

Tracing the roots and domestic sources of Korea's ODA: Aid as a cold war statecraft for a middle income country

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Abstract

The paper explores South Korea's South-South Cooperation (SSC) during the Cold War as the roots of its current Official Development Assistance (ODA). Unlike its ODA equivalent of activities, Seoul's SSC has been relatively neglected in academic literature. By applying Sato (2013)'s conceptualisation of overseas 'aid' as a policy and practice of a 'semi-developed' middle-income country, the paper examines how and what domestic conditions allow non-traditional development partners (NTDPs) to choose SSC as an instrument for its own development. In doing so, Sato's framing opens an interesting analytical possibility to revisit Korea as a South-South Cooperation partner in its pre-ODA period. A more systematic in-depth study on hows and whys of Korea's initial aid provision (but still as a recipient) deserves better academic attention. Therefore, this paper addresses this scholarly lacuna through the case of Korea during Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Hwan administrations - while aiming to draw some generalisable traits in an effort to trace the origin and domestic sources of Korea's initial aid provision. Simultaneously, this paper further considers South-South diplomacy (and SSC) not only as a Cold War statecraft - but as a middle income country's tool to advance and to promote (economic) security and 'economic cooperation' with the non-aligned Third World nations. In particular, for the latter, the paper focuses on the domestic sources of Seoul's SSC or Overseas Economic Cooperation then - that laid the key foundation of today's Korean ODA system.

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I. Introduction

The recent studies of 'foreign aid' have increasingly emphasised the role of non-traditional development actors (hereafter NTDP, i.e. BRICS - Brazil, China, Russia, and South Africa) in global development (Mawdsley and McCann, 2011; Sato et al., 2011; Taylor, 2014; Woods, 2008). The NTDP's discursive positioning of development cooperation, or South-South Cooperation, has been much scathing on the existing foreign aid regime as the manifestation of hierarchical thus unequal colonial and post-1945 power relations. The providers of South-South development cooperation (hereafter SSC) claims that their partnership is based on an equal and more empathetic postcolonial solidarity with the global 'South' (Mawdsley, 2012a; Sato and Shimomura, 2013; Six, 2009). Therefore, rather than act of charity and sympathy, NTDPs' symbolic gestures foreground the notion of investment, mutual benefit, and win-win relationship (Mawdsley, 2012b).

With their relatively recent 'visibility' as an international development partner within global development, scholarly research on these NTDPs has been rather fixated with the trends and effects of their contemporary activities and engagements (in particular BRICS in Africa, (Quadir, 2013)). Therefore, relatively little in-depth analysis (compared with its traditional counter parts) has conducted on how such partnership has initially emerged. This particular research tendency still persists despite the fact that those NTDPs are by no means new comers in the field of development cooperation (see Mawdsley, 2012a). Literature on their history of 'cooperation' - especially the origins and sources - has been limited when compared with traditional donors (Riddell, 2007; Ruttan, 1995). Even when studied (for e.g. China, see Brautigam, 2009a; Ping, 1999), their main focus has been on the international aspects of such cooperation. Therefore relatively less literature are available on the domestic political economic context/factors of NTDPs' development cooperation.¹ Such lacuna may have been also due to their relatively 'late' rise (from the 'Western' academia and policy circles) in global development field² - therefore, limited and thin research available so far on the subject. In turn, such knowledge gap has fuelled those 'threat' theories (Naim, 2007) and hyperboles (Brautigam, 2009b; Chahoud, 2007). And debates vis-à-vis 'cultural' elements have also emerged out of such lacuna (e.g. 'Asian' approaches and values, see (Korea Development Institute and The Asia Foundation, 2011; Soderberg,

2010).

