How did underground student activists construct a collective identity for their movement and mobilise the public during the 1987 South Korean democratisation movement?

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Abstract

This research examines the role of underground student activists in the 1980s Korean democratisation movement. Social movements have arisen to respond to repressive regimes, not just in Korea but globally, and in many of these movements, activists have been forced to go underground. However, little research has been done to explore collective life experience as underground activists. This study is an insider research project that pursues an in-depth retrospective exploration of students' collective experiences as activists, specifically the ways in which they went underground to maintain their engagement and solidarity in the face of harsh dictatorship and developed strategies to mobilise the masses and challenge the military regime in 1980s South Korea. This study will demonstrate multi-dimensional efforts for shaping underground activists' collective identity, and that the collective identity co-evolves with strategies which are heavily influenced by the relationship between activists and the public by incorporating evidence from interviews, letters, pictures, news articles, reviews and researcher's experience. To effectively show this process, this study discusses the findings thematically from developing movement as underground activists, the activist-led period, followed by the time when activists co-worked with the masses, and the collective memory in shaping strategies and collective identity. It argues that ideological cohesion was the key glue to sustaining their movement, and that inclusionary practice in generating collective action and identity has greater effectiveness in mass-mobilisation than dichotomising social movement actors based on the strong boundary work. This study also indicates that emotional disturbance of underground activists has significantly impacted on their lives. This finding therefore recommend that comprehensive emotional care strategies need to be developed for sustaining movement.

Keywords: underground activism, Korean democratisation movement, collective identity, mass mobilisation, student activism

Declarations

Declaration of Authenticity

"I, [Yeon Sook Leslie], declare that the Master of Research thesis entitled [How did underground student activists construct a collective identity for their movement and mobilise the public during the 1987 South Korean democratisation movement?] is no more than 50,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

"I have conducted my research in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and Victoria University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures.

Signature  Date 8/2/2024

Ethics Declaration

"All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the [Human Ethics Research Committee (HERC): HRE21-178]."

Signature:  Date: 8/2/2024

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Dedication

For my loving daughter Lisa, the reason why I have to become a better person every moment.

For Won-bong, who left me enormous tasks to put best efforts to make the society better place.

For Chris Baker, who always is pride in me to be a revolutionary.

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And, for other 'Me's, who are still fighting against unjust existing social order.

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INTRODUCTION

My Story

I had been living in South Korea until 2001, when I immigrated to Australia. I was 34 at the time, and since then I have encountered various inflection points in my life. So far, except for a few years in Korea where I lost my ideological orientation and wandered around, and a few years in Australia where I couldn't do anything due to fatal health reasons, I can say I'm a life-long activist.

It was the struggle for democracy in Hong Kong in 2019 that inspired me to design the rest of my life as an activist, from a street fighter to a researcher, at the age of well over 50. The protests in Hong Kong, which began on March 15, 2019, against the criminal prosecution law, have spread to the expansion of democratic demands for universal suffrage. On July 24, 2019, news broke that China might use troops to suppress Hong Kong's pro-democracy struggle. From that day on, I cried for two nights. This incident took me back to the streets of South Korea in 1987. At the time in 1987, I was a Korean underground student activist in my early twenties. At that young age, in front of armed policemen, I stood desperately, holding on to uncontrollable fears, unresolved ominousness, and a glimmer of hope. The urgency ran through my bones, and I had to do something when I heard the news of possible military intervention to Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong democracy movement in 2019 faded away as it lost power due to internal division, hard-line suppression, and unexpected Covid-19 pandemic, leaving a record for the longest protest in the 21st century, over 270 days. And I also paid attention to Lebanon and Chile, which were holding anti-government protests inspired by the Hong Kong democracy struggle. In many parts of the world, there are still many countries that do not have a basic democracy, and citizens in them are still taking high-risk struggles to create change. I had so many things to say to them as someone who was one of the student underground activists, who led the struggle for democracy to victory in 1987 South Korea and felt “I have to do something offer.” As an individual, not a celebrity, I started to think about the most influential way to deliver messages and realised that it was the path of a scholar. Therefore, this project was planned with a desperate desire to help activists from all over the world who are still risking their lives fighting for democratisation to come up with a better plan by telling the precedent case of Korea. I passed this message to my former comrades, and I have received considerable support from them. This research is also about me and my experience. This thesis is written based on our stories, I hope I deliver the message successfully.

This study: Student activists- bringing together the past with the present.

The global crisis and inequality, which threatens the mankind’s just coexistence, continues to be, and students are repeatedly appearing as a leading force in the struggle to address these crisis and

inequalities. Overt and covert oppressions on the activism are current, therefore listening activists' s past stories has present meaning to support young people who are fighting for a better future.

Throughout the course of history and across a number of repressive regimes, university students have often been key players in the fight for justice, working together to create powerful social movements (Weiss, 2012). More recently, Student activism and youth-led protests in South Africa known as the Economic Freedom Fighters have been a been an instrumental force of change since 2015 mobilising others as part of their #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall, drawing attention to the material and economic reality of inequality and deprivation. They have played a key role in raising consciousness and exposing the myth of the Rainbow Nation as an ideal place of racial, social and economic equality and opportunity in the post-apartheid era (Chikane, 2016). Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old girl sparked the global climate action, and around 1.6 million school children in 125 countries participated climate strike protest March in 2019 (Marris, 2019). It succeeded in creating a global attitudinal shift. Students have also shaped the famous fight for racial justice through the Black Lives Matter movement (Rim, 2020). Arguably Jacoby (2017) stated that the student activism has become localised at the micro level, those examples show the endless potential of the role of student movements in shifting public discourse and changing societal conditions. In Southeast Asia, the role of student activists is also still of importance, with both the student-led Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong and the more recent 2021 military coup in Myanmar (Waa, 2021) Myanmar students quickly took the leading role in campaign for the democracy.

