the effect of further diversifying the unification movement. Since the 1990s, the unification movement deviated significantly from state exclusiveness and people-orientedness as it became increasingly oriented towards civil society. As a result of the expansion of civil society and peace movements, the unification movement deviated unification movement from the paradigm of the theory of state-initiated unification.

Post-Cold War Civic Consciousness

In the division-statism historical conjuncture, South Korean consciousness of unification was based on strong nationalist sentiments, which overlapped with state ideology and thus led to division and conflict between conservative and progressive nationalism in the Cold War era. Along with the transition to the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture, this overlap of nationalism and state ideology showed weakening tendencies. Meanwhile, civic consciousness regarding unification based on a strong national identity also gradually weakened.

Since the mid-2000s, steady changes in public consciousness on unification are reflected in the historical frame of post-Cold War market-centrism. According to a survey conducted by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) of Seoul National University, respondents acknowledging the need for unification increased from 51.8% in 2008 to 55.8% in 2009 (M. Park et al. 2008, 2009, 2010). However, in the same survey administered in 2007, 63.8% of respondents acknowledged the need for unification; according to the Korea Institute for National Unification's (KINU) national opinion poll in 2005 regarding unification (J. Park et al. 2005), 83.9% of respondents

agreed that unification was necessary. The level of consciousness regarding the need for unification has dropped considerably over time, with the exception of a slight increase in the last three years. This short-term rise in positive responses reflects recent events such as nuclear problems or the Cheonan Incident. From the perspective of the theory of state-initiated unification—which is based on the perception that South and North Korea are both fundamentally incomplete as individual nation-states—the fact that only about half of South Koreans saw the need for unification as of 2008, for example, suggests a huge shift in the national perspective on unification.

Civic awareness regarding the specific reasons necessitating unification shows an even more pronounced tendency. In a 2008 survey administered by the IPUS, a majority of 57.9% responded that unification is necessary “because we are one people.” However, in the result of the same survey in 2010, 43% of respondents gave the same answer, showing a decreasing trend. In contrast, 14.5% of respondents in 2008 answered that unification is needed to lift the threat of war, followed by 23.4% in 2009 and 24.1% in 2010, showing a growing trend. Meanwhile, 17.1% responded in 2008 that unification is needed for Korea to become a developed country; this figure rose to 18.6% in 2009 and 20.7% in 2010 (M. Park et al. 2008, 2009, 2010).

Based on the responses regarding the reasons for unification, it is apparent that the justification for unification based on national identity is gradually fading. Additionally, sentiments basing the need for unification on realistic factors such as the threat of war or economic development are increasing. These results do not differ greatly from other similar public awareness surveys. The KINU survey in 2005 also showed that 35% of respondents chose “restoring a single nation” as the reason for unification, and 27.9% chose “economic development” and 20.4% chose “the prevention of war” (J. Park et al. 2005). Other answers included relieving the pain of separated families (11.4%) and the improvement of life for North Koreans (3.2%). Although the restoration of a single nation based on national identity still received a relatively high response (35%), is not such a high percentage, given the sum of all other practical reasons (62.9%) (M. Park et al. 2010).

These changes in the civic awareness of unification show that the values of national identity and Cold War nationalism have been greatly weakened. In particular, in the 2008 survey by the IPUS, 16.3% of respondents indicated that they were “satisfied with the current situation,” showing a 4.5% increase from 11.8% in 2007. In 2007, 8.6% of respondents were uninterested in unification, close to a twofold increase from 4.8% in 2007, showing that the level of indifference about unification is growing to significant extents. In the post-Cold War period, Korean civil society is faced with the reality of a weakening national identity and increasing civic indifference towards unification.

The Theory of Civil Society-Initiated Unification and Civic Nationalism

The Logic of Civic Nationalism and the Identity of the Korean Peninsula

Civic nationalism can be considered a new nationalist frame that underpins the theory of civil society-initiated unification in the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture, in which the Cold War national identity and notions of unification continue to decline. Civic nationalism, as opposed to ethnic nationalism, can be defined as an attempt to redefine the concept of the nation in accordance with postmodern global social change.⁷

7. The view that defines the nation as an imaginary community (Anderson 1991) as well as classic modernists such as Hobsbawm and Gellner, emphasize the gradually diminishing importance of nationalism (Hobsbawm 1990). Gellner (1983) argued that nationalism was important during the transition from the agricultural to industrial society, but its importance gradually weakened during the industrial era, especially in the latter part of the industrial era when it lost its power to mobilize the populace. Furthermore, there is the opinion that nationalism is pathological in that it mobilizes its members and marks outsiders as a group that threatens the members of the community and culture (Greenfeld 1992). In this sense, nationalism and the concept of nation can be said to have exaggeratedly strengthened national identity and uniqueness.