However, the above analytical approaches rather lack a rigorous analytical tool to explain the domestic political economy side of NTDPs' SSC. Here, a recent study on the evolution of Japanese aid during the 1950s sheds some interesting lights onto aforementioned domestic political economy aspect of NTDPs - that are largely 'semi-developed' recipients while simultaneously development partners (Sato, 2013). There have been quite a few studies on Japanese aid exploring in details the political economy of its origin and domestic sources (Arase, 1995; Lancaster, 2010; Orr, 1990; Rix, 1996; Takahashi, 2010). Yet, this particular conceptualisation of Sato's study stands out - because such conceptualisation is done not through the equivocal 'East (Asia) vs West' binary (Ohno and Ohno, 2013) or 'cultural' explanation in a grand search for an 'Asian model' of aid or even 'Asian alternatives' to the traditional DAC regime (Soderberg, 2010). Instead, the study frames Japan's structural interactions and changes during the 1950s and 60s via overseas aid as a policy and practice of a 'semi-developed' middle-income country - as its development cooperation was more likely driven by the domestic needs. By exploring how and "what domestic conditions allow countries to choose aid as an instrument for its own development" (Sato, 2013, p. 11), Japan (instead of being reduced to its longstanding trademark as the first non-Western aid donor with a DAC membership) contributes its more generalisable and relevant historical experience as a middle income country to the epistemological debates on NTDPs.

Although Japan has provided its aid as a DAC member since 1961, its actual practice during the initial stage still much resembles the practices of NTDPs today. Therefore, Sato's conceptualisation enables us to explore more critically and analytically by looking into NTDPs' structural interaction with the international political economy driven by their domestic political economy at a given time period. In so doing, Sato's framing in turn opens an interesting analytical possibility to revisit Korea's case as a NTDP. Thus far, Korea's case, despite its DAC membership, has been largely studied as a NTDP. Those studies mainly explored relatively recent, policy/practice and architectural evolution (i.e since 1987 with the establishment of the ODA loan agency EDCF - Economic Development Cooperation Fund). Thus, the history of Korea's - especially its initial stages of- aid has been often treated with a

brief chronological account of various events – starting with the 1963 USAID funded triangular cooperation project in Korea to instruct third country trainees. Yet, the history or a more whole-some understanding of South-South Cooperation has been rather missing in literature.

Naturally, a more systematic in-depth study on hows and whys of Korea's initial aid or 'aid-like' provision (but still as a recipient) deserves greater academic attention.³ In order to address this scholarly lacuna, I attempt to apply Sato's conceptualisation of 'aid policy as a middle income country' to the case of Korea in the 1980s⁴ - the period of Chun Doo Hwan administration - while aiming to draw some generalisable traits in an effort to trace the origin and domestic sources of Korea's initial aid provision. Simultaneously, this paper further considers Chun's use of South-South diplomacy (and SSC) not only as a Cold War statecraft - but as a middle income country's tool to advance and to promote 'economic cooperation' with the non-aligned Third World nations. In particular, for the latter, the paper focuses on the domestic sources of Seoul's South-South Cooperation or Overseas Economic Cooperation then - that laid the key foundation of today's Korean ODA system.

II. Brief overview of Korea's current ODA system

In terms of its ODA budget (see Figure 1), since the 2010 DAC entry, Korea's ODA (gross disbursement) recorded an annual average increase of 17%, reaching USD 1.652 billion (ODA/GNI 0.14%) in 2012. However, this figure still falls short of the self-declared target of ODA/GNI 0.25% by 2015 (Interview, 2014) due to current fiscal constraints (Lee, 2014; H. Park, 2014).

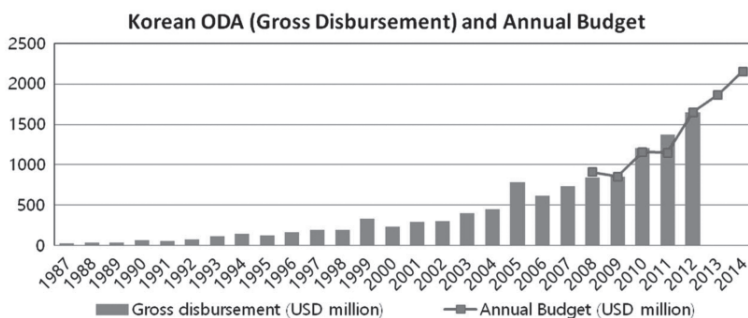


Figure 1. Korea's ODA (2005–2012/net disbursement).

