

Gyeongbu Expressway: Political Economic Geography of Mobility and Demarcation*

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This paper examines the Gyeongbu (Kyöngbu) Expressway construction from the standpoint of the political economy pursued by President Park Chung-Hee (Pak Chöng-hüi) in the 1960s. Specifically, I examine the politics of mobility and demarcation. I will argue that Gyeongbu Expressway was a powerful symbol to promote the socio-spatial integration of the population which enforced the authoritative political power of the Park regime through the creation of mobility. Moreover, it has had a strong impact on changing the physical landscape of national space and the spatio-temporal rhythm of everyday life by extending the 'machine space' as a non-place. Finally, it has provided a physical infrastructure through which the capital's circulation could be reduced. But Gyeongbu Expressway has also led to serious problems such as uneven regional development, the expansion of non-place or alienated place, ecological destruction and pollution. In conclusion, a sustainable politics is suggested to overcome this kind of "tragedy of highway" to develop a highway as an integration and balance of politics and space.

Keywords: Gyeongbu Highway, Geo-strategy of transport, Automobility, Non-place, Machine space, Uneven Regional Development, Korea

I. INTRODUCTION

The construction of Gyeongbu (Kyöngbu) Expressway by President Park Chung-Hee (Pak Chöng-hüi) during a period of rapid economic growth in the 1960s, was an important event. It justified authoritative political power

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while simultaneously rewriting the history of Korean national land. Indeed, politics as an exercise of power is always deployed spatially, on it, through it and under spatial conditions. As Foucault says, “A whole *history* remains to be written of *spaces* — which would at the same time be the history of *powers*” (Foucault 1980: 149; original emphases). Viewed within a context of a politics of space or a political geography (or Foucauldian geo-politics, if you like), a new construction or expansion of transport, especially a new expressway which differs significantly from existing traditional roads can be seen two ways. Practically, it can be seen as a result of historical efforts to accelerate the mobility of people and things, while symbolically, it justified political power.

In ancient Greece and Rome, it was necessary for central political powers to construct and maintain roads to peripheral regions to keep and extend their influence. In general, new routes and modes of transportation reduce the negative effects of distance while they increase spatial mobility. By increasing spatial accessibility as well as the circulation of people, materials, and information between nodes and networks, roads promote ‘connection effects’ for social and political integration. In short, roads extend the influence of central power to peripheral regions, creating centripetal force towards the center of power. New transport facilities allow not just access to new resources while increasing the transport speed of commodities, they also strengthen military mobility, capability, and enhance their territorial control. Construction of new transport networks can therefore be seen as a part of territorial strategy or geo-strategy of political power.

In modern history when nation-states settled down their territorial borders, construction and the extension of transport still played an important role, or at least a much more important than before, for capitalist economic growth and to promote centralized political power. Both the internal enforcement of centralized political power and the enhancement of social and spatial integration along with either external territorial expansion or the colonial exploration of modern states need to be supported by transport systems. The development and use of new transport systems generated a decisive moment that shows the symbolic dominance of a modern technological civilization. Moreover, it changes everyday life with new spatial landscapes and temporal rhythms. Construction of new transport networks such as expressways and the invention of new transport means (that is,

transport technology and machines) to use them have expanded *machine space*, and led to new modes of daily life which are dependent on them.

Even though increasing socio-spatial mobility and accessibility through both construction and the expansion of transport is a long-range task, the processes of creating mobility and the demarcation effect caused by them are ultimately very symbolic for developing a capitalist economy. In particular, the rapid development of transport and communication technology in contemporary society has accompanied the development of automobile industry, as well as the growth of construction (and real estate) capital to extend transport infrastructures. The development of transport has promoted the circulation of goods and capital over time and space and reduced the period of return on invested capital, hence contributing to an increased profit rate for capital.

But development of transport has tended to bring about an effect of spatial demarcation that has deepened disparity between regions included in and excluded from constructed transport systems. Cities connected by transport networks enjoy a reduction of time-distance, while those excluded from transport networks bear a relatively more distant time-distance. Moreover, even within cities included in a transport system, uneven geographical development between a central city and peripheral ones can intensify since capital, power, and information are concentrated in the central city. This is because the central city functions as the hub that controls the transport system and social and spatial interactions, which is, the so-called “straw effect.” In this situation, transport can bring about not only a socio-spatial “integration effect” between regions but also a separate effect which demarcates the national land space which gives rise to political conflicts between them.

I examine the construction and management process of Gyeongbu Expressway, especially focusing on the effects brought about by this new mode and route of transport. I first look at recent research trends on the construction of expressways and their political and economic geographical effects in Korea. I then analyze the political and military characteristics of the geo-strategy that president Park Chung-Hee pursued in constructing the Gyeongbu Expressway. I point out that the construction of the Gyeongbu Expressway in the name of “modernization of the fatherland” and of “speed

war” has extended a modern ‘machine space’ generating “non-place,” and led to a time-space compression to promote economic growth and the accumulation of capital. But it has also generated a decisive moment that frames the uneven regional development between the included and excluded regions, and even within the included regions. It exemplifies non-sustainable development, environmental destruction and highlights the increase in traffic accidents. As a final remark, this paper will briefly outline alternative politics for sustainable transport construction.

II. RECENT RESEARCH TRENDS ON EXPRESSWAYS IN KOREA

Research on expressways includes examining its effects, but this is conducted from the perspective of transport geography, analyzing route and usage. This information is derived from an economic geography that examines changes in land-use, industrial location, and the post-construction regional economy. Research that uses political geography focuses on the political process of decision making for huge public projects, their political symbolism, the political effects of social and spatial integration, and conflicts between regions. The environmental geography approach deals with ecological and environmental impacts, while social and cultural geography study psychological and behavioral changes in the consciousness and lifestyle of users.

This work will analyze Gyeongbu Expressway from a political and economic geographical perspective. I will focus on the expressway’s effect on mobility and demarcation, though I will also include those aspects of its geography as mentioned above. A review on existing research on expressways which examine the political aims and characters of the decision makers. In addition, conflicts between regional interests, political and administrative mobilization of technical workers and public finance, and political and psychological effects of its construction will be examined.

Ryoo’s research on existing expressway constructions (Ryoo 1991) seems most interesting and useful. This work interprets 88 Olympic Expressway as a political symbol mobilized by the new military regime of the President

Chun Doo Hwan (Chŏn Tu-hwan). According to Ryoo, even though public policy is often seen as a rational process using scientific analysis, many cases have been decided through non-analytical and non-rational processes. This is driven by the desire to use such projects to garner political power. That is, public policies that include expressway construction can function as political symbols that address the dissatisfaction and discontent of people while simultaneously promoting socio-spatial integration. For example, the 88 Olympics Expressway connects Daegu and Kwangju, two central cities of from regions that harbor mutual conflicts. Because the new military regime could not establish legitimacy, it used the Expressway construction as a scapegoat for its own political problems: first, the regime emphasized the necessity of construction of the Expressway by pointing out the physical and geographical disconnection rather than politics as the primary reason for their regional conflict. In doing so, the regime used a geo-strategy to weaken or dilute critiques against their own lack of legitimacy as well as the undemocratic nature of the new military regime. This in turn mobilized political discourses for national reconciliation (Ryoo 1991: 237).

That a dominant political power uses political symbols for its legitimation and national integration is well matched with the concept of iconography. This concept refers to a symbolic system such as national flags, heroes, statues, and other symbols and beliefs which represent the nation. These symbols and promote a sense of a common destination and shared sentiments amongst the general populace (Im 1997: 13, 49).

