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National identity in the era of global competitiveness: a critical analysis of nation branding through the case of South Korea

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Abstract

By looking at the phenomenon of nation branding, and focusing on the South Korean presidential nation branding strategy over recent years, this article tries to uncover how the imperative of competitiveness has moved from the corporate sector to the representation of national identity. By asking why more and more governments feel compelled to implement nation branding campaigns, and what identity South Korea in particular has tried to sell to a global audience, I contribute to an understanding of how a certain discourse of globalization structures the form of modern states in their identity and the image they associate with it. Rather than treating the issue of nation branding from a policy-oriented perspective, as has been done numerous times by marketing consultancies and scholars alike, I approach it as a form of proactive identity projection, the phenomenon through which national identity is embedded in the contemporary discourse on global competitiveness. Influenced by Foucault's understanding of power, the central argument of this article is that a powerful discourse of globalization deploys an intangible normative framework with tangible effects on contemporary understandings of national identity, imposed by a specific form of non-coercive power. National governmentshire private consultants to perform identities and political programs according to this framework. In other words, states are non-coercively constrained to share normalized self-representations. The South Korean case is a salient feature of this trend, and is an exemplary case study of the interactions between global structures and local factors in the nation branding phenomenon.

KEYWORDS: nation branding, governmentality, neoliberalism, competitiveness, South Korea

> "Governing people, in the broad meaning of the word, governing people is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself (Michel Foucault, The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom", in *The Final Foucault*, ed.J. Bernauer and D.Rasmussen, Boston: MIT Press, 1988, 1-20).

Nation branding is a major contemporary trend that has been "adopted in countries with emerging market economies and with established capitalist economies alike."[i] It can be defined as an apparatus of discourses and practices carried out by cooperating private and public sectors, aiming to create a highly competitive national image in the global market place of nations. It uses corporate marketing and brand management techniques to convey a unifiedidea of a nation, an image to be broadcast at home and abroad.National governments justify the public spending it involves with reference to the potential economic benefits. A successful nation brand is able to compete for international capital: tourists, investment, import-export trade, skilled labor and highly educated international students[ii]. It fosters national companies' competitiveness. It helps "convey an image of legitimacy and authority in diplomatic arenas"[iii] and obtain a legitimate seat in multilateral negotiations and decision-making.

Gerard Sussman finds it hard to determine how seriously to take nation branding "as it appears to be an exaggerated extension of neoliberal globalization and commodification, the notion that everything is for sale and that the potential market value of a nation … can be traded on international exchanges like stock equity."[iv]But while nation branding could be mocked as a mere CNN commercial for a country's fine wine and beaches, I believe that as a tangible phenomenon, involving both public and private actors, national governments and consultants intervening directly for them, its practice is revealing of contemporary power relations within the globalization paradigm. I take a critical rather than a purely policy-oriented perspective, conceiving of a discourse of globalization which presupposes the liberal understanding of the obsolescence of isolated nation states to face interdependency and "global challenges",in which the main historical force is competitiveness, with which countries should cope with the help of business actors.[v]

Many authors have considered nation branding to be an essentially domestic exercise, relating to nation building[vi]. I take a different stance, and consider that the ultimate goal of nation branding is the global audience. Nevertheless, to attain this global audience, the nation brand has first to beappropriated by the domestic audience, whose citizens are made responsible for becoming the nation brand's ambassadors.

The article is based on an empirically-deductive methodology. My empirical research tookas primary materialthe "industry literature"[vii]on nation branding, as well as the media sources, iconography and videos that have been associated with South Korean nation branding, together with interviews (with scholars, journalists, nation branding consultants and South Korean public officials). I then elaborated a theoretical framework, inspired by Foucauldian critique, to propose my core arguments. My central argument is that the discourse of contemporary globalization

deploys a normative framework with tangible effects, imposed by a specific form of non-coercive power. Foucault's work on *governmentality* and "technologies of the self"[viii]seem appropriate to analyse this form of power.