Similarly, whilst many studies about student activism have been conducted in the countries where a parliamentary democracy is functioning and the right to protest for example is a right (Gibson 2020, Hlatshwayo 2019; Jacoby 2017; Serafimovska 2018), less research explores the particular social, cultural, and political conditions of a repressive military regimes in countries like China. The countries where repressive measures were used to rule the country might have different dynamics in student activism. Thus, understanding the course and power of both underground activism and student activism under repressive regimes has not been a focus of research due to its illegal and highly secretive nature (Bryan, 2019). Social movements are often studied as they are happening, they rarely take a retrospective approach in which participants can reflect on their experiences, roles, and context. My research will be focused on the activism of South Korean underground university student activists operating under a repressive regime during the 1980s. Exploring a historical case study as portal through which we can develop new understandings in our current context.

The focus of this research is mainly on the year of 1987 as a significant historical moment in the South Korean student movement history as was turning point for change, characterised by turmoil,

violence, victory, and hope. In January 1987, a death of a university student by government officials' torture gave a rally point and threw the country in unrest anti-government movement (Bryan, 2019). In the same year, the military government was overthrown by the university student-led massive direct campaign actions (Rennebohm, 2011). Bryan (2019) stated that the Korean university students brought a number of strengths to the movement, particularly their ability to organise campaigns and changing the nations course in 80s. With this heightened activist activity during 1987, this study aims to explore the experiences of South Koreans who were student activists during this time, seeking to capture an in-depth understanding of the complexities of their strategies, organising and forming a collective identity under the conditions of a repressive regime. In terms of that, the 1987 will be a great showcase to investigate the dynamics of student activism and mass mobilisation under the repressive regime. Therefore, the first research question is 'How did students organise in response to the significant change of political situation in the 1987 Korean democratisation movement.' The two sub-questions that further guide this qualitative study are;

1. How was collective action generated through shared identity and purpose as students?
2. What tactics and strategies were employed to engage with the mass?

In the process of constructing answers to these two research questions, the mechanism of mass mobilisation and the process by which the masses grow into agents of struggle is examined.

This project aimed to look at how underground student activists organised themselves, formed a collective identity and took action to create significant change in the political situation during the 1980 Korean democratisation movement. The June Uprising in 1987 was possible because there were groups of organised underground activists who risked their lives to expose the nature of the regime and continuously fight for social change since the 1970s (Park, 1989). In the meantime, the political juncture continuously changed, and the strategies of the underground activists also shifted alongside. Therefore, this study examined how student activists formed their collective identity and generated collective actions according to these political circumstances. Strategies and tactics in line with the changes in the relationship between the public and activists will be intensively dealt with, and as a result, the process of the public growing into a subject of struggle will be examined. In order to effectively show these changes and progresses, the findings of this study are laid out in four chapters that are ordered chronologically.

Thesis Structure

Firstly, chapter 2 describes the background knowledge and historical context for this study. I focused on the history of emerging nationalism and anti-communism sentiment in South Korea, which became sacred ideology to control the country with repressive ruling measure. I laid out the resistant histories from 4.19 Revolution which became the root of collective resistant

memories. In the background chapter, I explain the political juncture in the 1980s as this project aimed to unpack democratisation movement in those days and outline the social movement era in the post-1987 era.

In the chapter 3, I review the relevant current literatures with the wide spectrum of academics. In the chapter, I discussed the current theories of social movements focused on social constructivist aspect and political process theory (PPT) after giving definitions of social movement and activism. Students were discussed in detail in the social movement stage; I unpacked the characteristics of student movement and its limitations. I also discussed the literatures about Asian student activism, providing insights into the influence of historical and cultural aspects of social movements in the region. Student activism in the 1980s in South Korea has received much academic attention, the chapter outlined the discussions and controversies of them.

As outlined in Chapter 4, this study used a qualitative methodological approach with a retrospective view to understand the role of student activists in South Korea more than 30 years after they led the democratisation movement. Situated within a constructivist paradigm using life history style interviews with 7 former South Korean student activists, this research aimed to better understand the underground movement, the important role of identity in such movements, but also the strategies, tactics and other dynamics used to create societal change. Given the sensitive nature of these experiences and memories, it was important that this research was reflexive and ethical, particularly as I am also a former activist taking on the role of researcher. I discuss this is further detail in Chapter 4. For the theories, this study mainly used two theories; collective identity to examine emotions, motivation and micro-mobilisation; collective memory was used to consider how memory politics impact on sustainable social movement.

The findings chapters of this research study are organised thematically, with each chapter bringing together a particular theme of the movement that emerged through analysis of the interviews and historical documents. There are 4 finding chapters in total, they are laid out as follows.

- Chapter 5: Building a movement: Undong-Gwon- Motivations, Collective Identity, and Sustaining
- Chapter 6: Pre 1987 Ongoing struggle, violence, and the vanguard era
- Chapter 7: The 1987, the era of “Into the public”
- Chapter 8: Collective memory and legacy of 1987 democratisation movement

Firstly, the student underground activists are repeatedly discussed in the subsequent chapters. Therefore, chapter 5 addressed how the underground activists were able to sustain high-risk activities while forming their collective identity and culture fuelled by their motivations and emotions. Centred of attention on 1987 when the student movement was able to maximise its

potential, chapter 6 discussed pre-1987, chapter 7 discussed 1987, and chapter 8 discussed collective memory. Chapter 6, called a vanguard era, addressed about the strategies and tactics under a violent regime for creating assets that made possible the mega-scale mass mobilisation in 1987, and their limitations. Chapter 7 focused on dramatical changes in the relationship between activists and mass, process of mass organising, and the formation of university students' collective identity. Chapter 8 discussed how previous collective memory was strategised in 1987 and how collective memory and collective identity shaped in 1987 influenced subsequent social movements.