Today, the nation-state and nationalism are faced with formidable challenges in the changed postmodern and post-Cold War environment. If these challenges are categorized into internal and external challenges of the state, internal challenges are related to the various sources that make up the identity of multicultural citizens within the state and it becomes less likely that diversity will be incorporated into traditional nationalism (Schwarzmantel 2004, 390). As Schwarzmantel (2004, 390) indicated, “external challenges are those of supranational institutions and international loyalties which rival those of the nation-state.”

Traditional nationalism in the postmodern process of globalization has gradually lost its prominence. In particular, traditional forms of nationalism, such as Cold War nationalism in Korea in which nationalism’s exclusive properties were enhanced, weaken democracy and diminish civil rights. Nonetheless, in the case of Russia, where communism collapsed in 1989, there has been a new revival of nationalism, while in Western liberal-capitalist states experiencing the homogenization trend of globalization, ethnic belonging still remains significant. Korean society is once again faced with changed conditions in which antidemocratic and divisive elements inherent in nationalism are surfacing as problems. Under these circumstances, civic nationalism is presented as an alternative that guarantees democracy without rejecting the attributes of nationalism.⁸

Civic nationalism defines the nation as the association of its citizens. In other words, citizens are the nation. A nation of citizens is united by shared political rights and democratic procedures. In this respect, unlike in ethnic nationalism where a nation is determined by citizens’ heritage and birthplace, the concept of nation in civic nationalism is political. Civic nationalism exists regardless of demographic factors such as race, color, religion, sex, language, or ethnicity, and

8. In Korea, interest in civic nationalism can be traced to Choi Jang Jip, an eminent scholar of Korean politics. Choi recognized nationalism as “one real entity” and proposed the idea of civic nationalism combining democracy and peace as an alternative principle to explore the ideal of a universal human community (J. Choi 1996, 200).

considers all people who follow the political beliefs of that community as citizens. The civic nation is a community of equals and ensures equal rights for all citizens who are united by sentiments of patriotism built through political practice and shared values. Therefore, civic nationalism is inevitably democratic (Ignatieff 1994, 6). Most societies are not ethnically homogeneous in their ethnic makeup; even in a homogeneous society, emphasizing ethnicity-based national identity does not weaken or eliminate the different demarcations between members of society. Ethnicity-based national identity is only one of the many factors that require allegiance from the individual members of society. According to civic nationalism, what binds together a civic nation is not ethnic heritage but the law. By following democratic procedures and values, individuals earn the right to construct their lives as a member of the community. In this respect, national belonging in civic nationalism can be called “a form of rational attachment” (Ignatieff 1994, 7).

Types of civic nationalism can be categorized based on the size of the political community. It may be formed at a single country level, such as in South Korea, or at broader regional levels as exemplified by the European Union. That is, various regional identities can be formed at an intermediate level between global and national level. Civic nationalism formed by integrating the legal citizenships of South and North Korea through unification may create a civic nationalism of the Korean peninsula, or, in other words, the conception of a “Korean peninsula identity” beyond the traditional national identity currently in place. At this juncture when, I believe, Korea is undergoing the process of unification, even if there is no civic nationalism in the Korean peninsula, it is necessary to continue to promote a unified sense of peninsular consciousness and share the values of unity and peace. In this sense, civic nationalism has several important implications for the unification and identity of the Korean peninsula.

First, civic nationalism can secure the structure of an open civil society, which will lead to unification. The most serious obstacle to unification within the South Korean society is the ideological conflicts between Cold War nationalism and progressive nationalism. This

conflict leads to narrow-minded nationalism, and this nationalism makes it hard for civil society to become open-minded to unification. North Korean refugees are victims of this ideological conflict, as they are treated as a minority reflecting this division rather than being granted the same status as South Korean citizens. With the growing number of foreign workers and the increasing multiculturalness of Korean society, overcoming ethnic nationalism and expanding civic nationalism will enable a democratic civic community. This will lead the way to an open civil society and ultimately to unification.

Second, civic nationalism can be a device to prevent more division by maintaining a balance between the abstract universalism of cosmopolitanism and the narrow-minded particularism. Unification is ultimately an issue of social integration. The implementation of a true unification politics has been delayed because the problem of Korean unification has been mired in Cold War nationalism; thus, national particularism has not contributed to the progression of unification. Furthermore, in considering the post-unification situation, South and North Korea are likely to each become trapped in another type of national particularism, as the two nations went through different histories of nation-building. Establishing civic nationalism prior to unification will enable the prospect of preventing further division after unification, as civic nationalism will be able to provide a point of compromise between national particularism and excessive universalism.