In 2013, South Korea ranked 14th among the world's economies[ix]. It has been a member of the OECD since 1996 and was chair of the G20 in 2010. Despite this status, its international reputation is rather negative, and successive South Korean governments from the 1980s have been obsessed with presenting an image of a modern and global country to the world.The South Korean example reveals the complex manifestations of combined endogenous and global-structural causes. While it is certain that South Korean nation branding exemplifies a global capitalist normalcy framework, it has been shaped too by the specific history of the Korean peninsula and South Korea's remarkable development trajectory. Therefore, this work aims not only at showing how South Korea was subject to global and capitalist structures of power, but also its agency in reproducing the frameworks I identify.

The phenomenon of nation branding

In 2005, The New York Times Magazine's "Year of Ideas" issue listed nation branding among the most interesting ideas of the year[x]. In this article, the British consultant Simon Anholt, "guru" of nation branding, explained: "Just as companies have learned to 'live the brand,' countries should consider their reputations carefully—because ... in the interconnected world, that's what statecraft is all about"[xi]. Nation branding is considered necessary for governments that, at the beginning of the XXth century, started to acknowledge "the influence of global public opinion and market forces in international affairs."[xii]

In the 1990s, a "postmodern branding revolution" took place and advertising, marketing and public relations (PR) became fundamental disciplines and fields of practice across and beyond the corporate sector; the brand itself and its logo became "the focus of conventional efforts. Indeed postmodern branding does not even require a tangible product."[xiii] If a brand is a symbolic representation and does not directly relate to a tangible commodity, then the idea of branding the nation does not so seem absurd.

The roots of nation branding go back well before Simon Anholt and his peers. International fairs were already a way to display a country's achievements, material power and cultural developmentin the nineteenth century. After World War II, national reputations started to matter on the international scene, and in 1953, Cantril and Buchanan published the first study of international images and reputations[xiv]. In the 1990s, the emergence of brands meshed with growing concern about national reputation, and the neoliberal shift in global political economy led to "a renewed relationship of mutual dependency between nations and private corporations"[xv]. Nation branding, an outgrowth of this relationship, "started to be considered the most legitimate way to make the nation matter in a global context."[xvi]For Anholt, the nation brand became "a clear and simple measure of a country's "license to trade" in the global marketplace and the acceptability of its people, hospitality, culture, policies, products and services to the rest of the world."[xvii]Crucially, it also responded to the new discourse of competitiveness[xviii], which urged national governments to withdraw from direct intervention in production, and foster competitive market relations throughout the economy and society. Michael Porter suggested that "a new kind of knowledge and expertise was required for state administration, one that comes from worlds of marketing and management" [xix] - what Foucault, in his analysis of neoliberal governmentality, called "an economic tribunal"[xx] judged and controlled governments. Nation branding, in short, constitutes "structural and discursive strategies that extend marketing priorities into new social and political realms."[xxi] It corresponds to the neoliberal pattern identified by Foucault, in which the corporate form is to be applied to every object of the social world.[xxii]Competitiveness has been normalized, accepted as an inexorable force to which nations should adapt.[xxiii]As one of my interviewees stated when asked why being competitive was crucial today: "The way the world itself has evolved and is evolving, economics is going to be above everything else.The way globalization is happening in today's world is economic."[xxiv] Competitiveness involves a Darwinian idea of international politics, in which a nation's objective is not to be erased by others, and where one should eat the others before it gets eaten.[xxv] What is questioned is whether the nation corresponds to the "evolved" political form of the late 20th-early 21st century: - "deregulated", "entrepreneurial", "open-minded", and "business friendly"[xxvi]. Countries are obliged to compete: "I'm not sure why they do it but I can tell you that if they didn't, they'd get left behind."[xxvii]In a world governed by markets, "the rearticulation of national identity in marketing terms, then, was a matter of evolution and even survival."[xxviii] The practice of nation branding is thus an outgrowth of a discourse, contested of course by radical critics, that presents globalization as an inexorable force leading nations to compete with one another in a global market place after the Cold War..[xxix] It can be considered "the controlling myth or master narrative into which individual nations can project their respective micro-myths and articulate their aspirations for wealth, power, and enhanced visibility."[xxx]