There were a small number of university student activists that succeeded in mobilising the masses on a massive scale in 1987, achieving significant change that had a lasting impact on South Korean society and the struggle for equality. Their example and experience of creating victory through tireless struggle laid the foundation for a powerful mass movement in those spans into the present.

The findings of this study reveal a crucial and unmistakable fact: in South Korea, a small group of university student activists were able to achieve a remarkable feat in 1987 by mobilising the masses on an unprecedented scale. Their efforts led to significant changes that had a profound impact on South Korean society and the ongoing struggle for equality. Their success serves as a compelling example, showcasing how victory can be attained through relentless and unwavering commitment to justice and democracy. Their story stands as a testament to the potential of collective action and the ability of dedicated activists to bring about transformative change that reverberates through time.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

This chapter provides an overview of the historical context and the major social events that helped shape and influence the emergence of the 1987 Korean democratisation movement (referred to as 'The 198'), including the role of university students within the movement. Beginning with a brief summary of Korea's modern political background, this chapter then outlines the 4.19 Revolution and military coup, the neo-military coup and Gwangju Uprising, before focusing on the major political events in the year 1987, which is the period of my research. The chapter also provides a snapshot of Inha University during that time, which was the leading university with a large number of students in the city of Incheon. By examining major historical events and deep-rooted oppression, the 1987 Korean democratisation movement can be contextualised as an outcome of the students' spirit of resistance.

2-1 Colonisation, civil war, national division, and its legacy

Pro-democracy or student activism in Korea was often framed and stigmatised as Reds – the North Korean followers. This arguably contributed to an enabling environment in which the authoritarian governments claimed absolute power to suppress the anti-government movement (Gang et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017). In this paper, Korean authoritarian governments are defined as the hybrid regime that prolonged dictatorship through a manipulative electoral system. To contextualise the emergence of strident anti-communism, a brief historical background of Korea is provided to establish the historical basis for the oppositions against the dictators who faced serious political oppression. To understand the democratisation movement in South Korea, it is important to consider the social, political, economic, cultural, and international contexts that led students to lead the social change as a collective force.

In 1910, Korea lost its sovereignty to the Japanese Empire and remained a Japanese colony for the next 35 years. Tens of thousands of Koreans died fighting for independence; however, some privileged Korean groups enjoyed the colonial era by serving the Japanese Empire (Seth, 2019). Since this period, nationalism has become a powerful discourse among Koreans and in Korean society (Seth, 2019). On March 1, 1919 (3.1 Movement), the first large-scale citizen-led national independence movement took place nationwide for about two and a half months, which is considered an important starting point for mass struggles in modern Korean history (Oh, 2018). The ending of Japanese rule came on August 15, 1945, when Japan surrendered unconditionally in the Second World War II to the US (Ohn, 2010; Seth, 2019). Most Koreans spontaneously celebrated the moment. However, the fate of Korea was a matter of many great powers' interests. US President Roosevelt advocated putting Korea under supervised trusteeship to build a nation for forty years, largely ignoring Korea's rich history of self-ruling (Ohn, 2010; Seth, 2019). On the other side, Stalin also advocated for a supervised trusteeship, albeit for a shortened period (Seth, 2019). In the meantime, at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers in December

1945, after Japan was defeated in World War II, it was decided that Korea would be governed by a trusteeship for a maximum of five years by the United States, Britain, China, and the Soviet Union. Korea divided into two ideological camps surrounding this political debate 'for' or 'against' the supervised trusteeship. While the nation fell into unrested and chaotic political division, Rhee Syngman (Rhee)[1] operated a South Korea-only presidential election and, with support from the US, established the Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948 (Seth, 2019). On September 9 the same year, North Korea proclaimed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) after carrying out a secret election supported by Stalin (Ohn, 2010; Seth, 2019). As a result, the nation separated with the borderline drawn at the 38th parallel north within the Korean peninsula (Ohn, 2010).

On June 25, 1950, North Korea crossed the 38th parallel north and attacked the South, marking the beginning of the Korean War (Abrams, 2020; Ohn, 2010). While the Korean War started with internal conflict, it quickly drew global attention and intervention. For the first and only time in history, 16 countries formed UN allied forces to fight for South Korea, and China mobilised troops to support North Korean forces. This allied force is different from the peacekeeping force under the United Nations. While the allied force had the combat mission against North Korea during the Korean War, the peacekeeping force generally maintained a neutral stance for policing duty in conflict or war zones. However, there was broad agreement among world leaders that the issues of the Korean peninsula were far too complex to be resolved by military intervention alone (Abrams, 2020; Ohn, 2010). In July 1951, both the US and China began to negotiate a peace settlement, and a ceasefire was declared in 1953 (Seth, 2019). The result was the Korean Armistice Agreement that formally established the North and South as two countries, recognised both internationally and on the peninsula. In this process, both North and South leaders were excluded and had little choice in the matter (Seth, 2019). Koreans saw their fate decided by great external powers (Seth, 2019). The death and destruction of the war were truly horrific, but national reunification has remained something that almost all Koreans support (Seth, 2019). A legacy of the war has been the emergence of anti-communist hysteria and pro-US sentiment among South Koreans (Seth, 2019), which has provided powerful justifications for draconian measures against the anti-government movement and has been a powerful tool to eliminate government opponents in South Korea until the 1980s (Shin, 2017).

2-2 The 4.19 Revolution and a military coup

Rhee's administration was largely comprised of men who had served in the notorious Japanese police force and was riddled with corruption (Abrams, 2020; Ohn, 2016; Seth, 2019). He governed the country in an authoritarian manner but was largely considered an incompetent

[1] Rhee Shingman: The Korean name are written in the order of surname and given names in this study.

leader, criticised for not addressing immediate national needs (Seth, 2019). His Liberal Party had no national agenda other than maintaining Rhee's rule and taking economic and political advantages through his administration (Seth, 2019). The Rhee administration was a hybrid regime and scholars agree that its characteristic was a patriarchal and corrupted authoritarian government (Kim Y., M., 1991). During his reign, anti-communism became a sacred ideology and suppressed all kinds of anti-government movements (Kim S., G., 1996).