Third, civic nationalism will build an open social order in Korean peninsula, securing the support of neighboring countries or global support for unification. Cold War nationalism, in which a nation maintains close relationships only with its main allies and remains closed to the rest of the international community, inevitably creates a structure of tension and conflicts between countries. However, as civic nationalism has a structure of universal openness, its establishment will invite neighboring countries and the world community to support Korean unification.

The post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture is a global process. In this process, it is difficult for the paradigm of statism to be effective for unification. Even if unification were to occur

due to sudden changes in North Korea, the unification paradigm of statism is bound to reveal obvious limitations. In this respect, a more in-depth examination of the main prospects of civic nationalism will reinforce the significance of the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

The Frame of Civic Nationalism and National Reconciliation

Division in the Korean peninsula denotes not only the physical North-South division, but has a complex and multifaceted structure. Liberation from Japan in 1945 created a geographical as well as sociocultural division on the peninsula, and the establishment of separate governments in the North and the South in 1948 stabilized the structure of division between the two regimes. The subsequent Korean War created a context of hostility and hatred between the divided nations. Since then, the two Koreas took different paths of development, aggravating the division in the cultural ways of life of South and North Korean citizens (J. Lee 2010, 15-16). These layers of division show that the effects of division are deeply embedded in the peninsula, ranging from the structural level to the psychological dimension of individuals and families.

It can be said that the unification frame most suitable to the theory of civil society-initiated unification is a “national reconciliation frame.” The national reconciliation frame is aimed at healing the microscopic scars of Korean civil society in the multilayered structure of the division, and in that sense it is the most fundamental and process-oriented approach to unification. Also, as civil society is the sphere in which traces of division remains in the most existential way, while the values of peace, equality, cooperation, sharing, and assistance are simultaneously at work in the most efficient way, it can be said that the national reconciliation frame is the most civil society-oriented unification frame. The reconciliation frame is fundamentally based on pacifism in the sense that it aims to create a mutually peaceful state. This is related to the principle of “seeking common ground while reserving differences” (*qiutong cunyi* 求同存異) as well as the

idea of “symbiosis and harmony” (*gongsheng gonghe* 共生共和).⁹

Although the reconciliation frame has its origins in the April 19 Revolution of 1960 and the Christian unification debate of the 1980s (*Maeil Business Newspaper*, June 9, 1983), it was initially proposed as a collective and practical unification movement in the 1989 Religious Declaration of National Reconciliation signed by six religious groups including Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Won Buddhism, and Cheondoism. The formation of the National Religious Conference for Peace led by Reverend Kang Won-yong, former chairman of the Korea Conference on Religion and Peace (KCRP), as well as the creation of a unified religious coalition promoting inter-Korean harmony and unification, added a religious connotation to the idea of national reconciliation (*Dong-A Ilbo*, February 27, 1989; *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, February 28, 1989).¹⁰ In 1995, with

9. The “win-win theory of history,” which applies the value of reconciliation to the North-South historical exchange, is also rooted in the ideology of reconciliation in Buddhism and Korean Confucianism. Historian Cho Kwang emphasized that since the academic circles in South and North Korea have different theories and methodologies for the study of history and apply mutually disparate perspectives, the exploration of a historical view of national reconciliation is essential. In the process of exploring this win-win theory of history, Cho traced the origins of reconciliation ideology to the “Hwajaeng Logic” of Great Master Wongwang and Great Master Wonhyo from Silla era Buddhist thought and to Jang Hyeon-gwang’s Neo-Confucian “Taeguk (Great Ultimate) Doctrine” (K. Cho 2003).

10. The Declaration of the Religious Clergy of 1989, which condenses the spirit of national reconciliation, demonstrates that the lack of religious introspection was partly to blame for the tragedy of division, and elucidates the achievement of a just and peaceful national unification and a unified national independent state before the nation. Furthermore, it also reveals its aims to reject the invasion of other powers wanting to enforce the permanent the division of the two Koreas and “achieve national reconciliation and national peace by taking charge of our own national fate and take the opportunity to create a new culture.” Consequently, the Korea Conference on Religion and Peace adopted five doctrines of practice including: promoting free visits, exchange, and pilgrimages between religious people in the Koreas; demanding peace talks between religious people in the Koreas; building a peace hall where religious people from the Koreas can pray and talk together; jointly publishing religious material for the promotion of peace in the Koreas; developing peace education; and establishing and operating a consultative group of religious people from the Koreas (*Kyunghyang Shinmun*, February 28, 1989).