Nation branding Literature

In addition to the considerable practitioner or "industry literature" in books and in journals as *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, Place Branding, Journal of Brand Management*, in which the names of Simon Anholt, Keith

Dinnie, Wally Olins and Peter Van Ham feature prominently, nation branders have created indexes, and benchmarking tools to measure the competitiveness of nation brands. Among these, the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index annually measures the nation brands of 50 countries in different fields.[xxxi]This literature argues that public officials have a poor understanding of nation branding and should rely on consultants to implement successfulcampaigns. It reflects the basic assumption that globalization is an inevitable historical force bringing nations to constantly compete and that to do so governments need nation branding.[xxxii]An emerging, more critical literature, mostly in communication journals with a focus on media and critical cultural research, is led by Aronczyk's*Branding the nation: the global business of national identity*, the most accomplished work on nation branding so far, in which she argues that nation branding; although problematic, does serve to perpetuate the nation form in its contemporary, contested understanding .[xxxiii]

Branding Korea

"That's one key thing we learned about branding Korea: let people outside Korea decide for themselves what they like." Fiona Bae, deputy PR manager at Hyundai Capital and Hyundai Card, WILLIAMSON Lucy (2012), Selling South Korea: No "Sparkling brand image", 31rd January 2012, BBC News, Seoul, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16713919, [accessed on the 4/4/2014]

Simon Anholt, the "inventor" of nation branding, and Keith Dinnie, another leading practitioner, have both worked on the South Korean case.[xxxiv]In May 2006, Simon Anholtwas the key note speaker at the "Nation Brands in the Global Market" conference in Seoul, held by the Korea Image Development Committee. He concluded his observations on the poor scores South Korea obtained in the 2005 AnholtGfK Roper Nation Brands Index declaring that South Korea had "a major image problem". He suggestedthat survey respondents had confused North and South Korea, and thus described the South Korean government as "dangerous, "unstable" and "unpredictable."[xxxv] Despite the country's "great advances in prosperity, stability, transparency, productivity, education" and culture, and the success of *hallyu* ("the Korean wave") in East and Southeast Asia, South Korea remained quite unknown, if not actually known for its negative image, in the rest of the world.[xxxvi] During the 2000s, its image seemed to deterioratein successivenation brands surveys: between 2005 and 2008, it fell from the 25st to the 33rd in the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index[xxxvii].

These findings have been taken extremely seriously by successive South Korean governments. David Kang and Adam Segal see this urge to be recognized and to attain a greater status on the global scene as "typically Korean,"[xxxviii]and according to one of my foreign interviewees, "Koreans feel like someone who studied well, who succeeded but that nobody takes note of, who remains unnoticed. The gap between the political and economic reality and South Korean image leads to an interrogation, in South Korea, about the country's place in the world, its recognition on the international scene."[xxxix]

To explain why national image for global audiences is a major concern for successive South Korean governments, an overview of Korean history is necessary.When the two Koreas signed the armistice at Panmunjom in 1953, South Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world. Devastated by war and left worn by years of Japanese colonization, it was considered "a basket case of developmental failure".[xl] During and after the authoritarian rule of General Park Chung-Hee 1963-1979), it experienced rapid growthuntil the Asian financial crisis of 1997 slowed it down. While in 1961 it only exported tungsten, fish and wigs, in 1996, Korea joined the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, having become "a solid upper-middleincome country". [xli] One South Korean government official I interviewed linked this history to the contemporary exigency of nation branding: "Korea has the experience of war, it was the poorest country in the world, and we were aid recipients. In my parents' generation, we were following the US army because some soldiers gave us chocolate, sweets. Babies had one meal a day, we grew rice but had only two harvests a year, in the meantime we did not have anything. It was a long time ago, but this history is still affecting many people. It is an obstacle for us to promote our country. So our government really thinks that nation branding is important."[xlii]Another interviewee explained the gap between the reality of South Korea and its image: "it all went too fast. It's almost natural to encounter this gap for a country which went all the way from absolute poverty to being one of the world's leading economies."[xliii]

