

Foreign Area Research of Korean Geographers -Retrospects and Prospects-

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Abstract : This paper attempts to analyze the changes of the contents in foreign area research carried out by Korean geographers, and discuss the task of the new regional geography in a global-local context. As compared with domestic area research, only a scant of foreign area research has been carried out. In the 1990's, the research interests are paid to how an open economy affects the regional economy, especially the production technique, division of labor, industrial mix, market strategy, industrial location and organization, and so on. Unfortunately, however, the boundaries between economic geography and regional economy are gradually disappearing.

요약 : 본 연구는 1963년 이후 한국지리학자들에 의해서 수행된 해외지역연구를 분석하고 장래를 전망한 내용이다. 자료는 주로 대한지리학회지와 서울대학교에서 간행된 두종류의 학술지에 의존했고, 이밖에 중·고등학교 교육자료를 참조했다. 이를 통해서 집계한 결과 창간 이래 1995년까지 총 46편의 해외연구논문이 실려 있을 뿐이고, 그 중에도 36편이 1980년 이후의 산물이다. 문화·역사지리와 인구지리, 촌락지리 등을 인문지리의 soft part라 분류하고 도시·경제지리 등을 hard part라고 분류한다면 외국연구에 관한 soft part가 더 많다. 그러나 1990년 이후에 hard part의 급증이 주목되는데 그것은 globalization 논의의 급증 때문이다. 물론, 이들 연구의 대부분이 실증주의를 기반으로 한다. globalization과 관계되는 논문은 주로 도시·경제지리 분야에서 많은데 대체로 regional change(transformation), regional impacts 등 주로 restructuring에 관한 내용이 지배적이다. 이들 내용이 지역문제의 본질에 무게가 실려있기 보다 노동시장, 기업의 조직, 기술혁신, 시장전략, 산업구조 등 경제 메카니즘에 무게가 실려있다. 오늘의 지리학자들은 사회적 사실이나 사회적 변화, 그리고 그와 연관된 자본주의 생산양식 및 그것이 양생된 환경을 외면하기 어렵다. 세계화시대의 "공간구조"는 그것이 사회적 생산물임과 동시에 다른 한편으로는 세계화·지방화 맥락의 산물이기도 하다. 우리가 새로운 지지(지역지리)의 건설을 요구하는 이유는 바로 여기에 있다. 지역의 다양성은 사라지지 않았다. 새로운 모습을 취하고 있을 뿐이다.

1. Introduction

Since the 1980's geographers have made every effort to reconstruct human geography. At the center of the attempts, there exists a substantial trend to revive regional geography. This was apparently evidenced by the subjects discussed

both in the seminar held in Utrecht, October, 1987 and in the symposium in commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korean Geographical Society, October, 1995. Why is regional geography reappearing on the stage after one generation has passed? Two reasons can be pointed out. First, spatial analysts have pursued a theoretical

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geography as an alternative to regional geography through overemphasizing a general law, only to face an impasse. Second, contemporary geographers should be familiar with the mechanism of the capitalist mode of production which is so complex, that is to say, in its operational logic and historical development path.

Korean geographers have written a number of monographs on geography since the 1960's. Most of them, however, can be classified as a sort of positivist study on topical geography, rather than that of regional geography. Moreover, it seems to be little efforts paid on foreign area research. This is because the history of modern geography in Korea is relatively short and we didn't have much chances to go abroad before.

This paper attempts to analyze the changes of the contents in foreign area research carried out by Korean geographers. It also examines the past and the present of geography education in terms of the foreign area teaching. In this paper, the concepts of area research and regional geographic research are treated as similar terms even though the two concepts are different in a strict sense. The research materials and data sources are various regional geography textbooks published in Korea and the three major geographic journals. One of them is Journal of the Korean Geographical Society¹⁾ and the other two have been published by Seoul National University, Journal of Geography²⁾ (Jirihak Nonchong) and Journal of Geography Education³⁾. Additionally, recent papers presented at the international conferences and some Ph. D. dissertations are used in this study.