The 88 Olympic Expressway can thus be seen through the lens of political symbols or iconography. The Jeon regime tried to gain national support by emphasizing the Expressway's role reducing regional conflicts, creating a myth of national harmony about it despite the fact its construction was rushed, it had only two lanes, and its economic effect was minimal (Ryoo 1991: 238). These geo-political manipulations were used not only during the authoritative regimes of president Park and Jeon, but also in the recent democratic governments. For example, during a policy forum on the construction of the East-West Expressway connecting Pohang and Saemangum, discussants talked about "reconciliation and development between regions through expressway," using the phrase *tongdo ikchin* (通道益親) which means "to connect roads is to increase friendships" (Rhu 2009).

These studies that argue expressways were constructed function as political symbols or iconography directly influence those that explore the politics of those who decided to construct these expressways. For instance, Kwak's study characterizes the political leadership of president Park Chung-Hee as consequential paternalism. For example, President Park's leadership pursued the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway as a symbolic project of the idea of "modernization of fatherland", presupposing a speed war and anti-communism within the project. During President Park Chung-Hee's leadership, the decision-making process in the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway seems to be justifiable with its results, yet it does not necessarily exemplify a democratic and constitutive leadership. This research is useful in that it enables us to see how the decision-makers' characters are reflected in large public policies. like the Gyeongbu Expressway with its impact on national land space. This research can also be seen as illustrating how the Gyeongbu Expressway construction exemplifies particular ruler's political leadership rather than the social and spatial characteristics of the Express itself.

The second type of research deals with political issues surrounding the construction of expressways. That includes local movements against expressway construction, regional conflicts about route location, political mobilization of public finances and land expropriation. For example, local movements opposing expressway construction have been continuously active since the late 1960's with the Gyeongbu Express to that of Western Expressway of the capital region (Suwon-Kwangmyeong) in 2008 and the Third Gyeongin (Kyöngin) Expressway in 2010. There are several studies on local and national scale conflicts surrounding the route sites as well as political efforts to resolve them. For example, Kim, C. (2003) examines conflicts and resolutions by focusing on the reappraisal case of the Cheongseong (Ch'öngsöng) and Keumjeong (Kümjöng) Mountain Track of Gyeongbu Train Express; Park, H. (2009) analyzes conflicting and cooperating factors between government and NGOs using the case of the Chuncheon (Ch'unchön)-Yangyang Express Way Route Section.

Yet research on movements against expressway construction has little import when examining the construction process of Gyeongbu Expressway, because there were some oppositions to, and conflicts around it, but these

could not appear obvious under an already authoritative regime of President Park. There was only one exceptional study, of Park, H. (1969), who analyzed the background of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway in terms of how the role of leader reflected on the construction plan, the pros and cons of the Expressway, the resolution of conflicts, and the economic and social effects expected with its construction. This important research provides a variety of real data that vividly depicts the political circumstances of that time, as it was conducted and published just before the completion and opening of the expressway, despite the inherent difficulty of researching such issues objectively.

The third type of research is concerned with economic, political, social, and psychological effects that have resulted from the construction of expressways. There are many studies on the economic effects of expressway construction. Most of the research on this issue has tended to expect expressway construction to produce positive effects on the regions around expressway routes. For example, according to Yang's research (2005), it was estimated that the Seohaean (Söhaean, western coast) Expressway would satisfy the increased demand for transportation in the capital region, promote development of major regions along the western coast, and improve national logistics and tourism. The positive effects of the Seohaean Expressway on the development of regional economies have been confirmed by Jeon and Kang (2007), especially in terms of changes in population and employment. But the construction of new modes and/or routes of transport, such as new (car or rail) expressways also seems to have negative effects. Kim, Y. (2009) has demonstrated such negative effects in regions that are connected with larger cities through expressways or express railways. The so-called straw effect describes how consumers of the former regions travel to the latter regions to purchase commodities that cannot be bought in their own regions.

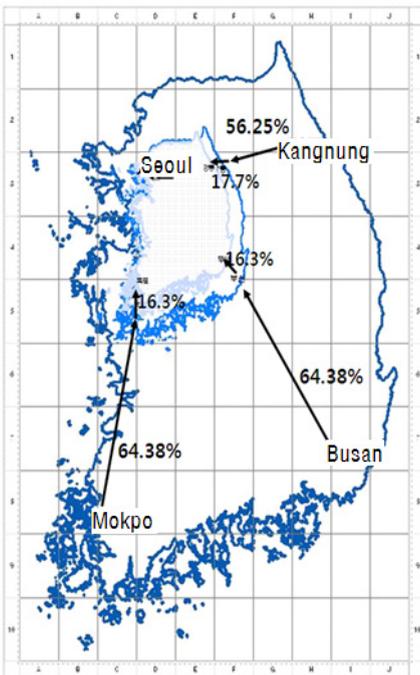
This kind of negative straw argument implies uneven regional development between cities even within the boundary of new expressway construction. In fact, uneven regional development between the capital and other regions in Korea has become one of the most serious social and political issues in recent years. This issue is the result of the concentration of all kinds of transport and communication systems, including Gyeongbu Expressway, around Seoul. As we shall discuss later, the controversy on this issue can be

traced back to the time of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway (Han 2009), There seems to be no question that the Expressway is a major axis of this uneven regional development, though it is difficult to find studies that have explored how and to what extent the expressway has impacted it.

Another area of research on expressways suggests that the transnational extension of expressways would bring about greater political and economic exchange of people and goods. In this sense, Lee and Lee (2006) discuss a necessity and background of the plan to link the Korean Peninsula, China, Japan, and Russia with one network of expressways, and suggest implementing stages of the plan. Kim and Park (2006) tries to estimate the national and regional effects when a Korea-China-Japan network of highways is realized. The extension of expressway across national borders would predictably bring about greater economic cooperation and development

of regions and/or countries through increased connectivity and accessibility. Yet this would also cause economic and political unevenness among them, Seen from a geopolitical point of view this can be used as means by which the political influence of a stronger country could spread toward its neighboring weaker countries. It is precisely this point of view that was implied in President Park Chung-Hee's assessment of the unification of the Korean Peninsula when he tried to construct Gyeongbu Expressway.

Finally, there is research that seems to be relevant here for this work, especially in terms of the social and psychological effects of expressway construction. The construction of expressways has the effect of reducing the time-distance between regions in and around the expressway, while



Source: Kim and Jeong (2008).

Figure 1. A cognitive map of effect of reducing time-distance through construction of expressway network.

increasing the speed of movement or accessibility. Kim and Jeong (2009) estimates that a direct connection via an expressway reduces the time-distance, in comparison between before and after construction, by 60%. But the psychological effect of reducing time-distance is about 16%, which is much less than the real reduction of time-distance. In particular, the psychological effect of reducing distance by the construction of expressways with an east-west axis is relatively less than that with the north-south axis, as shown in Figure 1. This research identifies the effects of rapid urban development, or time-space compression, resulting from the construction of new routes of transport. This research suggests the importance of an expressway network along the east-west axis, because the effect of reducing the psychological sense of isolation and hence removing the sense of economic, social and cultural heterogeneity, would be higher with an east-west expressway than a north-south one. This kind of research seems to lead us to see how to improve the sense of integration through the construction of expressways, but research on the social and psychological effects needs to include other important issues such as the sense of instability and non-place as well as its political effects.

III. THE CONSTRUCTION OF GYEONGBU EXPRESSWAY AS A LEADER'S GEO-POLITICAL STRATEGY

In geo-politics, transport is implicated in the exercise of political influence, the domination of territory, and as a form of regional development for the exchange of people and goods. Through increased mobility of labor power, raw materials, products, capital, technology and information, and hence enhancing the efficiency of location, transport has the economic effect of promoting the economic power of states. It also has a geo-political effect by enforcing the social and spatial integration of states, by enabling dominant political groups to conduct their geo-political strategies and tactics, and hence to extend their political influence (Im 1997; Wolfe 1963). Because it requires the investment of large financial sources and vast man power the construction of transport that requires large civil engineering works is regarded as a national project, Transport constructed as a national project

is itself a very useful social infrastructure, and can be seen as a strategy of territorial domination, a geo-strategy through which a political leader expects to have several effects, as mentioned above.