Because of this gap, many foreignersstill believedit was an underdeveloped, aid dependent country, until the 2002 World Cup and the following decadeofsegyehwa policy. Consequently, South Korean companies choose not to advertise their country of origin, preferring to be branded globally. So although South Korean companies have become leaders in several sectors of industry, "Korea does not appear to have benefited from this transference of brand equity from corporation to nation."[xliv] Referring to this "Korean discount", one public official said: " I meet a lot of people here in the UK who have Samsung or LG smartphones, they don't even know they're Korean! We (the government

and the Koreans) want to get Korean premium and not Korean discount. I believe that in three to four years, we will have raised the national image sufficiently so that these flagship companies [Samsung, POSCO etc.] will feel it to their benefit to state their nationality."[xlv]

Antecedents: from Segyehwa to 'Global Korea'

South Korea's efforts to brand itself predated the involvement of Anholt and Dinnie. The first event that put South Korea in the international spotlight wasthe 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, central for President Roh Tae-woo and his nordpolitik aimed at opening not only to North Korea, but also to the rest of the world.[xlvi] In 1990, South Korean citizens were allowed to travel outside of the country and in 1991, the two Koreas entered the United Nations. The end of the military regime at the end of the 1980s had changed the way the world looked at South Korea. These turning points were followed by the participation to the APEC Summit, and, in November 1994, by the adoption of a new foreign policy paradigm by the Kim Young-sam government: *Segyehwa*, or "globalization policy."
Kim Young-sam, a long-standing democraticopponent ofthe military regime, was elected president in 1992. The core objective of*segyehwa* was to "become a central country to the world"[xlvii] and an advantaged nation. More than adapting to globalization, Kim emphasized the need to adopt globalization as a state policy.[xlviii]*Segyehwa* was born out of a "recognition of a move from the periphery to the core"[xlix] and a worldview in which globalization could be "a shortcut that will lead us [South Korea] to building a first-class country in the 21st century"[l]. The new democratic regime, pro-business, accepted the principle of economic liberalization.[li] In December 1997, Kim Dae-jung, a democratic opposition activist, succeeded Kim Young-sam.Globalization was, for Kim Dae-jung as it had been for Kim Young-sam, a way to "join the ranks of first-rate societies."[lii]He also considered globalization to be crucial for South Korean foreign policy, seeing it as "in no way restricted to the economy."[liii] He launched the slogan "Parallel development of democracy and market economy". His aim was to make every citizen a global citizen, arguing that the country could only progress if it participated in globalization and "embraced the challenges of the new millennium".[liv]The 2000s decade was then marked by a series of events that confirmed this policy line: Kim Dae-jung developed the "Dynamic Korea" slogan to show the world that Korea was a "modern" country, andin 2002, South Korea held the first Football World Cup in Asia.Before the World Cup,under Roo Moo-hyun, a Committee for National Image was established, under the authority of the Prime Minister, to turn Korea into a "cultural superpower." Then in 2002 and 2004, the government held nation branding conferences with professors, ambassadors, chief executives and brand experts, to understand how foreigners perceived South Korea.[lv] In February 2004, the South Korean National Assembly approved the controversial dispatch of 3,000 troops to Iraq along the US army. In October 2006, Ban Ki-moon was appointed as UN's new secretary general.

With the election of Lee Myung-bak in 2008, *segyehwa* was replaced by a new policy line, Global Korea, which, despite Lee's conservative background, also reflected Kim Young-sam's and Kim Dae-jung's globalization concerns. Like them, Lee was convinced that "South Korea must globalize in order to survive global competition."[lvi]Hepromoted a more active global role for South Korea, deploying troops to Afghanistan in 2009, after a sustainedeffort to convince a hostile South Korean public opinion. On the 1st July 2011, the EU-ROK Free Trade Agreement entered into force and in June 2012 the KORUS FTA with the United States was signed, after six years of negotiation and great protest in South Korea[lvii]. South Korea hosted the G20 Summit in November 2010, and in March 2012, the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit. Strategy and Finance Minister Yoon Jeung-hyun justified Lee's Global Korea policy by proclaimingthat Korea has truly become one of the leading emerging countries in the global economy" and that it "seeks to promote the creation of a visionary Asia and a fair global society."[lviii]