the establishment of the National Reconciliation Committee of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Seoul, the unification frame of reconciliation was further expanded. On the 50th anniversary of Korean independence from Japanese forced occupation, it emphasized 50 years of division and declared that “today’s church has the responsibility to contribute to the reconciliation and unity of the national community.”¹¹ The Catholic National Reconciliation Committee expanded the unification frame of reconciliation in a practical manner by operating the National Reconciliation School and launching a National Reconciliation Committee in each parish. The Catholic community’s promotion of the national reconciliation frame seems to have provided momentum to the launch of the National Reconciliation Committee in North Korea in May 1998.¹² As for civil society organizations, the National Reconciliation Academy, operated by the

11. The Declaration of the Inauguration of the Seoul Archdiocese’s National Reconciliation Committee.

12. In tracing the history of the concept of national reconciliation, I interviewed Cho Kwang, professor in the Department of Korean History at Korea University and writer of the 1989 Declaration of Religious People for National Reconciliation. After the Catholic National Reconciliation Committee was launched in November 1995, National Reconciliation Committee officials, including Cho, held a meeting with officials of the North Korean Catholic Association in New Jersey and began discussions on national reconciliation. Cho debated with Jang Jae Chol, the then Chairman of the North Korean Catholic Association as well as the North Korean Red Cross (Cho believes Jang changed his name to Jang Jae-eon later on) for approximately two hours. In the process, it was mentioned that “although Rhee Syngman and Kim Il-Sung emphasized unification, the result was war, but reconciliation is a necessary step before we can achieve unification.” Then in 1996, the Catholic National Reconciliation Committee invited their North Korean counterparts for a visit in Beijing; Jang Jae-cheol is said to have shown a very positive response to the idea of national reconciliation. Later on in May 1998, when Cho and his party visited Pyongyang, the National Reconciliation Committee was established in North Korea. Although the South Korean Catholic National Reconciliation Committee was not directly connected to this, Cho hypothesized that previous talks influenced the formation of the committee. In addition, after the establishment of the North Korean National Reconciliation Committee, Cho recalls that a South Korean government organization questioned the relation between the launch of the North Korean committee and the Catholic National Reconciliation Committee (Cho Kwang, interview by the author, October 20, 2009).

CCEJ Unification Association, was created in 1996, following the model of the Catholic National Reconciliation School, and has since set up a branch of the school in many regions of the country.

The national reconciliation frame successfully brought together the institutional and activist domains in 1998 through the formation of the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KCRC), which was launched as a permanent consultation body for the unification movement and consisting of more than 200 organizations including political parties, religions, and civil society organizations. In addition to projects for inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation, the key objectives of the KCRC sought to reach agreements on national reconciliation through internal dialogue among groups within the South. The KCRC not only substantially contributes to the efficient cooperation with the North, but more importantly, by including both conservative and progressive organizations, expands communication within South Korean civil society (D. Cho 2009, 55). Although the role of the government cannot be excluded from the circumstances of division, the KCRC clearly showed its civil society-orientation in the main spirit and strategy of national reconciliation.

The unification frame based on reconciliation provided the most optimal form of movement that the theory of civil society-initiated unification could create and has made remarkable achievements for the unification movement in civil society. However, as inter-Korean relations have cooled recently, the frame of reconciliation is also withering, and this could lead to the eventual demise of the theory of civil society-initiated unification itself. Under these circumstances, the unification frame of reconciliation as a key idea of the theory of civil society-initiated unification needs to be further expanded by adopting the goals outlined in the following paragraphs.

First, the frame of reconciliation must be oriented towards historical reconciliation. Since the effects of division were created historically, the tragic experiences of fratricidal war remain as historical memories in the process of division. Such collective experiences and memories should be publicly confirmed and openly discussed rather than brushing them under the rug in attempts to forget them. A

shared structure needs to be put into place by which citizens can grieve together over these tragic experiences.

Second, the unification frame of reconciliation should be oriented towards reconciliation through exchange. Forms of inter-Korean exchange must be diversified, but considering the size of the economies of South and North Korea, the range of exchanges supporting the North should be first expanded. North Korea is facing an economic crisis that may be threatening the country's very survival. The expansion of support for North Korea could increase the probability of national reconciliation.

Third, the frame of reconciliation must be participatory. The frame of reconciliation is geared towards civil society. Therefore, unification programs enlisting civic participation, such as those of the KCRC, enable both parties to approach fundamental reconciliation whereas the current government's reconciliation policy is likely to stop at slogans and unkept declarations. If the government wishes to pursue practical and effective unification politics, then civic participation methods must be strengthened.