The integration and domination effect of transport construction can be identified empirically throughout history. For example, the ancient Roman empire's military engineers constructed about 50 thousand of stone-paved roads covering the whole territory and they still can be used today (Jeong, J. 2007: 68). The Roman roads were built to promote the mobility of Roman armies, and hence made a great contribution to economic and political prosperity, as it is often said that 'all roads lead to Rome.' The effective control and efficient circulation of people and goods to distant peripheral regions become more important after the formation of modern states. Transport construction has played a decisive role for extension of imperial powers as well as for expansion of capitalist markets throughout the world.

Some economic and political effects of transport that have been often suggested from the view of political geography can be summarized as follows (Im 1997). First, development of transport has the economic effect to promote the growth of regional and national economies. It does this by increasing the mobility of people, goods, capital and information which foster production components at the proper time and place. Secondly, by enhancing interchange and communication through which the power of a political leader or group can be exercised, the extension of transport strengthens social and spatial integration, Thirdly, the construction of transport has a military aspect which allows for heightens strategic performance by increasing the mobility of troops and military equipment.

President Park Chung-Hee's plan to construct the Gyeongbu Expressway can be seen as a major aspects of his geo-strategy. After he seized political power through a military coup d'état, he strongly adhered to policies of rapid economic growth and national integration. Hence, in 1962, Park's government implemented the first Economic Development Plan, which strongly emphasized regional development, including the construction of Ulsan industrial complex to foster import substitution industries such as the production of refined oil and fertilizers. In 1967, as one of his campaign promises for national land development, President Park put forth the second Economic Development Plan, which included the construction of four major

expressways (Gyeongbu, Yeongdong, Honam, and Namhae Expressway). In December 1967, after being elected president, Park Chung-Hee organized the Presidential Committee on National Expressways and installed a team for National Expressway Planning and Investigation within it. This team oversaw the groundbreaking of the first section of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway.

Even though, from the infrastructural point of view, it might be viewed as required for the development of a capitalist economy the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway can also be seen as a part of President Park's broader geo-strategy as the leader of a military regime. The effects of the Gyeongbu Expressway construction which were expected at that time included the expansion of social infrastructure, and secondly, the realization of a political leader's idea. "The implementation of a political leader" was, as is well known, the modernization of the fatherland for the purpose of making a "rich country and strong military" (富國強兵: *puguk kangbyöng*). This means the development of the national economy with increased regional productivity fostered through a rapid circulation of production factors and products. It also encompasses the consolidation of political power, including military superiority to North Korea achieved by enhancing territorial integration. Economic growth and anti-communism were two major national policies under President Park. Gyeongbu Expressway was expected to provide him with an extension of a material basis for economic growth, a real and symbolic assurance of political legitimation, and the construction of strategic infrastructure for military superiority.

The phrase "rich country and strong military" referred to economic growth and military superiority over a hostile country, North Korea, which was stressed by President Park during the construction process of Gyeongbu Expressway. For example, in a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the Expressway between Seoul and Suwon in February 1968, he announced, "There is an individual who might feel strongly threatened by our country's rapid growth of industry and by the rapid construction of infrastructure. That person is Kim Il Sung in North Korea and his puppet regime" (Park 1969: 69). What is more, he mentioned;

When it can be regarded as a part of an aorta of our country which will

penetrate from the south to the north, Gyeongbu Expressway will be a symbolic aorta and a great national project for South-North Unification as well. When the construction of Gyeongbu Express [between Seoul and Busan] is completed, the government intends to extend it to Panmunjom (Park, H. 1969: 261).

President Park Chung Hee's thinking tells the fact that the expressway is a decisive means and symbol of extending political power.¹ In this sense, he regarded the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway as 'a ceremonial project of anti-communism'.

This kind of geo-strategy, to comprehensively realize a political leader's idea, was pursued through a personal mode of governing, that is, through arbitrary decision-making and one-sided arguments by President Park. In a certain sense, it might appear difficult that Gyeongbu Expressway, given its scale and character at that time, could be planned and implemented by a government department since it required coordination and cooperation among ministries. For this reason, President Park seized administrative power and brought it under his leadership. The Presidential Committee on National Expressways and the team for National Expressway Planning and Investigation were titular organizations without any power. The president's decision-making power was absolute, even down to siting the concrete routes of the Expressway (Park, Chung-Hee 1969). In comparison with other expressways, Gyeongbu Expressway was much more significant in relation to the construction plans of Ulsan industrial complex, Pohang Iron and Steel, and other large industrial complexes along the Southeast coastal region for development of Nakdong (Naktong) River economic region. But "what seems unusual was that President Park decided directly and arbitrarily the route and construction process of Gyeongbu Expressway" (Son, J. 2003: 111).

Of course, some people, especially among intellectuals, might oppose this type of decision making process. As Son, J. (2003: 109) describes, "most of the intellectuals...were opposed, and there was even opposition among

¹ Indeed, airstrips and heliport for takeoff and landing of military aircrafts at emergency situations were constructed at several points on Gyeongbu Expressway. Those in Singal (450,000m²), Seongwhan (420,000m²), Gumi (235,000m²), and Eonyang (40,000m²) were decommissioned from facilities for military operations in 2005.

government officials and members of the ruling party.” It seems certain that there was considerable opposition against the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. Major reasons included that the maintenance of poor national and local roads should take precedence over the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway, and the view that because Korea was not very economically developed and therefore did not need an expressway. In fact, the GNP per capita of Korea at the end of 1967 was less than 150 US dollars, moreover, just after its opening, only about 9000 vehicles per day used the Gyeongbu Expressway. Thus, “there seems no doubt that it would be too early to construct such a large-scale expressway in a country which had barely US \$142 for per capita GNP ... But all opposition, including that it was premature to construct such an expressway, the argument for maintaining existing roads, and so on, were discussed only in private places or seminars, and could neither be reported in the mass media, nor published in academic journals. It was an era when nobody could dare to oppose the public policy of President Park Chung-Hee” (Son, J. 2003: 109).

Seen from a geo-strategic point of view of a political leader, internal limitations, including a shortage of financial resources and technical workers, was more serious than external opposition to constructing Gyeongbu Expressway. The total amount needed to construct the Expressway was estimated at about 30 billion won, and about 10 billion won was added in the construction process so that Gyeongbu Expressway cost a total of 43 billion won.² Assigning a formal plan to finance its construction, the government funded it by transferring transport-related taxes to a transport construction budget through legislative amendments on pertaining to an oil tax and on road improvement, issuing road bonds, transfers from general accounting, and toll revenues (see Table 1).

However, other important informal measures of financial funding for the construction were considered besides the above-mentioned formal financial

² The construction plan of Gyeongbu Expressway spurred a dramatic shift in the government’s budgetary allocation policy by increasing the budget for road construction beginning in 1968, the first year of construction for Gyeongbu Expressway. The original budget for transport in the Second Economic Development was 30.2 billion won, but it increased to 90 billion won including 33 billion won for the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway.