Source: (Kim and Kang, 2015, p. 781)

As to the aid architecture, it is often described as a fragmented two pillar system (and the rivalry) due to the two different line ministries overseeing two types of ODA – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) for Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)'s bilateral grants and Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF) for Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF)'s concessional ODA loans (see Figure 2).

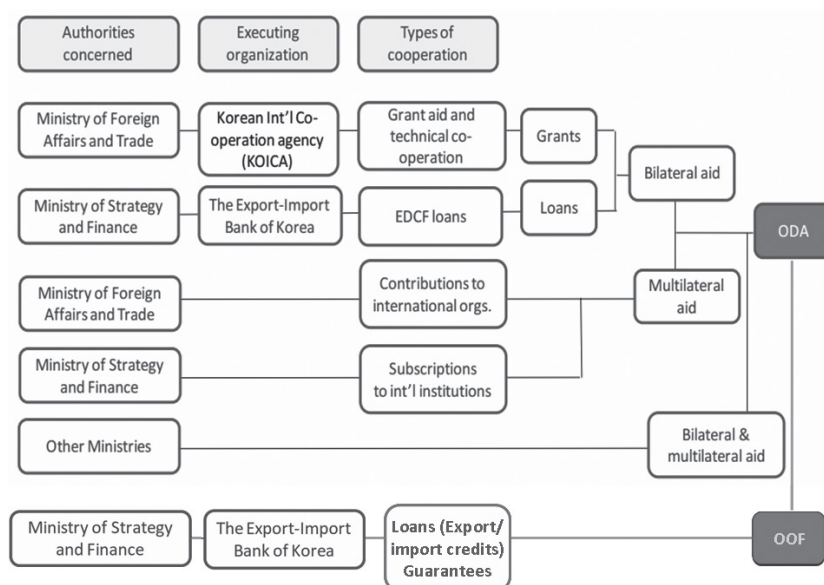


Figure 2. Korea's international economic cooperation architecture

Source: (Kim and Kang, 2015, p. 782)

But in reality, more than 30 governmental (including municipalities and quasi-governmental organisations) and non-governmental actors (including NGOs, private sector, and think-tanks) are involved in ODA project implementation. And more importantly, Korea's powerful influence of the executive branch - often dubbed as an 'imperial presidency' (Chung, 2013)- literally takes the centre stage of the agenda setting for Korea's aid (also all most every policy areas for that matter), creating a pork barrel-driven spontaneous yet powerful policy space (Kim and Kang, 2015). Due to the five-year single term, each president's desire for establishing their historic legacy leads to policy inconsistency as agencies and ministries do not have a consistent policy agenda. This is because the presidential agenda easily influences both policy

and political appointee/appointment. Unlike its US counterpart (Kingdon, 2014: 28-29) in which political appointees elevate issues from and within the ministries, the Korean case is more of a 'parachuting in' ideas and agendas to the ministries and the bureaucracy by political appointees (Lee and Rhyu, 2008; Hahm et al., 2013).

Korea has, since its DAC membership, increasingly drawn scholarly attention due to its growing visibility, bold and generous pledges, and the proclaimed 'bridging' . Especially the role as a 'bridge' is often presented as a display of Seoul's much-heralded empathetic role as post-colonial middle power (see Kim 2011, 2013), which in turn legitimises Korea's discourse on its contribution to global development through aid (Cho, 2014; MOFA ODA Independent Panel, 2014; ODA Watch, 2013; D. Park, 2014). Yet such particular proposition of bridging to some degree hints Seoul's subtle ambiguity as a DAC donor (n.b. Takahashi, 2010). Then, how, why, and where does such ambiguity originate from? This paper argues that it derives from Korea's own historical experience and institutional memory of SSC during the 1980s.

III. Tracing the roots - contextualising the origin and the domestic sources

The origin of Japan's aid often dates back to its post-war reparation - due to its volumes and more systematic approach to disbursement and practices that laid both an ideational and empirical foundation for the current ODA system (Arase, 1995; Takahashi, 2010). For Korea, this paper argues that Chun Doo-Hwan administration's South-South Cooperation - although having been entirely missed in the Korean aid literature (n.b. (Kim, 2013) - holds the key.