The paper begins with summarizing two pioneering works, which introduced Western culture to Korea. Then it will analyze how the foreign part in school geography has changed and how it has changed in terms of academic geography. Lastly, the paper will review the foreign area researches concerning globalization and discuss the task of the new regional geography

in a global-local context.

2. Two Pioneering Works

There are two great works that introduce Western culture to Korea. One is Soo-Kwang Lee's⁴⁾ *Jibong-Ryuseol* (Jibong's complete work), published in 1633. The other is Gill-Jun Yoo's *Seoyou-Kyonmoon* (Travels to the Western countries), published in 1895. Lee's work is encyclopedic records of the cultures he had observed in Beijing, where he visited three times as a diplomatic representative⁵⁾. Volume I of the work deals with astronomical phenomena. Volume II introduces a map of Europe representing physical geographies and various geographical facts of foreign countries, including Vietnam, Japan, Ryukyu, China and the West Territory, Ceylon, and England. In particular, he described English climate, way of life, battleship building technique, weapons, and the like. Furthermore, he introduced the tenet and range of Catholicism in citing the writings of the Italian priest Mateo Ricci. Lee's work – almost all of his knowledge were indirectly acquired through Chinese interpretations -- significantly influenced the movement of Koran pragmatism (Silhak) to blossom. Another work, *Regional Geography of Sooncheon* (Seungpyung-Chi)⁶⁾, published in 1618, is the record of what Soo-Kwang Lee experienced as a governor of Sooncheon, Cholla province. With its precise maps as an appendix, the work is evaluated as a good material for an area research.

Travels to the Western Countries (Seoyou-Kyonmoon)⁷⁾, written by Gill-Jun Yoo was published in 1895. The work is an extensive record of what he has experienced in Japan, America and Europe. It was when Chosun Dynasty was drawing to an end and foreign countries were demanding Korea to open the door for trade. Yoo was one of the most ardent supporters for opening

and modernizing Korea. It should be noted that the book was written both in Chinese characters and Korean alphabets so that the ordinary people can read it easily, whereas other writings were written only in Chinese characters at that time. Gill-Joon Yoo went to Japan as a member of visiting group, where he was much influenced by Hukuzawa Yukitchi, a pioneer of Japanese modernization. The experience in Japan, made him to reach a conclusion that Japan's rapid modernization was possible by imitating Western civilization. After the Korea-American Treaty of Amity and Trade in 1882, Lucius H. Foote came to Korea as a consul. In return, the Korean government sent a goodwill envoy to America, headed by Young-Ik Min. Gill-Joon Yoo went to America as a member of the envoy. He studied at Dummer Academy, located in Salem, Massachusetts and returned to Korea in 1885, via Europe. He is known as the first Korean student studying abroad.

After his returning to Korea, Yoo wrote the book *Travels to the Western Countries*, which described what he had experienced in the Western countries. In the book of twenty chapters, he describes geographic facts and introduces various Western administrative and social systems that Korea should adopt for modernization such as education, government, taxation, military system, currency, the Western science, commerce, hospitals, scientific machinery and tools. Among the twenty chapters, we need to pay attention to chapter 1, 2, 19, and 20. In the first two chapters, he systematically describes natural environments, races, and products from all over the world. In chapter 19 and 20, he describes the landscape of metropolises in America, England, Germany, France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain and Holland. As shown in the chapter title, *The Landscape of Metropolis*, these chapters can be regarded as a first urban chorography written by Korean. He also explains city planning and management in detail, which shows his intention to introduce the advanced systems of the developed

countries in order to improve his beloved motherland, Korea. He neither learned geography systematically, nor intended to write this book as a geographic one. Surprisingly, however, the book is so geographic in its contents and the methods of description. This was possible because he read lots of related materials and made a close observation.

3. The School Geography as a Minor Field

Japanese imperialists taught to students the geography of Korean peninsula as a part of the Japan geography during the Japanese ruling period. Even the title of the chapter was named Japanese Marginal Lands. The Korean peninsula, Manchuria, and Taiwan were included in the chapter. In middle school, they taught the geography of Japan in the lower grades and the geography of the East and the West in the upper grades.