Rhee was dramatically losing public support, driven largely by increasing public disgust with the regime's corruption and disappointment over the slow pace of economic recovery and growth (Shin, 2017). He increasingly adopted extreme ruling measures to maintain his power, reinforcing the National Security Law (NSL). The NSL, introduced in 1948 to promote national security by outlawing any activities that might be beneficial to communist activities and eventually North Korea, included illegal activities such as anti-state activism, dissemination of communist ideas, and organisation of communist groups (Shin, 2017, p. 4). However, the NSL was frequently used to oppress opponents of Rhee's administration (Shin, 2017). Despite his lack of popularity, he won the fourth election in 1960 in what was broadly viewed as a fraudulent victory, leading to a revolutionary student-led uprising in April of that year (Seth, 2019). Mosler (2020, p. 122) argues that the "extreme manipulation of the vice-presidential election on March 15 led to protests by the people." Further exacerbating student unrest, on April 11, 1960, the dead body of a missing high schooler Kim Ju-yeol was found floating in the sea near Masan with a tear gas cartridge in his eye. A nationwide protest erupted, resulting in around 1,000 participants being shot dead by police on April 19, 1960 (Mosler, 2020). Following this atrocity, then vice-president Jang Myeon resigned, and around 400 professors protested on the streets to show their sentiment toward the students' sacrifice. This triggered the demonstration to mobilise into a nationwide public movement (Mosler, 2020).

By April 26, about 30,000 citizens protested in front of the presidential palace, resulting in Rhee's resignation as president and providing an opportunity for democratisation (Mosler, 2020). This series of massive political movements was named the '4.19 Uprising' or '4.19 Revolution,' leaving a lasting legacy in Korean history (Mosler, 2020). For example, in 1963, the April Revolution was mentioned in the Constitution's preamble, stating "building a new democratic republic based on the ideas of the April 19 Uprising" (Mosler, 2020, p. 119). Following Rhee's resignation and as a result of the April 19 Revolution, Yun Bo-sun, who ran for the Democratic Party nomination, was democratically elected as the president in 1960. Koreans experienced a great deal of freedom and democracy during his presidency. However, while he focused on economic development, his ability to push the post-revolution political agenda was limited, resulting in a failure to bring political stability to the nation (Lee, 2010). The nation was rife with unrest, specifically factional conflict within the Democratic Party and political demands pouring out from all walks of life

during his presidency, creating an environment conducive to a military coup by General Park Chung-hee. The first democratically elected government after the revolution was overthrown (Lee, 2010). While the blowback of the Revolution resulted in the 1961 military coup, Lee has stated that "the 4.19 Revolution served as the spiritual foundation of the democratisation movement for the next 30 years" (2013, p. 37). This historical event connects the genealogy of the resistance spirit of the March 1 Independent Movement and inspires the struggle for progress until recently.

2-3 Neo-military coup and Gwangju Uprising

Park Chung-hee became the third Korean president in 1961, and his military dictatorship lasted for over 18 years until his assassination in 1979. The 18 years of his presidency were characterised as a developmental dictatorship with Martial Law and the Yushin regime, which denied citizens' fundamental rights and freedom. His time ended with his assassination by his right-hand man on October 16, 1979 (10.26 Incident), leaving controversial legacies of economic development at the expense of democracy (Brazinsky, 2020; Gu & Ki, 2007).

After Park Chung-hee's death, many Koreans were hopeful for democratisation after a long-lasting military dictatorship. The whole country began to demand democratisation, and this period came to be known as the 'Seoul Spring.' However, the movement of the military to regain power in the power vacuum after Park Chung-hee's death became active. The political turmoil from the end of October 1979, when Park Chung-hee died, until the Gwangju Uprising in May 1980, developed into a confrontation between the Yushin faction, named as the neo-military, and the pro-democracy movement (Gang et al., 2017).

After the 10.26 Incident, the military gained powerful authority through martial law and was divided into hardliners and moderates, revealing differences in the subsequent political agenda. Unlike the hardliners led by Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, who sought for the military to return to power, the moderate faction, which formed the martial law command centred on Jeong Seung-hwa, supported the abolition of the Yushin Constitution and the establishment of a civilian government. At this time, the overwhelming opinion was that the military should remain neutral, and it is known that hardliners within the military, who would later be called the neo-military, were seriously concerned about the possibility of being eliminated (Gang et al., 2017). The first action of the neo-military took place on December 12, 1979, not long after Park's death. Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo took collective action with their young military officer followers and imprisoned their political rivals, including Jeong Seung-hwa and five others, to take control of national power, naming themselves the neo-military force (Gwangju Committee, 2013). This was an internal military coup through which Chun Doo-hwan seized real power in the government. Meanwhile, demands for democratisation poured out from all walks of life,

including the media, academia, and labour. In particular, the number of labour disputes during this period increased to 809, compared to the total of 105 the previous year (Gang et al., 2017). The student movement also became active from March 1980 when universities reopened, focusing on the democratisation of the universities, and turning into a political struggle demanding the overthrow of Chun Doo-hwan and the abolition of martial law.