Table 1. Financial plan for the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway

(Unit: billion won)

	Total	1968	1969	1970	1971
Total	33.0	7.6	13.8	11.6	(△4.7)
Oil tax	11.2	3.2	3.6	4.4	-
Passage tax	3.7	-	1.7	2.0	-
Toll revenue	0.7	-	0.2	0.5	-
The fund of the claim to Japan	2.6	0.8	1.9	△0.1	(△0.1)
Grain loans	4.9	-	2.5	2.4	(△0.2)
Road bond	4.9	3.0	1.4	0.5	(△4.4)
The established budget	0.6	-	-	-	0.6
Sub-total	28.7	7.6	11.3	9.8	(△4.7)
Transfer from other accountings (Lack of fund)	4.3	-	2.5	1.8	-

Source: Ministry of Construction; cited in Park, C. (1969).

plan. For example, in order to reduce cost of land purchase for constructing the expressway, there was a measure to compel forfeiture by landowners. In the process of a land readjustment project in the Yongdong zone, a measure of voluntary oblation of land for the Expressway was sought out, as “magistrates of county (*gun, kun*) and chiefs of *myeon* (*myŏn*) and *eup* (*ŷp*) asked landowners to dedicate or to vend, if not they did not want to dedicate, their land, for national development” (Son, J. 2003: 111). Another option was to use the funds from the claim against Japan and that which was gained from the Vietnam War. As shown in Table 1, it can be seen that part of the fund from Japan was used for the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway, but it is very difficult to determine how and what amount the fund gained from the engagement in the Vietnam War was transferred to the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. But from the circumstances at that time we can surmise what one study describes as follows:

The biggest source which that allowed us to proceed with such a great project [that is, the construction of Gyeongbu Express] was in fact due to the Vietnam War. Most of the construction cost was appropriated from the so-called special boom from the Vietnam War to fund the construction cost ... The economic profit that Korea gained from the boom of the Vietnam War was

estimated at more than US dollar 5 billion in total (the exchange rate was 290 won per US \$1 at that time). The amount was really very large in comparison with US \$0.3 billion of free aid in the fund of the claims against Japan, which was the result of 14 years of negotiations. The amount of money that had been [formally] invested for the construction of Gyeongbu Express was trivial, when it compared with this amount of US \$5 billion (Sim, S. 2002).

As can be seen in this quotation, some of the funds gained from the Vietnam War negotiation were invested in the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. The construction of Gyeongbu Expressway was in a way paid for through the pain of all people during the period of Japanese colonization and to the sacrifice of young people who fought during the Vietnam War.

Another limitation to the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway was the lack of technical experts. Even though some labor supervisors were employed in different areas, officers from the engineer corps were mobilized to compensate for a lack of technical experts on road construction. "According to Kim, Jeong-Ryeom [the Presidential Chief of Staff at that time], President Park made a tour of construction fields and commanded working progress as if there were battle fields. "President Park," Kim continued, "declared a war, set up strategies, and commanded directly the combat soldiers." In concrete terms, Kim recalled, "Hhe set up a combat dispatch within the Blue House, and made three military engineering officers and one technical officer taken from the ministry of construction reside there to analyze and monitor the construction plan," (Son, J. 2003: 112). But some technical experts who participated in the construction fields expressed that "there was a rumor that working at the construction fields of the Expressway was as hard as working at the Aogi coal mine, and indeed, in their memory, the work environment for the construction was not so good," (Park, K. 2000). In the construction process of Gyeongbu Expressway, 77 people died and many others suffered injury. Moreover, as traffic increased after the opening of Gyeongbu Expressway, serious problems were exposed such as damage to the road surface, the necessity for additional pavement, and defects in bridge connections, and hence significant additional funds were necessary to repair the Expressway.



Source: © Korea Highway Corporation; http://news.khan.co.kr/section/khan_art_view.html?mode=view&artid=201003260931122&code=900306.

Figure 2. The military army and equipments in a ceremony of groundbreaking for the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway.

IV. POLITICS OF AUTO-MOBILITY AND IDEOLOGY OF MACHINE SPACE

Historically, one of major factors for military success or failure is mobility. According to famed urban planner and architect Paul Virilio, military-political regimes from the ancient Greek polis, through the development of commercial cities in Feudal Europe, to the formation of modern nation-states, all have been preoccupied with how to enhance mobility to ensure their success. In particular, the transition in the latter part of the 19th century from an infantry-centered to the logistics-centered army organization, that is, the transition of war strategy to machine-centered modernization, became a central paradigm for spatial reconfiguration on the national and global scale. Both are strategies of territorial integration, within a nation-state as well as

outside it in the race for colonization around the globe. National and global space has been reorganized in terms of offensive and defensive strategies and it is mobility that connects them. Thus national and global geo-politics or geo-strategies for spatial reconfiguration can be seen as the results of war.

The increasing machine-based mobility to overcome distance and the increased speed of warfare based on heightened mobility provide a basic framework for reorganizing modern space and time as well as developing modern states as war machines. The paradigm of creating mobility in modern space has been realized through a revolution of speed and of acceleration by mobile machinery, which is what Virilio calls the “dromocratic revolution.” For this kind of mobility revolution, space becomes the essential medium for politics. But for Virilio, the final destination of mobility politics or revolution is not geo-politics but ‘chrono-politics’. That is, “politics is less in physical space than in the time systems administered by various technologies, from telecommunications to airplanes, passing by the TGV, etc...[T]he distribution of territory becomes the distribution of time,” (Virilio 1986: 115; cited in Luke and Ó Tuathail 2000: 369). From this point of view, chrono-politics (or politics of time or speed) becomes more important, as urban space in recent years has become increasingly deterritorialized. Of course, it can be agreed that what becomes significant strategically is closely related to speed with non-place, an unfixed place without time. “The strategic value of non-placeness of speed (that is, the situation free from place through speed) has decisively substituted that of place,” (Virilio 1986). In this way, “speed become power itself,” while “stop is regarded as death.”

We can extend part of Virilio’s paradigm for spatial mobility might as it is reflected in a leader’s politics in general, and that of space or geo-strategy in particular for reconfiguring national land in Korea which has undergone colonization and to that of the Korean war, even though Virilio’s arguments have been criticized for overemphasizing the influence of war on modern society. Especially regarding President Park’s experience in the military, Virilio’s stance might be relevant. The geo-strategy of a military and political leader is an important moment wherein the sense of speed implied in the mobility of an expressway is generalized into everyday life and the culture of “faster faster” or of a speed war. This was all introduced into the Korean society. And this kind of speed culture, or the so-called “faster faster” culture,

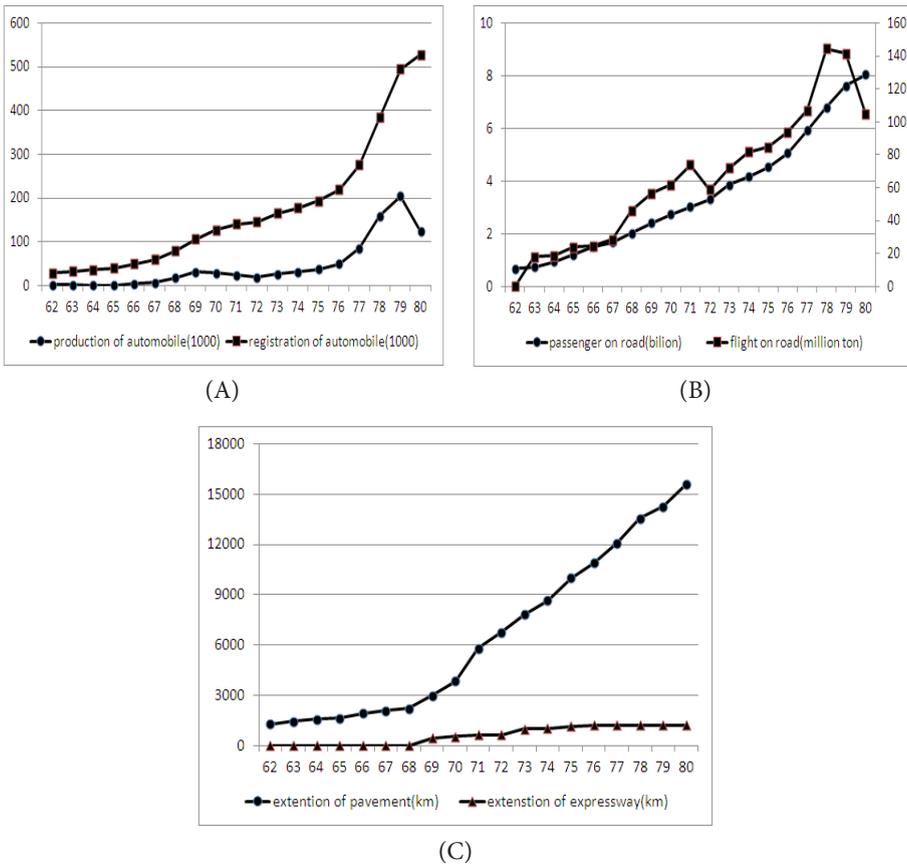
which has neither philosophy nor spirit (Ham 2010), became the ideological foundation on which political power tried to gain legitimation. This is expressed on the back of the monument proclaiming the completion of Gyeongbu Expressway which was erected at its middle point, Chupungryeong (Ch'up'ungnyŏng). It states:

This expressway is our glorious proud step forward towards the goal of modernizing the fatherland, which has been constructed under the historical decision making and direct command of President Park Chung-Hee, with our own finance, our technology, and our power, in the shortest period in the world history of expressway construction.³

Even without emphasizing the explicit influence of modern war or its implicit ideology or metaphor, mobility can be seen as a central theme of a new paradigm in both social sciences and applied ones, as Urry (2007) has suggested. Mobility refers to an autonomy of geographical movement which can be activated by overcoming spatial constraints. Mobility has been enhanced continuously with the development of transport and communication technology and means throughout history, but the hyper-spatial mobility accelerated after the latter part of 20 century becomes a core factor for the globalization of a capitalist economy. These factors all generate a nomadic everyday life. Spatial mobility includes the mobility of the human body, that of materials (e.g. car and other types of vehicles, that of symbols (TV, Internet, telephone, etc). and cyber-space, all of which become ideological means to promote a national identity and territorial integration.

The extension of transport and increasing mobility of human bodies and other materials are especially related to the production and diffusion of automobiles and spatial reconfigurations for them. From the beginning of the 20th century, automobiles became a central element for the social and spatial

³ According to Kim, W. (1970), “in an international comparison of construction costs of expressways, 100 millions won was input per 1 km of Gyeongbu Expressway, while the cost in the U.S.A. amounted to 2.8~9.2 times more, in Italy to 3.1~4.0 times more, in France up to 5.6 times more, and in Japan to 4.5~7.8 times more. As to the time required for construction, Tomei Expressway in Japan took 10 years to complete the construction of 346.6 km.”



Source: National Statistical Office, 1998, *Major Statistics of Korean Economy*.

Figure 3. Change in indicators on transport: (A) Production and registration of automobile; (B) Passenger and flight on road; (C) Extension of pavement and expressway

organization of capitalism. As such, they were and are rooted in people's daily life and identity. Cars have provided people with a new source for transforming their lives and formulating a new identity. For the 20th century, more than 1 billion automobiles have been produced, and since the mid-2000s, there are 700 million vehicles are actually being driven. In Korea, the period of rapidly increasing production and diffusion of automobiles differs from that of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. The capacity of automobile production of Korea was negligible, and the number of vehicle registrations

was only 59,000 in 1967, 79,000 in 1968, and 106,000 in 1969, which shows a relatively high increase rate, but in absolute terms remained low until the middle of the 1970s (Figure 3). Given that there was no significant change in passenger and freight automobiles compared with the period prior to the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. The extension of pavement showed a high rate of increase by 1969, while that of expressway still remained at a low level. Thus it seems more important to first examine the political effect of how Gyeongbu Expressway changed the physical landscape and built environment, and hence how it contributed to strengthening political power rather than analyze its economic effect on the production and diffusion of the automobile.

Space in contemporary society is dominated by the automobile culture and as such consists of the flow and trajectory of automobiles. As a typical example, Gyeongbu Expressway exemplifies the speed and landscape of 'auto-mobility' as well as the disappearance of a sense of place, or a creation of 'non-place' (Featherstone 2004; Lee, H. 2009). Auto-mobility within a city is a fundamental feature in everyday life, wherein the speed in urban areas is highly restricted, and the speed of automobiles is often slow because of road congestion. Yet the speed of automobile on expressway like Gyeongbu is increasing rapidly and in fact, in some countries, there is no speed limit. Driving at a high speed on an expressway becomes a metaphor for people experiencing a sense of escape from the effect of distance. Thus people experience a sense of spatial freedom as well as liberation from social oppression. One of fictions that the politics of mobility promotes is this sense of social liberation which can be obtained from high speed mobility.

But instability rises in proportion to rising auto-mobility, while the sense of place and its relationship to the surrounding landscape is weakened because auto-mobility generates a specific landscape of the expressway. Specifically, the expressway is wide—usually with more than 4 traffic lanes—and requires an open sightline to allow automobiles proceed at a high speed. When one drives on an expressway, the landscape in one's sight is monotonous as one can see only signs that show names of cities or regions, or indicate directions and distances between them. In fact, the majority of recent expressway development tends to consist of tunnels and bridges, and otherwise it is surrounded by incised slopes and soundproofing barriers,

so that drivers and passengers can see little outside of the car. Even where there are no artificial landscapes, it's difficult for drivers and passengers to see natural elements because they are traveling at high speeds. This kind of estrangement from surrounding landscapes due to high-speed travel heightens passengers' anxiety and risk, though one might expect it to offer a sense of liberation.

Urban spaces and landscapes are thus rendered as abstract, non-geographical or non-place because of accelerated mobility typical in contemporary (urban) societies. In a normative sense, place is defined as local, face-to-face, familiar, intimate, organic, and meaningful. Place is also a space where relationships between peoples and things can be made in everyday life, which generates self-identity. But when a gap opens between an individual and the space where he or she moves, place is no longer a place, but what Marc Augé's conceptualizes as 'non-place'. Non-place is "a space where there remains a bleakness without producing social solidarity or social emotions, though it is a space of circulation, communication, and consumption," (Augé 1996: 178; cited in Merriman 2004: 148). According to Augé who described expressways in France as typical non-place, expressway passengers recognize cities and rural settlements only by signs and as fleeting images. Drivers and passengers have no communication with people who live in cities or regions through which their cars pass, and even with people in other cars on the expressway. Everyone travels at a high speed and as such, they rely on signage, direction signs, electronic information screens, guide maps or electronic navigation systems in their cars: they have no connection with what is passing outside of their car windows except in unique situations.

The creation of non-place by auto-mobility has both a practical and metaphorical relationship with the concept of "machine space," a term coined by Horvath (1974). For him, machine space means a territorial space that is allocated especially for machines rather than prioritizing that space for use by people. The territory or space allocated automobiles can be seen as machine space, and represents the dominant position of the automobile in contemporary culture:

Automobile territory includes any area that is devoted to the movement, storage, or servicing of automobiles. The criterion used to classify individual



Source: © The Kyeonghyang Shinmun; Korea Highway Corporation.
http://news.khan.co.kr/section/khan_art_view.html?mode=view&artid=201003260931122&code=900306

Figure 4. Confusion between machine space and people space at the early stage of Gyeongbu Exressway.

parcels into ‘machine space’ (--- automobile territory) rather than ‘people space’ is: Who or what is given priority of use in the event of a conflict? Areas of conflicting use are classified as machine space when the machine is normally given the right-of-way (Horvath 1974: 169).

Horvath distinguished machine space from “people space” in which people have priority access, and argued that machine space required for mobility, especially the territory of automobiles has expanded rapidly, as transporting passengers and flights have also increased.