After the emancipation from Japan in 1945, Korean Ministry of Education made a new geography curriculum, which was consisted of geography of Korea, geography of neighboring countries, and geography of remote countries. Here, the neighboring countries imply the East and the remote countries the West.

The two subjects on foreign countries, geography of neighboring countries and geography of remote countries, were merged into one, titled World Geography, due to the reduction of class hours. Since the 1950's, in the middle school the Geography of Korea was included in "Social Studies" which encompass world geography, history, and even civil life. Though there were hours assigned for geography in high school, world geography was treated as a minor subject since it was optional. The contents of world geography, authorized by the Ministry of Education in 1988, are divided into the following chapters. Chapter 1

deals with the world physical environments. Chapter 2 is about the world resources and cultural divisions. In chapters 3 to 6, the world is divided into Monsoon Asia, Africa and South West Asia, Europe, and the New Continent. In the final chapter, various conflicts that human beings face are summarized. Since 1992, a new high school curriculum has been made. However, only a little opportunity to learn geography of foreign countries has been given. The new contents of world geography are not different from those authorized in 1988, except the emphasis on the Pacific Rim. Since then, nine different "World Geography" text books has been used, authorized by the Ministry of Education. However, they are much alike in the contents and the volumes; this is not productive in terms of educational policy.

Unfortunately, Korean geographers have paid no attention to publish the books chorographically dealing with foreign countries, such as *Geographie Universelle*, edited by the French geographer, Vidal de la Blache. *World Regional Geography*, written by Prof. Seok-O Kang in 1980, is the only one dealing with foreign countries. As a textbook for university students, this seven hundreds-page book contains the descriptive facts of each continent and country.

Why has little regional geographic research been carried out? First, it is related with the short history of academic geographic research in Korea. It was in the 1960' s that academic geography first settled down in Korea, when geographers in the developed countries were engaged in theoretical geography based on positivism, criticizing regional geography an unscientific exceptionalism. Second, there were no opportunities to be exposed to the theories and empirical studies of regional geography, since the geographers who were trained quantitative technics abroad in the 1970' s and the 1980' s began to lead academic geography in Korea. Third, under these circumstances, people considered chorographic description as a simple

record of trip that assembles miscellaneous things. They took it as a subject only needed for middle and high school students. Thus, it is natural that they gave little heed to it in universities except a college of education. Fourth, it is true that the study of foreign regional geography was neglected because we were not given many chances to go abroad until the 1980' s. The expense for an overseas travel was much higher compared to income level and the government strictly limited the use of foreign currencies.

4. The Topics and Countries the Geographers have concerned

In a strict sense, area research and regional geographic research (or, geographic area research) do not necessarily mean the same, because the former is not a term used exclusively in geography. This section deals with the topics and countries the geographers have concerned since the 1960' s by comparing them chronologically. Since the study uses only the papers published in the major geographical journals, the term, area research, used in this section, implies "geographic" area research. But it is not necessarily the same as "regional geographic" research, because the original meaning of regional geographic research is "holistic chorographical" research.

Though there have been a number of papers published in the three major journals since the 1960' s, only 46 papers have dealt with foreign countries. What is more, two thirds of them have been published after the 1980s. This indicates that foreign area research was quite limited.

Table 1 chronologically classifies the topics that have interested geographers. If the soft part of human geography would include historical geography, cultural geography, rural geography, and population geography, it is the soft part that has received much more attention since the 1960' s.

Seventeen out of 46 papers fit the fields. With respect to the hard part of human geography, including urban and economic geography, regional policy and so on, 14 papers have been published. In the 1990' s, there has been growing interest in these fields. Recently, the number of papers concerning geography teaching has increased sharply.

In the 1960' s, only 3 papers dealt with geography of foreign countries: one introduced the geographic achievements in Soviet, another concerning historical geography, and the other concerning geography teaching. The second and the third ones are concerned with various countries, not just one country. In the 1970' s, there were only 7 papers concerning foreign area research. Two of them dealt with geomorphology and another two of them with economic geography.