As much as China's Cold War battle against the US-led Western block (also tension with Taiwan, see (Taylor, 2012, p. 26), South Korea's initial interests in SSC have begun in the 1960s to battle for political recognition against Pyongyang's already significant ties with many decolonised independent Third World nations (Chung, 1988). Therefore, essentially, South Korea's motivation for SSC in the early years were mainly as a tool for the Cold War statecraft to compete against North Korea in an effort to secure official diplomatic ties - and ultimately for Seoul's UN membership. Pyongyang's cosier relationship with the Southern nations frustrated Seoul throughout the 1960, 1970s and 1980s - in particular due to Seoul's involvement in the Vietnam War that brought relative isolation from the Third World solidarity movement (Gills,

1996).

To that end, the two consecutive administrations Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Hwan have implemented various strategies to rehabilitate the image among the non-aligned nations - in particular the strong anti-communist image from its Vietnam War commitment. Such changes since 1969 was reflected in Seoul's greater flexibility and openness in its Third World diplomacy - and especially after the Nixon shock and the US withdrawal from Vietnam in the early 1970s (Gills, 1996). Thus, in 1973, President Park Chung Hee abandoned the 'ideological' Hallstein Doctrine, and adopted more 'practical' diplomacy and embraced the idea of entering the UN as two Koreas (Lee, 1999). In the early 1980s, the President Chun Doo Hwan further advanced Park's policy by promoting the South-South diplomacy (Seo, 2009).

In their efforts for more strategic diplomacy (i.e. competition with North Korea), both Park and Chun have emphasised the efficacy of SSC or economic cooperation with the Third World. Therefore, compared with other countries with similar economic status, Korea has started its 'aid-like' cooperation relatively early. And without such political context, Seoul's 'economic cooperation' with the Third World nations may have been further delayed (Interview, 2015).

Despite the undeniable gravity of the Cold War politics, Seoul's political gear changes has also reflected the changing needs of domestic political economy to 'leap to an advanced economy' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1990), 112-113). Korea has achieved its (lower) middle income country status in 1983 (Im and Rosenblatt, 2013). And some serious structural reforms were pursued for the outward-looking Korean economy to respond to the increasingly challenging international political economy climate of that time (Rapley, 2007). The rise of new protectionism by the advanced economies (i.e. restrictions on the imports of Korean goods) has turned Seoul to the Third World diplomacy vis-à-vis economic cooperation: 1) to minimise the trade friction/tension with the advanced economies; 2) to induce a structural change of Korea's economy; 3) to secure steady supply of natural resources (Chun et al., 1985; Korean Economic Research Centre, 1984).

Then what has the South Korean government meant by SSC? Various Korean documents and materials from/on this period interchangeably use the following words while referring to SSC: 'cooperation with the Third World developing countries (*dae-*

ghedoguk-hyeop-ryeok 対開途国協力)’; economic cooperation; assistance to developing countries. Further, those Korean materials specified five key areas for SSC: trade cooperation, financial cooperation, technical cooperation, industrial cooperation, and economic cooperation. Some of these activities significantly overlapped with or more precisely complemented each other. Yet, the economic cooperation served as an overarching umbrella of Seoul’s SSC that included both ‘aid-like’ and non-aid-like activities (Chun et al., 1985; Korean Economic Research Centre, 1984).

In the following section, I explore two consecutive administrations - Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Hwan- with a specific focus on their SSC strategies in the pre-ODA period (1964- 1986).⁵

III.1. Park Chung Hee (December 1964 ~ October 1979): South-South Cooperation as a Cold War Statecraft via the Third World Diplomacy

Seoul’s key diplomatic principles in promoting SSC during this period was to achieve self-supporting economy and international diplomatic isolation of North Korea. But still, such principles were mainly politically and diplomatically motivated - therefore focused largely on the issues of UN voting, non-alignment group, competition with North. So actually more pragmatic advancement of economic cooperation efforts was seen to be still insufficient (Kim, 2013; Seo, 2009).