From April until mid-May 1980, especially after university students returned to their studies after vacation, demonstrations calling for student rallies escalated. The number of rally participants increased over time, and on May 15, 1980, approximately 70,000 students gathered in front of Seoul Station, demanding democracy, as reported by the Seoul newspaper. However, there was no leadership at the time to guide the student movement in an integrated manner, and rumours circulated that martial law troops would be deployed (Gang et al., 2017). After intense discussions, the argument of 'Preserve our movement capabilities without giving an excuse for military intervention' prevailed, and the protesters voluntarily disbanded. This incident is called the 'Seoul Station Retreat,' and as a result, Gwangju was completely isolated (Gang et al., 2017). The Gwangju Uprising ended with a civil massacre, and as a painful reflection on the Seoul Station Retreat, the theory of 'Immediate and leading struggle' dominated from then until early 1986 (Seo et al., 2017; Gang et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the 5.18 Gwangju civil massacre brought an end to Seoul Spring. The civil massacre, variously referred to as the Gwangju Democratisation Movement or the Gwangju Uprising, is considered a pivotal moment in Korean history from dictatorship to democracy (Choi, 2013).

The process of the Gwangju Uprising began in the early morning of May 17, 1980, when martial law was extended and strengthened by the coup leaders. The neo-military force soon deployed troops in major cities. The troops encountered only a small number of student rallies in Gwangju on May 18, yet the protest was brutally suppressed by the paratroopers (Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013). Gwangju citizens were enraged at the bloodshed, and protests expanded over time. On May 19, more paratroopers were deployed in Gwangju under the operational name of wonderful vacation, and around 3,000 rally participants were brutally assaulted (Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013), provoking the ordinary citizen-led demonstration to turn offensive (Lee, 2013). The city of Gwangju was isolated by the army's blockade plan, and the number of citizens participating in the protests grew (Gu & Ki, 2007; Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013). Paratroopers shot and killed civilian protesters. Given that major media outlets were under the control of the neo-military force, the incidents in Gwangju were framed within a government narrative. The government declared "the state of Gwangju was due to the acts of destruction, arson, and instigation by rebellious elements or spies" (Gwangju Committee, p. 94) in attempts to justify the paratroopers' gunfire against the citizens. The citizens armed themselves and took control of the city with massive support and participation, during which time the city achieved

self-management with a low crime rate (Gu & Ki, 2007; Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013). However, the fierce resistance of the citizens was suppressed by 20,000 troops who carried out a bloody operation on May 27. According to government official records, there were 4,000 victims who were dead, missing, injured, or detained (Choi, 2013), but the May 18 History Compilation Committee of Gwangju (Gwangju Committee, 2013) insists that the number would be closer to 7,500. The Gwangju Uprising was forcefully suppressed, the neo-military seized power, and Chun Doo-hwan was elected president on August 27, 1980, through an indirect vote. The neo-military force's isolation of Jeonnam, province[2] including Gwangju, appeared to be successful (Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013). However, the truth of Gwangju was exposed to the world by German reporter Jürgen Hinzpeter, and the Gwangju Uprising became Chun's Achilles' heel (Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013). Photos and videos from that time were continuously displayed in the university districts. Many students, upon discovering the truth about the Gwangju Uprising, which had been portrayed as a disturbance instigated by North Korean spies on public broadcasts, reached a consensus that the dictatorship, established through the massacre of their own people, should come to an end.

The alleged involvement of the United States in assisting the neo-military force to suppress the Gwangju Uprising, or at least turning a blind eye to it, provoked a strong anti-US sentiment (Kim, 2010; Gwangju Committee, 2013; Lee, 2013). Several circumstantial pieces of evidence suggest US involvement: firstly, Korean military deployment required US approval or acquiescence under the ROK-US Combined Forces Command system in 1980; secondly, Gwangju sought American intervention, and the Gwangju Citizens' Committee requested US Ambassador William Gleysteen to intervene and negotiate a truce, but the embassy refused (Shorrock, 2010); thirdly, after the Gwangju massacre, there was a significant political and economic alliance between Korea and the United States during the early days of the Chun Doo-hwan regime. Particularly, Chun Doo-hwan's visit to the United States, which took place soon after US President Reagan assumed office in February 1981, provided legitimacy to Chun Doo-hwan's rule but left a deep scar on the Korean people (Gang et al., 2017). While there are numerous documents illustrating that the US is not responsible for the events in Gwangju, there are also countless official materials indicating US approval of the military actions. What is clear is that the US remained invisible to Koreans despite recognising the gravity of the situation in Gwangju (Shorrock, 2010), and Chun Doo-hwan was welcomed by the US soon after taking office. As a result, anti-US sentiment in Korea became evident, particularly after Gleysteen's official recognition in June 1980 (Shorrock, 2010). Alongside the violence of the Chun Doo-hwan regime, criticism of the United States, traditionally seen as a democracy-loving ally, became an important aspect of the struggle to uncover the truth

[2] Jeonnam province: In the 1980s, there were 7 provinces in Korea including Jeonnam, and Gwangju was the capital of Jeonnam until it was incorporated as a direct-controlled city in 1986.

of Gwangju. Consequently, the Gwangju Uprising became a catalyst for the fierce struggle for democracy in the 1980s and symbolised the Korean people's ongoing, relentless pursuit of a just society.