In the 1980' s, the number of papers dealing with foreign area research increased remarkably, so that the papers published in this period were doubled compared to the 1970' s. It started in the 1980' s that geographers interested in the soft part of human geography. The researches concerning history, population, and folk houses are noticeable. Specifically, they deal with the following subjects: residential preference, the movement of Mormon, migrations between Korea and Japan, the comparison of the types of folk houses between Korea and Japan, the traffic system of Lansing City at the end of 19th century, the black population in New York, the residence of Korean in Los Angeles, the population in Utah and the effect of Mormon, and so on. 9 out of the 14 papers were in *Journal of Geography*, published by Seoul National University.

In the 1990' s, more papers concerning foreign area research were published. Besides, they deal with more various fields of geography. Papers in the fields of urban geography and regional policy characterize the foreign area research in this period. They also deal with various subjects, such as the unification of Germany, the geopolitics of

Northeast Asia, folk houses, employment market of the United States, minority problems in the United States and so on. It is the 1990' s that papers, dealing with geography teaching in the middle and high schools of Russia, China, and Germany, have appeared.

Table 2 shows the countries and the fields papers have chiefly dealt with from 1960 to 1995. Papers about the United States were 24 out of the 46 papers on foreign area research. Among them, four papers are about Germany, and three papers about China, Japan, and Russia each. Seven papers concern comparative studies of various countries. This indicates most research has been carried out with respect to the traditionally friendly countries and the countries where lots of Korean students are studying. The table also indicates that there has been growing interest in China and Russia, resulted from the recent open policy.

What topics are they most concerned in the study of the United States? They include population, minority problem, urban geography and economic geography. This implies that the conflicts the United States faces are the major concerns of American geographers. It should be noted that the research concerning the neighboring country, Japan is relatively underresearched. Traditionally, there have been a number of interactions between Korea and Japan in various respects, and many of Korean geographers have studied in Japan. Nevertheless, only three papers have been published. Note here that the number of papers cited here comes only from the three journals mentioned above.

Then, what kind of approach was taken in the research? Needless to say, it was positivistic approach to a topic, which led to the attempts to verify a hypothesis or set up an abstract spatial theory. Considering this, most of the research can not be said to be "regional geographic" solution, whether it takes old or new approach. Here, old approach means holistic view point, and new

Table 1. Change of foreign area research by Korean Geographers
— from 1963 to 1995 —

Topics \ Periods	1960' s	1970' s	1980' s	1990' s	total
Geomorphology		2	2	2	6
Climatology				2	2
Historical G.	1		2		3
Cultural G.		1			1
Population G.			3	2	5
Ethnic problem			1	2	3
G. of religion			1		1
G. of house type			2	1	3
Rural G.				1	1
Urban G.			1	4	5
Economic G.		2	1	1	4
Regional policy			1	2	3
Map & information		1		1	2
Geography teaching	1	1		3	5
Miscellaneous	1			1	2
Total	3	7	14	22	46

* Figure means number of the paper published in the three major geographic journals (J.K.G.S., J.G., J.G.E.)

approach means new regional geographic view point, which deals with spatio-temporal realities of daily life, social concerns, historical process, human agency, and the like.

All in all, the characteristics of foreign area research, carried out by academic geographers since the 1960' s are summarized as follows:

First, as compared with domestic area research, the productivity of foreign area research is so poor. Second, foreign area research has increased sharply since the 1980' s, mainly dealing with the soft part of human geography, such as cultural geography, historical geography, and population geography. By contrast, concerning the hard part, such as urban geography and economic geography, a number of papers have been published in the 1990' s. Third, the country that has interested the geographers most is the United States, followed by Germany, Russia, and Japan. Particularly, it is surprising that relatively a small number of papers have been published, with respect to the area research on neighboring Japan. Fourth, in most

cases, positivist approach to area research has been taken, and many of the academic achievements are about the verification of the established theories. Fifth, when the topics of research are divided into two groups, physical geography and human geography, it seems that relatively little research on physical geography has been carried out. Sixth, being included in the field of either economic or urban geography, many papers, published in the 1990' s, have concerned regional impacts or regional changes influenced by economic globalization. Particularly, in these fields, there have been a lot of dialogues with regional planners and economists; not only their concerns but also the methodology are very similar.