In his 2008 Liberation Day speech, Lee declared: "it is extremely important for Koreans to win the respect of the international community. … Korea is one of the most technologically advanced nations. And yet, the first images coming to the minds of foreigners are strikes and street demonstrations. If our nation wants to be "approved" as an advanced country, then it … needs to improve its image and its reputation significantly."[lix]Formerly Hyundai Heavy Construction CEO and mayor of Seoul, Lee took Simon Anholt's work and comments on South Korean nation brand's poor scores very seriously.[lx] He created the Presidential Council for Nation Branding("gukaburanduwiwonhoe")[lxi] under his direct control on 22 January2009. His objective was to climb from 33rd to 15th rank in the Anholt-GfK Ropers Nation Brands Index, as early as 2013.

As Dinnie observed, "the government has committed significant resources and energy to position the Korea Brand as a vibrant, dynamic democracy, creative and open to the world."[lxii] These attributes correspond to the standards of global normalcy countries seek to meet through nation branding. They suggest a neoliberal lexicon ("dynamic", "creative") and are embedded in a discourse of modernity that correlates to that of competitive globalization.[lxiii]The South Korean government has institutionalized this phenomenon in a way that no other nation has. As Lee Doo-hee, a professor at Korea university and memberof the Presidential Council on Nation Branding put it: "No [other] nation has taken systematic measures to improve its nation brand, particularly by establishing a separate organization and by creating its own tool for international comparison"[lxiv].

According to the former website of the Council, "Nation brand is the dignity of a country. Korea must raise its global status by making efforts to gain credibility and likeability in the international arena."[lxv] Thus, the Council had three main objectives: "to increase Korea's commitment and contribution to the international community; to help Koreans become responsible, respectful global citizens; and to promote Korean products and services."[lxvi] It had 47 members (13 government officials and 34 others, mostly from the academic and private sectors)[lxvii]. 24 international advisors also sat on five different committees.[lxviii]

In March 2009, the PCNB presented a ten-part plan for action. Among its leading initiatives,aiming at showing its benevolent commitment to international cooperation, as a country finally made responsible to address global challenges,World Friends Korea, a voluntary service modeled on the United States Peace Corps, would send over 3000 young Koreans to developing countries every year to participate in development efforts,[lxix]public diplomacy would be developed with the nominationof an ambassador for Public Diplomacy based in Seoul, to take advantage of the *hallyu*phenomenon;[lxx] and Korean international aid to developing countries would be increased, together with the adoption of a Korean Wave Program to help developing countries achieve rapid economic development based on the Korean development experience model.[lxxi]In addition, the PCNB sought to attract young foreign talents and foster academic relations between South Korean and foreign universities through the Global Korea Scholarship Program and the Campus Asia Program.[lxxii]Finally, it sought to help South Koreans become global citizensby fostering a greater sense of multiculturalism and open-mindedness in South Korean society, through academic exchange programs, and the establishment of educational foreign cultural centers in Korea. The PCNB also emphasized the need to achieve a better treatment and integration for foreigners and multicultural families through the Rainbow Korea TV campaign, which encourages South Koreans to welcome foreigners and improve their global etiquette. [lxxiii] At the same time, a "Global Korea" campaign was launched by the Council, in collaboration with major *chaebols* (Samsung, LG, Hyundai) and entertainment industries (SM, YG, JYP).[lxxiv]

In 2013, newly elected president Park Geun-heedissolved the Council, without official reasons given.[lxxv]However, a number of factors may have contributed. One government official commented that the South Korean government considered that "foreign consultants have more knowledge and more experience than us in the field of nation branding until now."[lxxvi]Indeed, the Council was criticized by foreign observers for its lack of coherence and its "archaic"[lxxvii] management. The logo, the slogan (especially "Korea Sparkling"[lxxviii]) andthe narrow branding perspective were also considered counter-productive by these observers. Although international advisorswere hired to sit inthe Council's committees, one observer argued that "It would have been better to hire European and American communication agencies."[lxxix] This criticism reinforces the argument that the (Western-based) private sector is portrayed as fitto work on nation branding, while the public sector is criticized for its lack of flexibility and its heavy bureaucratic character.