2-4 1987

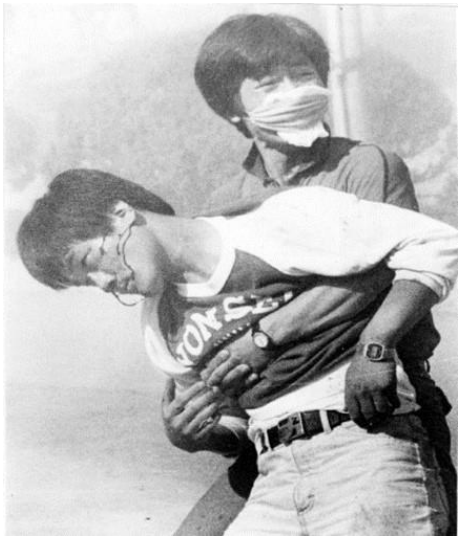
The Gwangju Uprising may have been suppressed, but student resistance continued. Reflecting on the fact that Seoul Station Retreat eventually isolated Gwangju, the struggle continued by mobilising all possible strategies and tactics. These movements in the 1980s, known as the Korean democratisation movement, began with the Gwangju Uprising and reached their peak in 1987 with a series of significant incidents. The year 1987 holds particular significance in South Korean student movement history as it marked the greatest influence on social change. In January 1987, the death of university student Park Jong-cheol as a result of torture by government officials turned the country into a battleground for anti-government movements (Bryan, 2019). On April 14, Chun announced that there would be no constitutional change for the democratic presidential election (Hoheon), which further fuelled the anti-dictatorship movement. In early June, another university student, Lee Han-yeol, was shot dead, provoking outrage at the national level. The continuous protests in 1987 began to intensify from June 10th and peaked until the 28th. As a result, they gradually subsided with the so-called June 29 Declaration of direct constitutional amendment from the neo-military government. This period is referred to as the June Uprising, which led to the overthrow of the military government through massive direct campaign actions led by university students (Rennebohm, 2011).

Bryan (2019) stated that Korean university students brought several strengths to the broader democracy movement, particularly their ability to organise campaigns. Chun Doo-hwan became president through an indirect presidential election after suppressing the Gwangju Uprising, and he continued the harsh ruling measures of the previous president, Park. From the beginning of Chun's regime, he struggled to maintain legitimacy (Gang et al., 2017; Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013), and the pro-democracy camp constantly criticised the violent nature and adherence to the Yushin system of his regime (Gang et al., 2017; Lee, 2013). The bloody suppression of the Gwangju Uprising and the harsh repression in the early days of the Chun Doo-hwan administration paradoxically gave strong legitimacy and moral grounds for resistance to the forces of the democratisation movement. University student activists made consistent efforts to reveal the truth about Gwangju (Gang et al., 2017; Lee, 2013). Their efforts were impeded by martial law, but the struggle, including acts of resistance and underground movements, intensified when public discussion was impossible (Gang et al., 2017; Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013; Seth, 2010). The government stigmatised student activists as ‘Reds’ to justify the arrest or conscription of many underground student activists (Gang et al., 2017; Lee, 2013), although student activism had been present since 1983 (Gang et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the murder of a Seoul

National University student named Park Jong-cheol in January 1987, who died after being tortured, became dramatically known to the public, sparking a new wave of student movements and public disgust with the administration's brutality (Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013; Seth, 2010). A joint organisation emerged, marching across the country in March for the eradication of torture, rejuvenating the pro-democracy force after prolonged suppression (Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013).

On April 13, 1987, Chun declared that a new president would be decided by the National Council for Unification, ending negotiations over the new constitution (Hoheon). This meant keeping the presidential system with a strong executive presidency and handpicking his successor through a sham election with only one candidate to allow the neo-military force to remain in control (Lee, 2013; Seth, 2010). The declaration shattered public expectations of restoring democracy. The April 13 announcement initiated a period of political turbulence as students and political activists held increasingly larger and more massive protests (Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013). "Much of the middle class, dismayed at not being able to select the next president, sympathised with the demonstrations" (Seth, 2010, p.193). The student demonstrations continued to grow in number and size, and incidents of police brutality further inflamed the situation. On June 9, 1987, a student from Yonsei University, Lee Han-yeol, fell into a coma after being hit by a tear gas bullet (Lee, 2013; Seth, 2010). The public was enraged, as the incident revived memories of Kim Ju-yeol in the 4.19 Revolution. The widely circulated image of Lee Han-yeol being hit by a tear gas bullet and collapsing as Image 2-1 shows caused nationwide anger (Lee, 2013).

Image 2-1 Lee Han-yeol



Jun 9, 1987:Lee Han -yeol was hit by tear gas and fell

This photo was emblazoned on huge posters, becoming a centrepiece for the struggle (Lee, 2013, p.136). This photo acted as a catalyst to put an end to the constitutional reform of the Chun Doo-

hwan administration and was later selected by the Associated Press as one of the 100 best press photos of the 20th century.

The pro-democracy forces centred around the National Movement Headquarters organised a large-scale nationwide demonstration on the following day, June 10, when Chun was set for a nomination as the presidential candidate. Roh Tae-woo, the second person in the neo-military, was nominated as the presidential candidate on the same day. However, approximately 240,000 people participated in nationwide rallies calling for constitutional amendments. The protests lasted for 20 consecutive days (Gu & Ki, 2007; Lee, 2013), and became known as the June Uprising. Afterward, anti-government protests flooded the major cities. An estimated 1.5 million people participated in protests nationwide on June 18. As the protests intensified, rumours circulated that the military would be deployed. Chun's rejection of a democratic presidential election provoked another protest with approximately 1.5 million participants on June 26. Three days later, on June 29, Roh issued a declaration, with Chun's approval, that they would accept a new constitution with provisions for direct presidential elections, named the June 29 Declaration. The government also announced the end of censorship, the release of political prisoners, and the removal of all obstacles to political activities. The ROK-US Combined Forces Command system was maintained at that time, resulting in difficult conditions for Korea to deploy the military on its own. Therefore, international pressures for US disapproval of army mobilisation and concerns about the scheduled Olympic Games may have influenced the Declaration (Lee, 2017; Lee, 2013). However, it is unlikely that these democratic changes would have been made without the persistent student demonstrations (Gang et al., 2017; Gu & Ki, 2007; Heo, 2017; Lee, 2013; Seth, 2010). "The June Uprising was a victory of people power" (Lee, 2013, p.139).