5. Task of the Foreign Area Research in Korea

1) Why is a foreign area research in the academic and school geography needed?

Table 2. Distribution of foreign area research by Korean geographers
— from 1963 to 1995 —

Topics\Areas	China	Japan	USA	Deut.	France	Italy	Sov. & Ru	Interstates	Total
Geomorphology		1	2	2		1			6
Climatology			1					1	2
Historical G.		1	1					1	3
Cultural G.			1						1
Population G.			5						5
Ethnic problem			3						3
G. of religion			1						1
G. of house type	1							2	3
Rural G.	1								1
Urban G.			3				1	1	5
Economic G.			3		1				4
Regional policy			1	1				1	3
Map & information			2						2
Geography teaching	1	1	1	1				1	5
Miscellaneous							2		2
Total	3	3	24	4	1	1	3	7	46

* Same as table 1.

The educational goals of "world geography" taught in high schools can be summarized as follows⁸⁾:

First, to make understood the physical and human environments in the earth surface and the characteristics of each country in terms of various topics. Second, to help improve the ability to understand comprehensively the impending problems that human beings face, such as population, resources, environments, and the like. Third, to make understood the necessity of international cooperation with the realization of the relationships among regions and the impending questions, and to improve the ability and the attitude to cope with the rapidly changing world. Fourth, ... (omitted)⁹⁾

The key words extracted from the above can be classified into three categories: characteristics of global environments, impending problems of the world, and cooperation among nations. It is the goal of the world geography education in high schools to help improve the ability and the attitude

to perceive, understand, and deal with these topics utilizing geographical concepts and tools.

After the World War II, UNESCO emphasized international understanding as one of the most important goals. Korea has long been depending on international trade because of poor resource endowment. This fact leads us to understand and analyze foreign countries in a full scale. Unfortunately, however, Korean school geography seems not to pertain an important status in terms of the volume of study and the class hours allotted.

Why is foreign area research needed in academic geography? It is needed for comparative study for some geographical facts, even more it is through a comparative study that generalization should be induced. Besides, the impending age of globalization is sure to make it possible to connect New York and remote areas in Korea, directly through an efficient networking. The effect of other countries on the social transformation for a region becomes greater than ever. Spatial configuration, the cause and result of this phenomenon, is quite

different from that of the past. In this age, such remote areas in Korea will be hardly identified by classical chorography.

2) Globalization and Foreign Area Research

The world is becoming a more interconnected set of places as the globalization of economies, societies and cultures goes on apace. It is difficult, however, to define globalization clearly because it involves a complex array of changes in socio-economic systems on a global scale. Globalization and internationalization are often used interchangeably since both of the concepts involve the geographical spread of socio-economic activities across national boundaries. Globalization is distinguished as a more advanced and complex form of internationalization.

Among French speaking people, the term "mondialisation" is usually employed when globalization refers to the development of economic relations at a world scale. They use the term "globalization" in three different meanings: one is related to the growing range of economic relations, another to the growing range of cultural and political relations, and the other to the global emergence of environmental unbalance (Claval, 1997).

The most important characteristic of globalization is a gradual decline of the regulatory power of the nation-states. Such power tends to shift to international organizations and local governments. The second characteristic is the increasing movement of capital, products, labor, information, people and other production factors across national boundaries. The third is a growing trend of functional integration of the capitalist mode of production on a global scale which is based on greater specialization and differentiation in product and process technology. The process of globalization is accompanied by fundamental changes in socio-economic activities and spatial configurations, both at the domestic and global

levels, although the changes do not occur everywhere in the same way at the same rate.