The Seoul G20 Summit: Living Brand Korea

In November 2010, South Korea hosted the fifthG20 Summit. President Lee Myung-baktook advantage of itto boost Korea's nation brand in foreign audiences: "Korea should take advantage of the event to become a more respected and powerful nation. It will be a good opportunity, too, to upgrade global awareness about Korea's potential as well as the remarkable achievements the nation has made during the past decades".[lxxx]The event was perceived as a test, but also as a source of great pride for the South Korean government. It was the first time, according to SakongIl, that Korea was "asked to show its global leadership."[lxxxi] One foreign journalist who followed the G20 Summit remembered "For Koreans, the G20 was a big thing; it was impressive to see how seriously they took it. Politically the message was "we belong to the big ones, we're part of the club of advanced nations". They really wanted to blow everyone away." Indeed, it was the first time an Asian country presided over the G20, and this was understood as a new, inclusive, form of global governance, a perception reinforced by "a narrative marking the shift of authority to the emerging economies" which "had gained ascendancy within [the G20]".[lxxxii] Consistently with this narrative, the Seoul G20 Summit was evidencethat "Asians had now achieved greater participation in global economic governance"[lxxxiii], and that the G20 "acknowledged that global governance could not be done by the West alone."[lxxxiv]It was also expected that "If the Summit was a success and developed nations recognized South Korea was able to organize efficiently such an event, then the South Korean nation brand value would "be greatly enhanced."[lxxxv]As one observer put it: "On the international scene, the G20 would enable Korea to be at the heart of international discussions, to be perceived as a country responsible for taking care of the world. This was new for Korea. Korea has been a martyr of history, so the need for international recognition is very strong and very emotional. But the country has ambitions, so the G20 met the need to be recognized by peers and people who count."[lxxxvi] In seeking to give international observers the best impression, the South Korean governmentmade citizens responsible for being entrepreneurs of themselves, complying with what it saw as normal, globally accepted standards of behavior. In other words, they were asked to "live the brand".

Living the brand is a key partof any nation branding strategy[lxxxvii], and consists in having ordinary citizens perform "attitudes and behaviors that are compatible with the brand strategy."[lxxxviii] Since Brand Korea was that of a global, open-minded and dynamic country, South Korean citizens were asked to act accordingly. Two foreign journalists

described the summit preparation: “The whole city was regulated, they needed to give a good image, to be polite. The country was mobilized to avoid any wrong chord. It came from the top; it was a big thing for Lee Myung-bak.”[lxxxix]According to Prof. Yoo, “Because of the Summit, Koreans were disturbed in their daily lives.”[xc] Boards reading “If you come across a foreigner, smile and say “Hello!” were posted in the capital’s subway. Other boards asked South Koreans to behave well towards the foreign visitors in Seoul for the Summit.[xci] “G20” was the key term before the summit: it appeared on newspapers, official speeches, ads, and policemen’s uniforms. While foreign heads of states were taken on a tour around the country[xcii], Seoul’s mayor took drastic measures to present a clean and modern capital. The streets were cleaned, street vendors and the homeless were asked to leave the city center, asthey did not fit in the image of a “global city”. Taxi drivers were obliged to attend English classes and shave every day. Other operations aimed at reducing traffic in the city, and presenting an efficiently working, ordered metropolis.[xciii]Additionally, a video entitled “the real story of Korea” was produced for the G20 Summit, and broadcast on the Internet. Its purpose was to help foreigners understand more about Korea, Koreans and the meaning of the G20 chair for them. It also worked as a welcoming message for foreign audiences. Recalling the “miracle on the Han River”, it emphasized the sense of sacrifice and community of South Koreans, especially during the development period. It displayed a commitment to global happiness, multiculturalism and open-mindedness, together with an emphasis on young generations and South Korea’s green future commitments.[xciv]