Nonetheless, Korea’s SSC activities have expanded between 1960s and 70s. Since the first a medical team dispatched to Uganda in 1964 (Min, 2011), more bilateral (aid-like) SSC projects were carried out in Africa - sending more doctors, medical supplies and equipment’s (Korea International Cooperation Agency, 2011). As much as aid-like technical cooperation, trade cooperation with the Third World was also seen as pivotal to Korea’s SSC. By improving market access for the Third World manufactures to South Korea, Park demonstrated its solidarity with the Southern partners and simultaneously advanced Seoul’s economic interests (Gills, 1996, p. 166).

In the second half of the 1960s, Korea increasingly emphasised economic cooperation as a theme of Third World diplomacy (Chun et al., 1985). Park Chung Hee decisively pushed an export-oriented industrialisation while adjusting its political economy from a labour-intensive to a capital-intensive structure (Gills, 1996, pp. 163-164). For this, South-South economic cooperation was seen as an effective tool to

promote Korea's business or to sell its 'successful development model' to the Third World countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Korea, 1990, p. 160). Opportunely, this particular strategy has been further boosted thanks to the positive assessment of South Korea performance in the late 1960s by the World Bank and UNCTAD - as a model of successful economic development (Gills, 1996, p. 167).

III.2. Chun Doo Hwan (September 1980 ~ February 1988): South-South Economic Cooperation as a Middle-Income Country Strategy in an era of New Protectionism and Neoliberal Hegemony

Chun's administration has met with the two key challenges, for which SSC was considered as an effective solution. The first is a political one as his presidency began with the 'Second Cold War' (Halliday, 1987), yet ended with the final years of Cold War. The second challenge concerned the heightened new protectionism from the 1970s and the rising neoliberal market fundamentalism (Rapley, 2007).

Chun's South-South economic diplomacy held the key to Seoul's diplomatic competition with Pyongyang. Political pragmatism and economic interests prevailed by effectively abandoning its anti-communist stance during the Vietnam War. Such strategic thinking was clearly demonstrated in his emphasis on the economic relations - especially with the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries (Gills, 1996). Chun prioritised ASEAN diplomacy while advocating mutually beneficial economic relations with ASEAN nations - of which central interests were in acquiring South Korea's compatible technology (Chun et al., 1985). Similarly with Japan (Sato, 2013), Seoul was under dire needs to secure long-term supply of natural resources on favourable terms. Through both trade and investment, Seoul desired economic/business advancement in ASEAN countries by expanding into their growing markets and tapping into the future economic potential (Gills, 1996, p. 220). Chun's ASEAN economic diplomacy was heralded as a 'model for South-South cooperation' - which would offer appropriate technologies and investment to ASEAN countries in return for secure resource supply contracts (Presidential Archives, 2014a).

Chun has also utilised the SSC to bid for the 1988 Olympics. Both Park and Chun have valued the political possibilities of Olympics that would provide Seoul with ample opportunities 1) 'to demonstrate its economic growth and national power'; 2) 'to

create favourable conditions for establishing diplomatic relations with both communist and non-aligned nations' (Oberdorfer, 2013, pp. 140-141). During the bidding process, among others, the Korean delegation has particularly emphasised its developing country status to gain the Third World support in competition with Japan (Kang, 2003). In order to solicit the non-aligned countries' participation at the 1988 Olympics, Chun has promoted South-South diplomacy as well as aid-like activities (Ministry of Culture and Public Information, 1982). For example, 16.59 million USD were disbursed between 1977 and 82, while 6.89 million USD in 1983 alone. This rapidly increasing grant aid largely supported LDCs in Africa - with political and diplomatic reasons (Chun et al., 1985). In so doing, he became the first Korean head of state in history to make a presidential visit to Africa (Kim, 2013) as well as several ASEAN member states - of which all leaders later visited Seoul following Chun's tour between 1981 and 1983 (Presidential Archives, 2014b). During those visits, the host governments have publicly declared their support for Seoul's 1988 Olympics (Presidential Archives, 2014c). Chun, in response, has pledged various SSC projects including economic cooperation including various assistance and technology cooperation at the meetings (Presidential Archives, 2014a, 2014c)