It may not be difficult, then, to imagine what patterns of the spatial organization in future would take place as an outcome of globalization. The patterns can be summarized as follows: first, the existing spatial order would be changed into a new one. The network pattern of spatial organization across national boundaries may be more important. Not surprisingly, such restructuring is due to exogenous and endogenous forces although it is not clear which one is more influential. Second, concentrating and dispersing forces of urbanization would be newly directed, hence certain existing urban cores would fade out while others would newly emerge. Third, amenity of location would be more preferred because of the new constraints such as pollution, traffic congestion, high land price and the like. Fourth, information centers would become a core of network, since new society needs the high quality of information and its production, which in turn requires an advanced knowledge. Fifth, regional characteristics would be more affected by the distribution of service population. Lastly, some indigenous character of a region would be gradually fade out on the one hand, and a new one would be established on the other hand.

Since the beginning of WTO, there has been much discussion about what regional impacts and changes will take place in the field of economic geography and urban geography. It is to identify the process and pattern of restructuring affected by globalization. Let us take two papers as an example, which were presented by Korean geographers in the "Residential Conference of IGU Commission on the Organisation of Industrial Space", held in Seoul, Aug. 1995. One dealt with the political and economical responses to globalization, especially the role of local government in urban redevelopment of the United States (Koh, 1995). The other with the spatial and social division of labor in electronic industry

between Korea and Taiwan(Alvstam, C.C. and Park, S. O., 1995). The former took politico-economic approach and the latter positivist approach.

A discussion of the sort mentioned above has been made world wide. Korean geographers also have dealt with foreign area and presented papers comparing Korea with foreign countries in some conferences. Among the conferences are: IGU Tokyo Conference, 1993(Le Heron, R, and Park, S. O., 1996), "Globalization and Regional Development in Southern Asia and Pacific Rim," Seoul, 1994, which was sponsored by Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements, "Seoul Metropolitan Fora 96," presented by The University of Seoul, "Local Productive System and European Center, Turin, Italy, 1996, which was sponsored by the International Training Center of the ILO, and "Conference in Critical Geography", Vancouver, Canada, Aug, 1997. The two conferences, held in Turin and Vancouver, are noticeable, since the papers dealing with the geography of foreign direct investment in Europe by Korean firms were presented there(Jung, 1996).

Of the dissertations recently presented abroad, one dealt with advanced information service industries (AIS), by applying the cases of England in terms of global-local context. The dissertation argues that the locational decision becomes important to competitiveness of the AIS firms, due to the paradoxical requirement of both catering for local needs and reaching the global market simultaneously(Kim, 1996). There is a research on international quaternary place system in the era of globalization, by using multinational corporate data base that defines the location of both headquarters and associated subsidiaries. This research, empirically and theoretically carried out, deals with linkages and networks of multinational corporations under the new international circumstances and concentration of corporate power(Nahm, 1995).

A series of studies are worthy of note, which analyze the responses of Korea's neighboring countries in a global-local context. S. O. Park, who has analyzed the changes of industrial organizations in America's regional economy with James O. Wheeler since the 1980's(Wheeler and Park, 1983, 1984), has presented about 10 papers in the 1990's. The papers are on the industrial restructuring, regional policy, external ownership of industries, development of dynamic industrial system, and high-tech industries of Asia Pacific Rim(Park, 1997).

The common properties found in the papers in the era of globalization are as follows: first, the papers show considerable interest in the fields of economic geography and urban geography. Second, the papers have much interest in the restructuring of manufacturing technique, division of labor, industrial organization, industrial structure, market change, and industrial location, affected by globalization. As the most effective way to restructuring strategy, a small, fast, flexible, and multiple solution to the changes in circumstances is considered important. Third, the properties mentioned above enables geographers to communicate with economists, urban specialists, and regional planners in terms of global-local context. This, however, blurs the boundary of geography in some respects. Fourth, many of the papers deals with the national or regional economy as a result of global economic change, whereas only a few papers deal with foreign area research.