Despite this grand strategy, critical voices suggest that the government’s nation branding strategy is contested. The homogeneity of the branded image was broken by dissident voices. The anti-G20 demonstrations, the South Korean labour unions opposed to the progressive economic liberalization of the country[xcv], the fierce opposition to Iraq war involvement[xcvi], all counter the Global Korea image that the government tries to sell. A recent social opposition movement came from students and threatened the consensual nation brand: replacing the Korean greeting *Anyeonghasimnikka*(“How are you?”) by *Annyongdulhasimnikka*(“How are we *all* doing?”), they express their misfortune and their impression that the South Korean is tarnished by social resentment and disunity.[xcvii]

Despite the refusal of visas to international activists and police and army repression against local demonstrators, protests were fierce against the Summit, but not emphasized by the Korean media, for they did not fit in the consensual South Korean nation brand the global community was to consume.[xcviii] As J. Yoo noted, “Instead of rushing headlong into the image, the brand, we should first repair the house. You should not always enlarge the house and paint the walls; sometimes it’s better to inspect the cellar first. We need to backtrack to nation building, for our nation-state is not achieved yet. The socio-economic integration is still fragile.”[xcix]A government official also confided: “President Lee nominated the Council but a country’s image does not function like that, it can’t be created. The idea is still present today, but even with a “Brand Korea”, you can’t attract people that easily.”[c]

CONCLUSION

Foucault’s analysis of how particular discursive structures and knowledge configurations create “norms, rules and standards of accepted or normal behavior, with respect to which agency may be evaluated and evaluates itself”[ci] is central to my work. While traditional analyses of power in political science had emphasized negative and tangible variables (repression, coercion or impediment), Foucault introduced a new way of thinking about power. For Deleuze, Foucault is a “new cartographer” who shifts power analysis from a typology that located itsorigins in a single place to one in which itis diffuse and “can no longer accept a limited localization”.[cii]Foucault also shifts from a critical analysis of power mainly derived from Marxist theory and its emphasis on the economic relations of production to one in which discourse and practice are intrinsically linked.[ciii]Foucauldian power is structural, creating a set of rules to which agents comply because they are forced to or because they feel obliged to. These rules form a “normalcy framework”, that is, the standard defining what is normal oracceptable. Power is a positive notion because, as opposed to constraint, it produces behavior in accordance with the standard or acceptability.[civ] Foucault’s main analytical notion, developed in his lectures at the Collège de France[cv], is governmentality, which he defined as “the encounter between the techniques of domination exercised over others, and the techniques of the self”.[cvi] So, while “government of others” refers to a situation in which oneagent exercises power over another to make hercomply with the normalcy framework, government of the self refers to voluntary practices through which individuals not only control their behavior to act according to what they perceived as “normalcy”, but also try to transform themselves to meet the requirements of these norms. Then, “the liberal polarity of subjectivity and power ceases to be plausible. From the perspective of governmentality, government refers to a continuum, which extends from political government right through to forms of self-regulation, namely “technologies of the self””.[cvii]

Let me now relate this to the appeal of nation branding. Governments have not been subjected to any kind of direct coercion obliging them to hire nation branding consultants. Rather, governed by a perceived framework of acceptable global national identity, they have extended political government onto the citizens, who are made responsible for their performed national identity to fit in the framework, the global matrix of normalcy that they come, through power structures, to perceive as unavoidable. Governments feel compelled to comply with the recognized normality and

publicly seek, through the (somehow undemocratic) performance of a normalized national identity, to adhere to the norm. They not only show foreign audiences that they are "normal" and "developed", butalso, as a result of the neoliberal logic, lead their citizens to become "entrepreneur of themselves", in the process of what nation branding consultants call "living the brand."

The reproduction of the norms of acceptable behavior is also crucial, and brings agency back in the frame. Indeed, in the case study of South Korean nation branding, I wished to show that not only have the South Korean governments adopted practices and discourses of unquestioned global competitiveness that underlie global power relations, but also, by requiring of their citizens to feel responsible for adopting these standards of global, "civilized" behavior, they have participated in their perpetuation. This is not to say that actorsintentionally reproduce these power relations. But by adopting practices and discourses fitting in the global normative framework, they do reproduce the very power relations that established this normative framework.

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