The second challenge was an economic one which Seoul faced as a middle income country in an era of increasing new protectionism and integration into the global market economy. Despite Seoul's growing economic dynamism with achieving the middle-income status in 1983, its GNP dropped by some 5 per cent in 1980 (Gills, 1996, p. 204). For Chun, successful management of globalisation or integration into global economy was the key. He stressed both the goods and the ills of such processes. He emphasised the 'greater proximity' and 'interdependence' as globalisation provided Seoul with 'new opportunities' for 'co-existence' and 'co-prosperity' in the 'global village' (Office of Presidential Staff, 1982, p. 13). Simultaneously, he warned of 'conflicts and tension' fuelled by 'instability and uncertainty' (Office of Presidential Staff, 1982, p. 13) in the global market economy while referring to the heightened new protectionism, subsequently trade frictions with advanced economies (Chun et al., 1985). Here, the importance of SSC was put forward to overcome such ills. Thus, the SSC was utilised to accelerate economic reform (including industrial restructuring and market diversification) to regain growth and international competitiveness while

rectifying structural imbalances (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Korea, 1999). Also as aforementioned, SSC was key for market diversification and resource security. The South-South economic cooperation gained the defining momentum in Seoul's policy during the 1980s.

IV. Korea's South-South Cooperation

The policy discourse of Korea's SSC revolved around the two key pillars: securing Seoul's political and economic interests and promoting equality and mutual benefit in dealings with the Third World countries. Since 1967 - the establishment of Korea Bank of Export and Import (KEXIM), Seoul, still an aid recipient, became a more active participant in SSC. As discussed above, further acceleration of SSC began after the early 1970s in efforts to reduce Seoul's vulnerability to external shocks cause by its heavy dependence on the advanced economies (Ministry of Culture and Public Information, 1982). Such vulnerability was exacerbated further due to the 1980s' hostile trade environments. Korea's export goods have become subject to greater import control while its existing benefits of Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) being reduced. In this context, SSC was considered to be an effective statecraft to reduce such vulnerability while boosting economic dynamism via structural change.

More concretely, Chun's strategic prioritisation of SSC laid some basic foundation including institutional and policy apparatus. Until the early 1980s, the architecture/ system of Korea's SSC - more specifically here Overseas Economic Cooperation (OEC) - has been largely fragmented into four pillars - diplomacy related matters overseen by MOFA, export promotion and market development by Ministry of Commerce and Industry, overseas construction support by Ministry of Construction, and technical cooperation by Korea Agency for Science and Technology (Chun et al., 1985). OEC had dedicated implementing agencies including KEXIM, private economic cooperation organisations (e.g. Korea-Mexico Joint Business Councils), and Korea Development Institute (KDI). But with Chun's ASEAN and Africa visits since 1981, much concerns were raised over the inefficiency caused by the fragmentation (Chun et al., 1985). Therefore, in January 1983, as an integrated government platform for managing OEC, Overseas Cooperation Committee (OCC) was established with the vice-minister of Economic Planning Board as a chair and vice-ministers from all other ministries/

agencies as members. OCC was then again in 1984 April, expanded in its role and size while being promoted from a management platform to a policy coordination body (Chun et al., 1985).

Chun's policy priority was also materialised into some basic principles for SSC (Chun et al., 1985). The contents of the policy emphasised the responsibilities and roles that Korea had to fulfil as a developing country which successfully entered its middle-income country status. Seoul aimed to form a 'development frontline' in a solidarity with the Third World developing countries to promote Third World's self-help efforts by complementing the existing North-South or South-South cooperation via bridging the two (Chun et al., 1985). In so doing, Seoul's SSC offered the exchange of development experience and skilled experts, trade, joint investment, strengthening of economic solidarity with developing countries (Office of Presidential Staff, 1982).

In particular, Korea's technical cooperation was said to be 'the most actively engaged in and promoted area' of SSC (Chun et al., 1985). With the rapidly increasing demands from developing countries, technical cooperation expanded into various areas including invitation and dispatch of trainees and experts, joint technology research, and joint project implementation. For the trainee invitation, there were 4,023 trainees from 104 countries between 1963 and 1983. Especially, during Chun's administration, the number of trainees has increased to 300 trainees per annum. The main sector for cooperation was agriculture, fishery, health, and social affairs. As per the regional origin of the trainees, Africa has sent the largest number of trainees, followed by Latin America.