3) Globalization and New Regional Geography

As mentioned above, less foreign area research has been carried out by Korean geographers since the 1960's than domestic area research, and it is only after the 1980's that there has been increasing interest in foreign area research. Particularly, in the fields of urban geography and economic geography there have been increasing attempts to deal with how each region is to be restructured under the global environments. Globalization not

only creates a new economic system, but also reproduces the regions of new social and cultural structures. This provides the reason for geographers to pay attention not only to economic phenomena but also to the so-called "social formation" or "social transformation," the terms often used by D. Gregory(Gregory, 1982). Moreover, let alone domestic area, their attention should also be paid to foreign area, related with the domestic one. For this, the geographers should deeply discuss the so-called new regional geography.

So far, major concerns have been paid to the topics of region, rather than the region itself. After all, though this has led geography to communicate with other systematic sciences, the boundaries among them have become unclear. As globalization goes on, more common properties will be found between Korea and other countries. This, however, does not necessarily mean the loss of diversity. Regional diversity has not yet disappeared, but it has just taken on new forms, based relatively more on interrelations and less on autonomy(Thrift, 1990).

Then, what is the new regional geography and how should we approach it? For this question, we will refer to the agenda for regional geographical research in the Utrecht Seminar. Classical regional geography assumed that the regions were an intricate product of the combination of natural and human forces. At present, space is considered to be the realization of human perceptions, ideas, intentions, and technology(Hauer, 1990). The generalizations that have been sought and investigated are not natural laws but historical abstractions of societal development, more connected with the anthropocentric approach. The region is not the abstracted space but unique place in which historical processes become the spatio-temporal realities of daily life. These concerns allow regional geography to look for the processes

behind the place where we live. Consequently, new regional geography is compelled to come to grip with the development of the larger societies concerning the different capitalist mode of production. To appreciate how capitalism operates today, we need to understand the milieu within which it was nurtured, and the milieu that it has created. To understand our present and future, we must understand their origins in a spatially differential past(Johnston, Hauer, Hoekveld, 1990). The difference between the old and the new regional geography lies in its use of a broad array of method, technique, and foreign information for description and analysis.

In a global context, what research frontiers should be explored for a new regional geography? Above all, clear-cut definition of the terms like "region", "place", and "area" should be given, and relevant approaches should be taken. Second, we should deeply understand how the global-system, nation states, world cities, and their subsystems interact, although we know that multinational enterprises play a key role(Hauer, 1990, p.213). Third, the different philosophical and ideological viewpoints that are prevailing in current geography affect the approaches of regional geographers. They lead to different outcomes of regional geographical analysis and description (Hauer, 1990, p.208). It is a very difficult task for geographers to take into account the contrasts among Marxist, institutional, behavioral, neoclassical, humanistic and other views in regional analysis and description. Fourth, under the restructuring as a response to globalization, much importance should not be attached only to economic mechanism. This is because it would be the socio-cultural identity in a region that plays a role in an endogenously controlled restructuring. Thus, it will be an important task of new regional geography to decode the socio-cultural identity.

6. Conclusion Remarks

As compared with domestic area research, only a scant of foreign area research has been carried out. Since the 1970's, foreign area research has developed chiefly from the soft part of human geography. In the 1980's and 1990's, foreign area research, centered on the United States, has sharply increased. In the 1990's, the research interests are paid to how an open economy affects the regional economy, especially the production technique, division of labor, industrial mix, market strategy, industrial location and organization, and so on. Unfortunately, however, the boundaries between economic geography and regional economy are gradually disappearing.

It seems that regional study, the pivotal subject of geography, should take more anthropocentric approaches than before, because the space today is considered to be a realization of human perceptions, ideas, intentions, and technology. The spatial structures in a world system are social and global creatures. This is why geographers should revivify regional geography in a global view point.

Notes

- 1) The first volume was published in 1963.
- 2) The first volume was published in 1970.
- 3) The first volume was published in 1973.
- 4) Jibong is Lee's pen name. Jibong-Ryuseol (芝峰類說).
- 5) He visited Beijing in 1590, 1597 and 1611 AD.
- 6) Seungpyung-Chi (昇平誌).
- 7) Seoyou-Kyonmoon (西遊見聞).
- 8) Korea Ministry of Education, 1992, The 6th High School Curriculum, Korea Textbook Co., pp. 171-172.
- 9) For brevity, the rest of the items are not listed.

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