The rapid expansion of machine space as automobile space has some important features, and these can be applied to Gyeongbu Expressway. First of all, machine space expands at the expense of “people space” (cf. Lee 2009). People space in which people have priority access has been encroached upon by the expansion of machine space, as urban space has been reconfigured for

the diffusion and use of the automobile. The rise of the automobile requires more and more construction of machine space such as roads and parking space which may further reduce people space, with the resultant shifting of residential space as well as reduction of natural space including farmland and forest.

Secondly, machine space is an alienated space in that the machine takes priority over people and human life is separated from their experience (Horvath 1974: 179). The alienation is similar to the experience of people in non-place spaces. Users of space in non-place cannot recognize their own presence in such places because they cannot communicate with others or landscapes.

Thirdly, the use of machine space is a dangerous space if it is not properly planned and controlled. Specifically, problems arising from construction and use of transport, that is, deaths by traffic accidents, intensifying air pollution, and environmental degradation by road construction, convert machine space like automobile territory to spaces of biological or ecological "death" (Horvath 1974: 181).

Seen from these points of view, the automobile culture which dominates contemporary societies is a machine culture, and the territory of automobiles is a machine space which has been allocated to service automobiles. This space has symbolized a cultural territory in developed countries. But it is the culture and territory of automobiles, created for people's convenience, that has encroached on human culture and reduced people's space. This problem can be found during the construction and use of Gyeongbu Expressway symbolizing the "modernization of the fatherland."

V. TIME-SPACE COMPRESSION AND POLITICAL ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY OF DEMARCATION

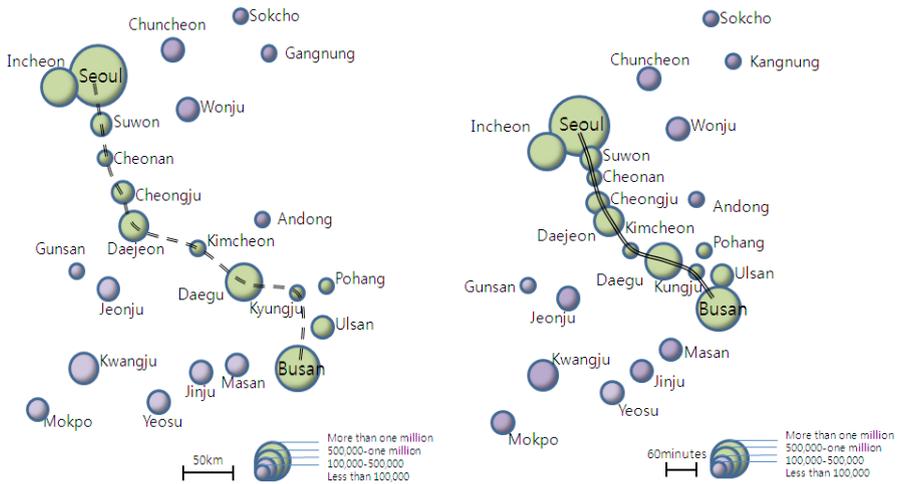
The construction and extension of transport has an important effect on the political economics of spatial reconfiguration; it also reveals the geo-strategies of a political leader, as well as the cultural and political influences on its users. The impact of new transport construction on spatial relations between cities is often through the concept of "urban implosion" (Kim, I. 1986: 232-

233). Urban implosion is space reconfigured in terms of time-distance, while accessibility among major cities are reduced due to an innovation of transportation. Innovation accompanying new construction or extension of transport results in reducing time-distance and enhancing accessibility between major cities, which creates a hierarchy of relational locations and promotes inter-dependency and cooperation for the economic growth of cities. But small and medium size cities excluded from the transport route become more isolated and alienated as they are outside of transportation network. Hence, they cannot benefit from time-distance reduction and increasing accessibility and interdependency. This concept of urban implosion can be applied to explain the differential effect of spatial demarcation that can be generated by a construction of new transport.

Before the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway, cars could travel between 60-70 km/h on most of national roads given their physical condition, though there was no official legal speed limit. Yet when Gyeongbu Expressway opened, travel of up to 100 km/h was possible. Cities along the Gyeongbu Expressway have experienced at least a 30% reduction of time-distance though the physical distance was not changed (Figure 5).⁴ Cities between Seoul and Busan, the origin and the terminus, underwent a rapid rise in the interchange of people and goods, as both time-distance and the cost of transport between them were reduced. The national land space from the 1970s developed rapidly around the capital region and southeast coastal region. But cities excluded from the accessibility of Gyeongbu Express become more distant in their time-distance, and hence became economically depressed regions with relative reductions of interchange between cities and/or regions.

In recent years, as discussions on the social and spatial impact of developing transport and communication technology have been on the rise, the concept of urban implosion has been substituted with more

⁴ The average bus speed at that time was 40 km per an hour, that of a car was 60 km, that of the railroad (*Jaeonho*, *Chaegŏnho*) was 80km, and cars on expressways was 120 km (*Chosun Ilbo*, 1967. 11. 30; cited in Kim, G. 2010). If we accept that the actual speed limit on the expressway was 100 km, this figure constitutes a 70% reduction of the diagonal distance of Seoul-Busan, while the diagonal distance of Sokcho-Mokpo remained unchanged.

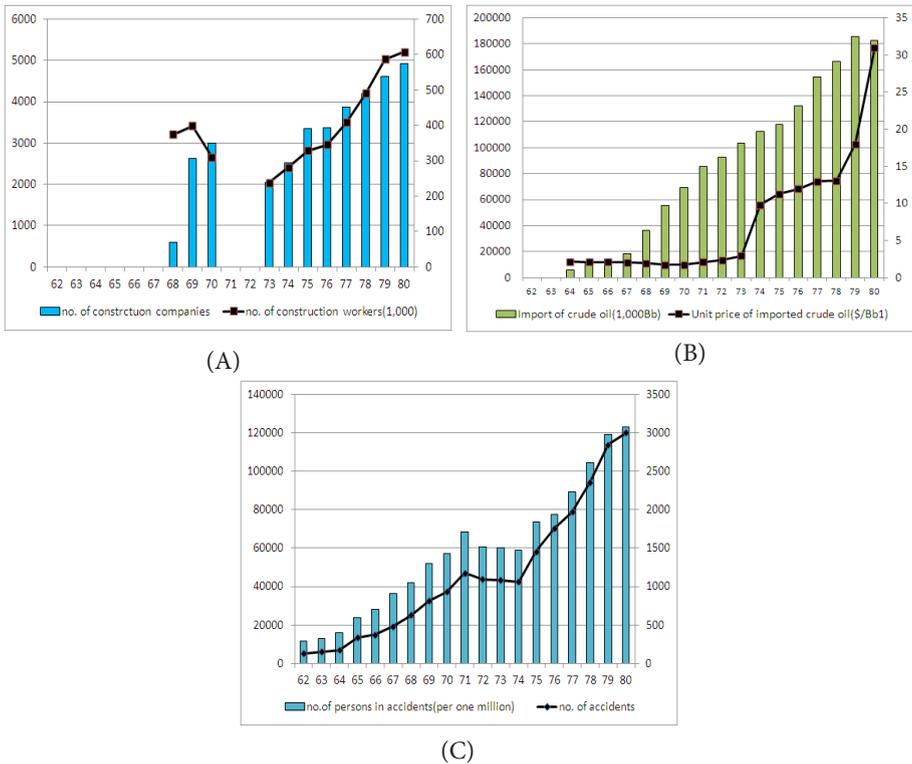


Note: The size of cities is that of population in 1970, and some cities are not expressed.