Since the 1990s, the unification frame based on reconciliation as established by civil society in the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture has consistently pursued the historical, participatory, and exchange reconciliation approaches. Above all, the reconciliatory view of unification is a meaningful model for the theory of civil society-initiated unification, of which civic nationalism is the axle. At a time when the theory of civil society-initiated unification is weakening, the reconciliation frame should be pursued even more fervently.

Conclusion: Crisis and Future Outlook of the Theory of Civil Society-Initiated Unification

The theory of civil society-initiated unification is a unification paradigm that reflects the changes in civil society following global social change and the democratization of Korean politics in the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture. The statist paradigm of

unification of the previous historical conjuncture now shows clear limitations as a practical and effective unification discourse. In the new historical conjuncture, trends such as the expansion of non-political civilian exchanges and peace movements, civic-led unification movements, and a unification governance of civic participation are new practices that broaden the horizons of the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

When differentiating between civil society as a realistic mode of existence and civil society as a normative community, the theory of civil society-initiated unification focuses on the aspect of civil society as a normative community oriented towards the values of peace and equality, a green environment, autonomy, and coexistence. These norms and values of civil society are implemented through civic nationalism, which goes beyond the narrow scope of Cold War nationalism and will consequently be able to expand the conditions of the unification-oriented civil society. Civic nationalism can be defined as a new nationalist view which goes beyond ethnic or lineage-based nationalism and embraces anyone who shares civil rights and democratic political procedures as a citizen of a nation. Civic nationalism, by combining the various values of civil society oriented toward global publicness with notions of national identity, contains in the least both universalism and national particularism. Above all, because civic nationalism goes beyond the Cold War national identity and is based on civic identity, it can become the new unification frame to build an open civil society as a process of unification.

Because civic nationalism is an order that, through citizenship and democratic procedures, combines members with different ethnic origins who exist within the same political community, the theory of civil society-initiated unification inevitably requires a democratic political order. If the theory of state-initiated unification in the division-statism historical conjuncture implied an authoritarian political order, the theory of civil society-initiated unification is interconnected with a democratic political order.

Recently, the Lee Myung-bak administration's so-called reciprocity unification paradigm shows, in many ways, retrogressive tenden-

cies in line with the theory of state-initiated unification. The reciprocity paradigm arose from criticism that the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations' policy of engagement with North Korea resulted in the North's uncompromising attitude and failure to fulfill promises. The paradigm of reciprocity attempts to make inter-Korean relations equal and symmetrical while emphasizing the simultaneous implementation of mutual obligations by evaluating the execution of agreements at each stage. Such an attitude has seriously compromised inter-Korean relations and resulted in new confrontations such as the recent Cheonan Incident. Above all, the exclusion of civil society inherent in the policy of reciprocity towards the North represents the untimely resurrection of the theory of state-initiated unification. The reciprocity policy leans toward a theory of state-initiated unification centered on political security by linking political and military issues with economic and sociocultural exchange. In particular, linking the North Korean nuclear issue to inter-Korean economic cooperation, as presented in "The Vision 3000: Denuclearization and Openness Policy," is bound to give priority to the political and national security issue of denuclearization (D. Cho 2009, 56-57). Such a reciprocity policy prioritizing political security leaves little space for civil society to intervene. Moreover, the reciprocity paradigm emphasizes international relations and tries to resolve inter-Korean relations in the context of international politics rather than considering it a national matter, which in turn results in excessive emphasis on strengthening the Korea-U.S. alliance. An international relations approach attempts to resolve inter-Korean relations at the international politics level, which also inherently limits intervention by civil society.

The Lee Myung-bak administration's current policy towards the North has placed inter-Korean relations back in the Cold War conflict structure, debilitating the autonomous functions of civil society. Contemporary social change in South Korea reflects the greater global order. The division-statism historical conjuncture after the Liberation was a reaction to the World War II and the following Cold War, and the post-Cold War market-centrism historical conjuncture after the 1990s was a result of the new global trend of marketization that

unfolded after the collapse of socialism. These enormous changes are already accompanied by the global trend of a bottom-up structured civil society. The revival of the theory of state-initiated unification countering such a significant global trend can be linked to the regression of democracy. The tensions in the Korean peninsula must not grow as a result of the statism perspective's return, and the peninsula must certainly not become the source of the destruction of the order of peace. Global social change in the post-Cold War historical conjuncture is, above all, a massive force that demands the expansion of the theory of civil society-initiated unification.

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