

# A study on the influence of land institution on state-building in South Korea: Human resources



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## ABSTRACT

Since Korea was divided, conflict has continued between South and North Korea. However, preparation for the reunification of Korea needs to be considered consistently. Prior to this reunification, it is advisable to analyse the process of state-building in South Korea immediately following the liberation from Japanese colonial rule because this could be the foundation of the reunification of Korea. Meanwhile, land institution seems to have an influence on the process of state-building. Land institution appears to be connected to state-building economically, socially and politically, and, as this is the case, the German government also executed land reform for state-building following its unification in 1990. Regarding land institution, human resources (HR) seems to play a pivotal role. HR is in charge of the operation of land management organisations and acts to improve the related laws and systems, which seems to have a considerable impact on land institution. In light of the above, poor HR could have a negative influence on not only land institution, but also societal, economic and political aspects of state-building. Hence, this study reviews the influence of HR on land management in the process of state-building in South Korea immediately following the liberation from Japanese colonial rule; furthermore, related problems and their fundamental reasons are analysed.

## 1. Introduction

After the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, Korea was ruled by Japan for around 35 years. In 1945, Japan lost World War II and Korea became independent from Japan; however, this was not achieved by itself. Thus, Korea was under the trusteeship of the U.S. and the Soviet Union. A communist state was built in North Korea and a democratic state was built in South Korea. After the establishment of different governments, conflicts, such as the Korean War, terrorism, naval battles and nuclear tests, have continued for around 70 years.

Even though these conflicts have continued, preparation for the reunification of Korea needs to be carried out consistently. Prior to this reunification, it seems advisable to analyse the process of state-building in South Korea immediately following the liberation from Japanese colonial rule, because this could form the foundation for the reunification of Korea.

Meanwhile, land institution seems to have an influence on the process of state-building. Land institution appears to be connected to state-building economically, socially and politically (Luciani, 1978; General Tax Directorate, 1991; Fitzpatrick, 2002; Augustinus and Barry, 2004; FAO, 2005; UN-HABITAT, 2007; Boone, 2007;

Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010; Todorovski et al., 2012; Manirakiza, 2014; Todorovski et al., 2015). In addition, given that the German government executed land reform, such as the privatisation of state-owned land in eastern Germany, for state-building following its unification in 1990, land institution seems to contribute to state-building to some extent (Dells, 2008).

Human resources (HR) appears to play a pivotal role in land institution. HR is in charge of the operation of land management organisations and acts to improve the related laws and systems, which seems to have a considerable impact on land institution (Augustinus and Barry, 2004; FAO, 2005; Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010; Manirakiza, 2014; Todorovski et al., 2015). As mentioned above, land institution is interrelated with social, economic and political issues in the process of state-building. Hence, poor HR could have a negative influence on not only land institution, but also society, economics and politics. In light of this, it could be argued that land management HR has an influence on state-building institutionally, socially, economically and politically.

Hence, this study reviews the influence of land management HR in the process of state-building in South Korea following the liberation from Japanese colonial rule; furthermore, related problems and their

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fundamental reasons are analysed. The scope of analysis is limited to land management HR in South Korea following independence, and the research was carried out by collecting secondary data via a literature review.

The first part focuses on reviewing the basic concept of state-building, relations between state-building and land, and land management HR. The study then moves on to analyse the influence of land management HR in the process of state-building in South Korea after the liberation, and the related limitations and problems.

## 2. Concepts of state-building and land institution

### 2.1. Concept of state-building

After World War II, the phenomenon of decentralisation arose and new states were built in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, which gave rise to the concept of state-building (Fritz and Menocal, 2007). In the 1990s, state-building took centre stage again with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; recently, international communities and organisations seem to have been making efforts in state-building in East Timor, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq (Fritz and Menocal, 2007; Lemay-Hebert, 2010 cited in Marquette and Beswick, 2011).

The concepts of state-building do not yet seem to be clarified (Fritz and Menocal, 2007). As for definition, it is quite difficult to define state-building in a widely acceptable manner, but it could be defined as the processes of (re)construction of an autonomous, legitimate and stable government by international or domestic actors in a territory in terms of political, institutional, economic, social and military perspectives (Caplan, 2005; Fritz and Menocal, 2007; Call and Cousens, 2008; OECD, 2008; DFID, 2010). Key goals of state-building include provision of security, establishment of the rule of law, effective delivery of basic goods and services through functional formal state institutions, and the generation of political legitimacy for the (new) set of state institutions being built (Brinkerhoff, 2007 cited in Fritz and Menocal, 2007: 13). State-building can be classified into three types, as shown in Fig. 1, and Korea seems to fall under Type II (Fritz and Menocal, 2007).