Figure 5. Urban implosion of national land space due to the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway: (A) Physical distance (before the construction); (B) Time-distance (after the construction).

sophisticated and complicated terms such as “time-space compression,” “time-space distancing.” The term, “time-space compression” was suggested by a famous geographer, Harvey (1982; 1989) to explain that development of capitalism has promoted that of transport. According to him, transport is the physical basis for the accumulation of capital, and in particular is regarded as a representative element of fixed capital (or the built environment) into which surplus capital drawn from production can be put. The infrastructure of transport and communication, which has rapidly increased under modernization, is a typical part of built environment or the physical basis for economic growth (or accumulation of capital) through the rapid transportation of people and goods. In particular, developing transport enables capitalists to gain surplus profits through time-space compression, which reduces transport costs, enhances price competition of products, and shortens the turnover time of capital invested.

When Gyeongbu Expressway was constructed, the physical foundation for Korea’s capital accumulation was very weak. It is therefore possible that surplus capital generated from the sphere of production was not switched to



Note: There is no record before 1966 and in 1971~1973.
 Source: National Statistical Office, 1998, *Major Statistics of Korean Economy*.

Figure 6. Changes in indicators related to expressway construction: (A) Construction work; (B) Import of crude oil; (C) traffic accidents.

the sphere of the built environment. This can be identified in the shortage of financial funds and technical workers for the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway, as mentioned before. Rather the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway was a moment of growth in construction capital. Even though the construction industry at the time was quite vulnerable. The number of construction companies was increasing during the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. And after four years of shrinking between 1970-1975, it again began growing after 1975 (Figure 6(A)). In particular, the number of heavy construction firms at the end of 1967 when construction

Table 2. Estimated effects of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway

	Monetary effects (billion won per year)				Reduction of driving distance (1,000 km per year)	Reduction of driving time (Hours per year)
	Total	Reduction of transport cost	Time savings	Reduction of traffic accidents		
Amounts	287.4	118.6	111.2	57.6	1,299	18,640

Source: Choi, T. (2000: 14).

of Gyeongbu Expressway began was about 3,602 in total (1,086 possessed by the government, 2,516 by private companies), and most were quite old (Park, J. 1969). But during the co Gyeongbu Expressway construction, the Korean government encouraged private construction companies to actively buy heavy construction equipment, providing preferential benefits including exemption of import duty.

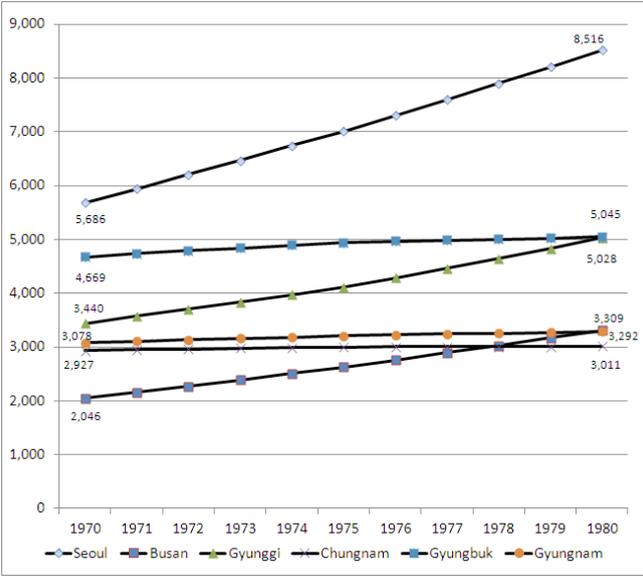
The construction of Gyeongbu Expressway promoted the accumulation of capital in general as well as a rapid growth of private construction firms in Korea. After the opening of Gyeongbu Expressway in 1972, freight cars quickly outnumbered passenger cars, which means that one of the Expressway's main functions was as an industrial road. It also brought about many important results such as reducing transport costs, expanding means of transport, shortening circulation routes and times, and decreasing damage rates to goods. The Expressway's impact on reducing costs can be calculated as 287.4 billion won, including 118.6 billion won in reduced transport costs, 111.2 billion won in time saved, and 57.6 billion won in accident reduction (Table 2). In addition, the Expressway has been evaluated as a major means of price stability by mitigating the difference of price of commodities between regions. Moreover, it has been suggested that Gyeongbu Expressway has promoted the location development of, and connectivity between, large national industrial complexes, which were suggested in The First National Comprehensive Development Plan.

But according to Harvey (1982), the time-space compression for accumulating capital often makes competition more fierce among capital to get surplus profits, while simultaneously fomenting uneven regional

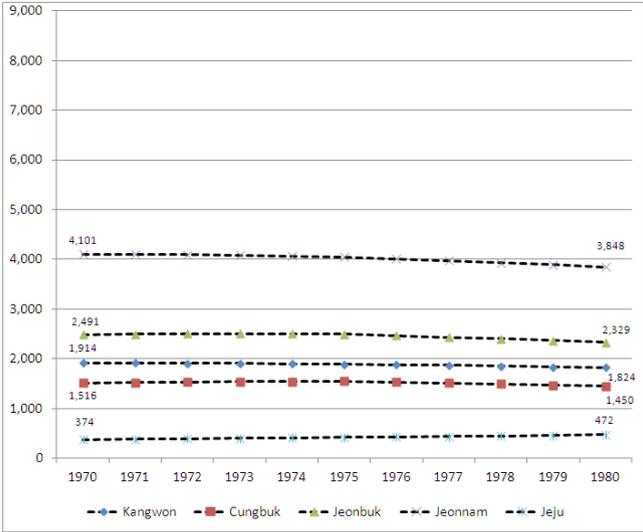
development. When capital can no longer garner such profits, it tries to make a “spatial fix” to move its investment to other regions, but the built environment of the existing transport infrastructure is so fixed that it limits new spatial fixes, highlighting the contradiction between mobility and fixity. Harvey’s explanation gives us significant insight into why transport is amongst the first construction projects during industrialization, and how it is eventually confronted with problems or contradictions. But this explanation seems to be confined to the economic aspect, and gives little explanation of political issues.

The concept of “time-space compression” in relation to developing transport and communication technology corresponds to the concept of time-space distancing which is a temporal and spatial extension or stretching of economic and political influence. This concept has been suggested by Giddens (1981) to explain how the interactions between persons who do not share the same time or space have been expanded by the development of transport and communication technology. In pre-industrial societies, interactions in everyday life were primarily face-to-face encounters within relatively narrow communities, but in modern industrialized societies, the scope of interactions has been extended almost infinitely. And hence the social integration within face-to-face relations has been separated functionally in a relationship of mutual absence. The time-space distancing has increased with the development of transport and communication technology. And yet these have also made important contributions to developing capitalist societies based on integration. Gradually, however, this social integration and communal identity has collapsed. This concept of time-space distancing can be applied to the economic, political and social effects of extending means of transport, including Gyeongbu Expressway. The Expressway has made a great contribution to both the circulation of capital and political power, enhancing regional connectivity, it has done so at the expense of social integration and communal identity.

Another important argument on the effects of Gyeongbu Expressway is by Castells (1996) who has suggested a transition from the concept of space of places to a space of flows based on the development of transport and communication technology. In pre-industrial society where transport and communication technology was not developed, space was discrete



(A)



(B)

Source: National Statistical Office (*e-narajipyo*), http://www.index.go.kr/egams/stts/jsp/potal/stts/PO_STTS_IdxMain.jsp?idx_cd=1007

Figure 7. A comparison of changes in population of included and excluded regions: (A) populations of included regions; (B) populations of excluded regions.

and designated individual places or regions, and hence each place had inherent geographical characteristics. But space in recent years exists no longer in individual, separate places, but in networks of transportation, communication, and flows. Places have not been disappeared, but they have become nodes in networks, organized and hierarchicized based on their relative importance. The informational society, or what Castells calls “network society,” developed around this kind of space of flows, which separates regions or countries included in the network from those excluded from it, in which the informational, economic, and socio-cultural disparity between them deepens. The social groups or regions included in networks can enjoy rapidly increasing interaction and improve their qualities of life, with new constructions and extension of transport and communication networks, while those excluded from the networks are deprived of both opportunities to use transport and communication infrastructures, and of accessing new information or knowledge, and hence become more marginalized groups or regions.