The main focus of this work is activists from Inha University in 1987. Inha University is located in Incheon, which is the third-largest city in Korea with a population of nearly three million. Inha University is one of the leading universities in the city, which is a comprehensive university composed of 8 colleges with many faculties under its umbrella. In the 1980s, Incheon, being close to Seoul, was considered a strategic area to activate labour movements that could have an impact on the central government, as there were labour-intensive factory complexes scattered in several places. I also began my labour movement career in Incheon. During that time in 1987, there were 187 underground student activists at Inha University (Rho, 2022). Reflecting on the immediate and proactive struggle without popular support that lasted until late 1986, activists turned to strategies involving the public, and the National Liberation (NL) line approach was widely accepted by university student activists across the country. Four family-like underground organisations called 'Fam' reorganised alongside different collages to take control of each academy and student council at the end of 1986 at Inha University (Rho, 2022). Consequently, groups organised diverse methods of activism, aligning with the public's political demands and

engaging them on an equal level. These efforts exploded and escalated following the torture and death of Park Jong-cheol. The activists who took control of both the student council and the general student councils of eight colleges successfully mobilised an estimated 13,000 Inha University students out of 16,000 for the June Uprising.

This chapter examined the history of authoritarian regimes in South Korea, which originated during the Japanese colonial era, and the enduring struggles against them. The experience of colonial rule and the civil war naturally fostered anti-communist and pro-American sentiments among Koreans. Following the division of the country, South Korean authoritarian leaders utilised anti-communism as a governing ideology to suppress social movements. However, the Korean people persistently resisted these oppressive regimes, beginning with the independence movement during the Japanese colonial period.

This chapter highlighted the 1980s Korean democratisation movement. In December 1979, a coup led to the rise of a neo-military force, and in May 1980, Chun Doo-hwan seized power by forcefully suppressing the Gwangju Uprising. It became evident that the neo-military government faced significant challenges due to its oppressive actions. Particularly in 1987, the sacrifices of innocent university students and Chun's attempt to prolong the dictatorship sparked nationwide resistance, akin to the 4.19 Revolution. The United States, which had remained silent during the Gwangju Uprising in 1980, expressed disapproval of the Korean government's military mobilisation during the June 1987 Uprising when the resistance showed no signs of subsiding. Consequently, the previously held belief in the United States as a democracy-loving ally was shattered. The outcome of the Seoul Station Retreat differed from that of 1987, as the victory in 1987 could not have been achieved without the continuous and fierce struggle of the Korean people.

In conclusion, this chapter shed light on the history of resistance against authoritarian regimes in South Korea, with a particular focus on the 1980s Korean democratisation movement. It emphasised the importance of continuous struggle by the Korean people in achieving victory over oppressive regimes.

CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the motivations of students advocating for a just society and their effective strategies for mobilising the public. This review focuses on five major thematic areas, including: definitions of social movement and activism, social movement theories, student activism and motivation, the characteristics of student activism incorporated with their roles and limitations, and student activism in Asia, specifically South Korea in the 1980s, to provide an extended perspective of 1987. Whilst numerous recent studies on student activism in the broader context of global shifts exist, my focus lies on examining student activism within highly repressive regimes.

3-1 Definition of social movement and activism

There is a substantial body of literature examining social movements and individuals' and group roles within them. Both social movements and activism have been explored from a range of disciplinary perspectives, and thus there are a range of ways in which these are understood and defined. Nonetheless, no unified definition of social movement has been formulated. It is possible to describe social movements as "large-scale, collective efforts to bring about or resist changes that bear on the lives of many...with collective action" (Oberschall, 2017, p. 2). Tilly (1998) also argued that social movements involve a collective claim against the power holders under their jurisdictions and sustained challenge to them with the population's numbers, commitment, unity, and worthiness. In this paper, I accept Tilly and Tarrow (2015)'s definition of social movement as "sustained campaigns of claim-making, using repeated performances that advertise that claim, based on organisations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities" (2015, p. 145). Among the social movement literature, scholars have focused on the ways in which participation in social movements shapes identities (Klandersman, 1995), creating a collective identity of being an activist, in addition to considering how shared struggle shapes collective identity and collective action (MacDonald, 2002; Bobel, 2007).

Activists and activism have also been defined in a myriad of ways that point to identities, practices, and processes. Atkinson defines activism as "collaborations by people in order to advocate for a position, nurture conflicts in society, or violate or transgress laws or norms in society" (2017, p. 10), and Humphrys (2015) stated in her review article that activism is the core component to analyse social movements. Dumitrascu (2015) described social activism as the instrument of social movement in his review. While some argue that the social sciences have focused on the dramatic, iconic, glamorous, and heroic forms and elements of activism (Pile & Keith, 1997; Horton & Kraftl, 2009), more recently, there have been broadening definitions of activism that include everyday actions and forms of quiet activism, which are modest in their resistance and subversion (Askins, 2017; Pottinger, 2017). Atkinson (2017) suggested in his study that researchers need to approach qualitative methods in a thoughtful way as social activism

becomes complex. Regardless of the definition, it is impossible to imagine a social movement without activists and activism, as they are the people and their actions that create, energise, and shape struggles for justice, rights, and a better world (Humphrys, 2015, p. 168). In this thesis, the definition of activism that most closely aligns is that of student activism, which refers to collective action by university students directed toward (and often against) the ruling regime, as suggested by Weiss and Aspinall (2012, p. 2).

3-2 Unpacking social movement theories: Political process and social constructivist approaches

The question of why people protest has occupied social scientists for a long time. Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009) summarise that collective actions such as street protests were regarded as forms of irrational, destructive, and deviant behaviour at the turn of the last century. The enormous growth of social movement activity in the late 1960s resulted in the breakdown of these theories due to their inability to explain these phenomena (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009). This, combined with the changing forms of collective action, required new theoretical approaches that perceived social movements as positive and rational human acts (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009). Tilly (1998) argued that people know what they can do when they want to oppose a public decision they consider unjust or threatening, which he referred to as the repertoire of contention. Theorists focused on the availability of resources, political opportunities, and mobilising structures to explain the rise of social movements (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009; Tilly, 1998). However, if resources are unavailable, the social movement cannot take place within the structural approaches. Goodwin and Jasper (1999) have made significant contributions to the theorising of social movements, calling for paradigmatic shifts that include cultural components such as the role of emotions, strategising, and agency, which also shape collective action.