In reducing vulnerability from external shock and accelerating industrial upgrade, Korea's labour intensive light industry was in dire needs of relocation to developing countries due to its worsening comparative disadvantage (Chun et al., 1985). Here, Chun facilitated various types of economic cooperation funds (from FDIs to aid-like financing) to support the relocation of Korean manufacturing business, and to secure and nurture new export markets and steady resource supply for the Korean business from developing countries (Ministry of Culture and Public Information, 1982). For example, as of 30 September 1984, FDI to developing countries accounted for 47% of Korea's total FDI (Chun et al., 1985; KOTRA, 2006) - especially concentrated in Southeast Asia the most and then Latin America. Regarding sector allocation, until the

mid 1980s largely concentrated on resource development (forestry, mining, and fishery) and construction. But since the mid 1980, more active investment was made in local manufacturing and assembly joint venture projects and manufacturing within free trade zones (Chun et al., 1985; KOTRA, 2006).

However, despite Chun's prioritisation of and various strategies, it had a range of weaknesses and difficulties. Seoul's SSC first rather lacked the financial capacity. Despite the increasing requests for OEC funds since 1980s, Korea struggled with insufficient funds for 'development finance' - that can support projects in Third World with long-term and with low-interest rates. This ultimately led to the establishment of EDCF in 1987. Secondly, OCC lacked of strategic institutional arrangement, and fragmentation continued to persist. Thirdly, it also lacked technical capacity - in particular the regional/local expertise, research capacity to expand OEC. Among these, the most critical comments concerned Seoul's inability to be attune to the developing countries' needs, as Seoul's SSC was more likely to push what South Korea was able to and desired to offer then (Chun et al., 1985).

V. Conclusion

The paper explored South Korea's South-South Cooperation during the Cold War - that has been little studied in academic literature. It did so via application of Sato (2013)'s analytical conceptualisation of overseas aid as a policy and practice of a 'semi-developed' middle-income country.

The paper attempted to move beyond the hitherto approaches that focused on the 'East (Asia) vs West' binary or 'cultural' explanation in a grand search for an 'Asian model' of aid. In doing so, the paper more critically engaged with two key aspects of Korea's SSC of the time. The first is the domestic political economy aspect of South Korea as a 'semi-developed' middle-income NTDP while exploring how and what domestic conditions allow countries to choose aid as an instrument for its own development. The second aspects concerned an analytical framing that highlighted Korea's structural interaction with the international political economy at a given time period, driven by its domestic political economic needs.

The paper traced the origin of Korea's current ODA back to Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo-Hwan administrations' SSC. South Korea's motivation for SSC in the early

years were mainly as a tool for the Cold War statecraft to compete against North Korea in an effort to secure official diplomatic ties - and ultimately for Seoul's UN membership. In their efforts for more strategic Cold War diplomacy, both Park and Chun have emphasised the efficacy of SSC or economic cooperation with the Third World.

Nevertheless, the paper finds that such Seoul's political gear changes was a reflection of the changing needs within domestic political economy to leap to a high-income country status. Thus, for some serious structural reforms to respond to the increasingly challenging international political economy climate of that time has further pushed Seoul towards the Third World diplomacy vis-à-vis economic cooperation. OEC as the key pillar of Seoul's SSC was pursued to address domestic needs and desires of the time including easing of the trade friction/tension with the advanced economies, structural change of Korea's economy, and steady supply of natural resources.

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Notes

- 1 But some Chinese and Japanese scholars have been pioneering on this particular aspect of NTDPs - especially China, see (Kobayashi, 2013; Ping, 2013)
- 2 This point goes straight the heated debates on the correctness of using the terms - 'emerging/ new' or 're-emerging' or 'non-DAC'; and 'donors' or development partners
- 3 Most studies focus on Korea's development experience as a recipient (see REF)
- 4 Korea entered its lower middle-income country (MIC) status in 1983, upper MIC in 1994 (Im and Rosenblatt, 2013)
- 5 The reason for this particular periodisation is by counting the first Korea's bilateral SSC activities in 1964 (dispatching of medical doctors to Uganda) and the availability of actual ODA statistics since 1987).