Seen from Castells’ view, the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway has demarcated national land space into inclusion and exclusion along the Seoul-Busan axis. It also marks an important moment that has generated and deepened the disparity between those cities within its influence and those cities and rural areas outside its influence, thereby promoting uneven regional development. As shown in Figure 6, all of the cities and regions which have been included in the influence of Gyeongbu Expressway—Seoul, Gyeonggi-do (Kyōnggi-do), Chungcheongnam-do (Ch’ungchōngnam-do), Gyeongsangbuk-do (Kyōngsangnam-do), Gyeongsannam-do, and Busan (Pusan)—have experienced increased population, while those regions excluded from its influence experienced decreased population. It seems clear that Gyeongbu’s construction has provided transport infrastructure and hence enhanced mutual accessibility necessary for a rapid development of urban agglomerations along the Gyeongbu axis connecting Seoul, Daejeon (Taejōn), Daegu (Taegu), and Busan. Yet it has also led to a deepening disparity between the regional developments of Yeongnam (Yōngma) and Honam, and brought about serious political conflicts between them as a result.

While promoting uneven regional development and conflicting

regionalism might be not the intent of a political leader or his regime, these two interrelated problems have remained continuously and produced a political burden for subsequent regimes to resolve. In fact, these problems were already hot-button issues among politicians and officials at that time. In fact, “it has been argued loudly by senior officials of the government and other policy makers at that time that, if the Expressway was constructed, the concentration of population and industries to large cities would be prevented, but it would promote a balanced development of national land, between local small and medium-size cities, and between agriculture and manufacturing” (Son, J. 2003: 116). But Kim Dae-jung (Kim Tae-jung), a member of the National Assembly at that time, and who later became the president of Korea, pointed out that a serious uneven regional development would be brought about because of the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway. That is:

Amidst the polemicists stressing uneven regional development due to the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway, Kim Dae-Jung, a member of the National Assembly belonging to construction committee at that time, was most vocal. He recognized that the construction of the Expressway would be a great work that could foster pride and dignity because it would expand the social infrastructure. But in the 62th Construction Committee of the National Assembly in 1967 he defined the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway as ‘a work like an oaf with its legs larger than its head, and with both arms and the right leg being thin’. This undoubtedly referred to the concentration of the transport network in the Yeongnam region would heighten the imbalance between the Gangwon (Kangwŏn) and the Honam regions (Han 2009).

In the end, the debate around the balanced/imbalanced development with the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway has fallen towards the latter. That is, “after the opening of Gyeongbu Expressway revealed a rapid concentration of population and industries in the capital and Busan regions, with a subsequent decrease in population and relative and/or absolute decline of industries in the rest of the national land space, including small and medium cities and rural areas,” (Son, J. 2003: 116). This burdened the Park regime, which was based on a political terrain of “the ruling party in rural areas and the opposition party in the urban ones,” (that is, 與村野都 *yeochon yado*, *yŏchŏn yado*), and triggered regional identity-based competitiveness between the

Honam and Yeongnam regions which continues even today.

Gyeongbu Expressway has played a decisive role in reconcentrating political power as well as economic wealth in Seoul and the capital region, and in recent years this trend has been further strengthened by the construction of Gyeongbu Express Rail. As a result, even the Yeongnam region seems unable to escape from the trend of the ongoing economic recession. In fact, the centralization and concentration of economic wealth and political power in the capital region are not simply caused by Gyeongbu Expressway, but also by the industrial restructuring process around high-tech industries and production services, as well as the tradition of centralizing power in the political structure. But the concentration of growth engine industries and traditional political power itself presupposes the construction of a centralized transport system and political, economic, and socio-cultural mechanism operating in such a system.

Apart from the uneven regional development and concentration of economic and political power, the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway was an important moment for people not only in the regions it crossed but also for Korean society, which began to experience increasing traffic accidents, massive consumption of resources (especially oil), destruction of nature, and rapid degradation of environment (see Figure 3). For example, the increased import of crude oil, despite the oil shocks in the 1970s, was stimulated not only by the process of industrialization, but also by the increase of automobiles on paved roads and the newly constructed expressway. The number of traffic accidents also increased significantly from the middle of the 1970s. The construction of Gyeongbu Expressway was the first massive civil work that was conducted without any consideration to its impact on nature. In particular, the Expressway itself has resulted in separating not only people's communal life, but animals' ecological system, because of its route. In addition, increasing automobiles in the Expressway have seriously impacted the environment such as air pollution, noise and vibration. Seen from these social and environmental stances, Gyeongbu Expressway can be seen as a critical moment for Korean society entering into what Ulrich Beck has called the modern 'risk society'.

VI. CONCLUSION

The construction of transport reflects not only the economic development of the time but also the political regime pursuing it (Hudson 1981). Gyeongbu Expressway symbolizes the method of preparing, implementing, and evaluating grand national agendas on industrialization, modernization, and unification (Jeon, C. 2010). That is, Korean society since the 1960s has accelerated the process of modernization, or of capitalization, and made the construction of transport networks the physical basis for this process. In particular, the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway reflects the geo-strategy of the military regime which exercised a hard dictatorship for development with its aim of ‘rich country and strong military’. Its construction was conducted under President Park’s military organization of management and with an actual mobilization of the army and its equipment, as if conducting a war.

Even without military experiences or the metaphors of war, the construction and use of new transport like Gyeongbu Expressway has legitimized the development of a dictatorship for modernizing the “fatherland.” It has been constructed on the basis of an economic logic based on extending the physical basis for capital accumulation. The construction of Gyeongbu Expressway has made a great contribution to the growth of construction capital, enhancement of productivity, and strengthening of competitiveness through a reduction of cost and time of transport with time-space compression. But Gyeongbu Expressway has brought about several negative effects, including a “faster-faster” culture in general, as well as the risks associated with the development of a fast-paced infrastructural development originating from military culture. This has generated a sense of placelessness or extended industrialized space that encroaches on the traditional senses of places inhabited by people. Moreover, the construction of Gyeongbu Expressway has drawn a demarcation line dividing the included regions and the excluded ones along the Gyeongbu axis, and hence increased the disparity between them. It also has also led to an increase in traffic accidents, greater consumption of oil, the destruction of nature, and the degradation of environment.

In spite of the political, economic, social, and ecological effects brought on by constructing the Gyeongbu Expressway, there remain strong political, economic and technological impetuses to pursue such projects (Featherstone 2004). Hence Paterson (2007) argues that there exists a political power which has made automobiles highly dominant nowadays, a result of the interconnection of capitalist political economy with the cultural politics of space. The extension and use of transport in the capitalist system keeps the accumulation of capital. On the one hand, it promotes the production of mobility machines, as well as generally promotes economic activity through the circulation of goods and services. On the other hand, it also maintains and strengthens political power with the politics of inclusion/exclusion through the construction of material identity on the basis of mobility

This kind of negative effect would be termed the “tragedy of the expressway” (Baeten 2000). In order to resolve this problem and make expressways real channels of communication, it can be argued, “a politics of sustainability” is required. The politics of sustainability should abandon policies that emphasize military mobility, produce non-places, or that stimulate uneven regional development. Policies that have developed on the basis of slow but scrupulous planning, that try to promote space necessary for human life, and that orientate a real inclusion and integration for balanced regional development of the national land should be promoted.

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