The term state-building tends to be used interchangeably with nation-building and peace-building (Scott, 2007). However, the relationships between them can be summarised as shown in Fig. 2. Nation-building seems to underline national identity and peace-building appears to highlight the maintenance of sustainable peace, internationally and domestically (Boutros-Ghali, 1992; Scott, 2007; Fritz and Menocal, 2007; Call and Cousens, 2008; OECD, 2008). Given the above distinctions, state-building seems to contribute to successful nation- and

peace-building, and successful nation- and peace-building appear to strengthen the government for successful state-building. In other words, even though they seem to be quite different, they are interrelated; therefore, state-, nation- and peace-building should be performed in parallel.

Meanwhile, as for nation- and peace-building, peace-building could contribute to nation-building through the institutionalisation of peace to some extent; however, nation-building can cause ultra-nationalism, such as Nazism, which could result in international conflict (Boutros-Ghali, 1992; Scott, 2007; Fritz and Menocal, 2007; Call and Cousens, 2008; OECD, 2008). This point needs to be carefully taken into account in the process of implementing nation- and peace-building.

### 2.2. Relationships between state-building and land in the post-conflict environment

In the post-conflict environment, relationships between state building and land could be classified into four perspectives: institution, politics, economy and society (Luciani, 1978; General Tax Directorate, 1991; Fitzpatrick, 2002; Augustinus and Barry, 2004; FAO, 2005; UN-HABITAT, 2007; Boone, 2007; Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010; Todorovski et al., 2012; Manirakiza, 2014; Todorovski et al., 2015).

First, during conflicts, properties are destroyed, land registers are damaged and refugees occupy land illegally; therefore, land information, especially land rights, becomes incorrect and, to make matters worse, laws have limitations in encompassing complex land issues and conflicts in post-conflict environments (Fitzpatrick, 2002; FAO, 2005; UN-HABITAT, 2007; Manirakiza, 2014; Todorovski et al., 2015). In addition, HR and related support for the efficient operation of land management organisations are not prepared for dealing with this situation (Augustinus and Barry, 2004; FAO, 2005; Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010; Manirakiza, 2014; Todorovski et al., 2015).

In terms of politics, the central government tends to use land institution in order to strengthen the power of the central state or influence-related areas; however, powerful groups, such as politicians and elites, tend to abuse their authority to strengthen their vested interests and obtain private gain in the process (Augustinus and Barry, 2004; FAO, 2005; Boone, 2007; Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010; Manirakiza, 2014). For example, states nationalise and monopolise all the land and allocate rights of land use to the public, and corruption can occur among powerful groups in this process (FAO, 2005; Manirakiza, 2014). In addition, governments tend to change during conflicts; therefore, land transactions that were permitted by the previous government may not be acknowledged by the new government (Zevenbergen and Burns, 2010).

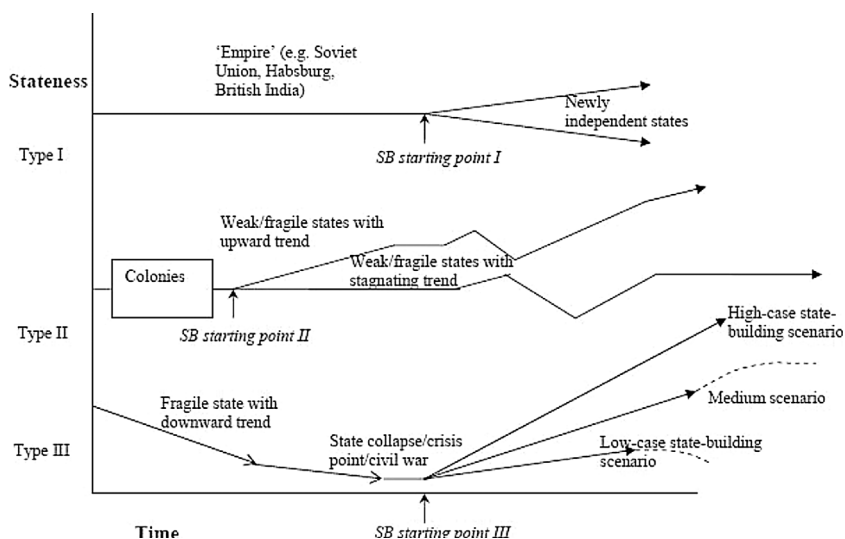


Fig. 1. Types of State Building (Adapted from Fritz and Menocal, 2007: 17).

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