Political process theory

Political process theory (PPT) explains the rise and decline of a social movement within the political structure. While McAdam (1999) emphasises objective structural aspects of the environment, it also focuses on subjectivity, specifically the cultural framing of the given political opportunity. McAdam (1999) argues that, along with available resources and open political opportunities, cognitive liberation is a necessary condition to turn social instability into a political insurgency. In other words, intermediating between political opportunity and action are people and the subjective meanings they attach to their situations (McAdam, 1999). PPT tends to explain strategies with structural categories, such as institutions or external cultural constraints. The standard explanation of strategies for political process theory (PPT) emphasises the role of political opportunities, mobilising structures, and framing processes, along with protest cycles and contentious repertoires (Caren, 2007). Proponents of PPT argue that major strategies of social

movements are shaped by the political opportunity structure (Doherty & Hayes, 2019). Such political opportunities, stemming from the vulnerabilities of the existing political system, are essential to the success of a social movement from the perspective of PPT (Crossman, 2019). Caren (2007, p. 2) also indicated that "individuals must feel that the current political system lacks legitimacy, and their social movement participation could make meaningful change happen," implying the importance of affect in participating in the movement for social change. There are a number of aspects of the opportunity structure that these social movement theorists have identified and defined, including mobilising structures, which are defined as the organisations that seek change in the existing social order, such as churches, community and non-profit organisations, and student groups and schools (Crossman, 2019).

Framing processes are carried out by leaders of an organisation in order to allow the group or movement to clearly and persuasively describe the existing problems, articulate why change is necessary, what changes are desired, and how one can go about achieving them (Crossman, 2019, para. 7). Framing is denoted as collective processes of signification and meaning making. Benford and Snow (2000) referred to collective action framing as "action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization" (p. 614), and these functions include "focusing attention" (Snow, Vliegenthart, & Ketelaarsp, 2019, p. 393). Core framing tasks will not be discussed in this chapter; rather, I will present three overlapping processes that are discursive, strategic, and contested. In the discursive process, collective action frames are generated via frame articulation and frame amplification or punctuation, providing new angles of vision on the events or experiences (Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow, Vliegenthart & Ketelaarsp, 2019). The strategic process enables the framing process, as it is deliberative, utilitarian, and goal-directed, with framings strategically developed and deployed to achieve specific goals (Benford & Snow, 2000). Scholars agree that framings are contested processes that confront many challenges within the internal and external collective action arena. It often creates counter-framing to undermine a group's interpretive framework (Benford & Snow, 2000). Framing contests occur in a complex area; therefore, those who deploy the most resonant framing would win in framing/counter-framing processes (Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow, Vliegenthart & Ketelaarsp, 2019).

A protest cycle is "a prolonged period of time when opposition to the political system and acts of protest are in a heightened state" (Crossman, 2019, para. 8). Contentious repertoires refer to the set of means through which the movement makes its claims, including strikes, protests, and petitions (Tilly, 1998). Many of the PPT's tactics are rooted in Tilly's repertoires of contention, which is a routinised and institutionalised set of performances available to any given actor within a regime. Thus, actors know when and what to do, and the public can anticipate their actions, which can be the root of public mobilisation (Doherty & Hayes, 2019). Therefore, strategies and

tactics usually take structural and cultural forms, and innovations usually take place at a relatively slow pace based on reflective learning from "What works" (Doherty & Hayes, 2019).

While PPT proves to be an efficient explanation in many cases, it does not sufficiently explain the specific mechanisms that link the political process and movement activity (Koopmans, 2005). Goodwin and Jasper (1999) claimed that the PPT theory displays a strong structural bias, and "mobilizing structures and cultural framing—are subject to the same structural distortions" (1999, p. 27). Goodwin and Jasper (1999) suggest that much more attention needs to be paid to "the diverse ways that culture and agency, including emotions and strategising, shape collective action" (1999, p. 27). Secondly, it is criticised that PPT's state-centred model is not sufficient to explain non-state targets. Contemporary social movements aim at far more varied targets and institutions than suggested by the state-centred political process version (McAdam & Tarrow, 2019). Overemphasising opportunity over threat is another area where the PPT model is criticised (Almeida, 2019). Unlike the understanding of repression by PPT, ongoing empirical studies on repression suggest that both opportunity and threat are catalysts for protest (McAdam & Tarrow, 2019).

Social constructivists

The social constructivists argue that even if people display identical behaviour, their motivational background and the associated emotions may be different (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009). Thus, they emphasise social changes in identity, emotion, motivation, lifestyle, and culture (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009; Klandermans, 1984). Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta (2001, p. 13) argue that emotions are socially constructed but that "some emotions are more [socially] constructed than others, involving more cognitive processes." Melucci (1996) argued that collective identity "bridge[s] the gap between behaviour and meaning, between 'objective' conditions and 'subjective' motives and orientation, between 'structure' and 'agency'" (1996, p. 69). Therefore, collective identity plays a key role in what protesters think, feel, and do in collective action.

The structuralist approach, which explains the emergence and strategy of social movements in terms of the availability and constraints of external structures, is criticised for having a narrow understanding of agency (Doherty & Hayes, 2019). In that respect, constructivism attempts a cultural and social psychological approach that places importance on the emotions and motivations of the actors, recognising the agency of those constituting social action and movements (Fominaya, 2019). In explaining this, collective identity seems to be the most coherent theory at present. Many scholars agree that collective identity is expressive while contentious repertoires are instrumental. Constructing collective identity involves a shared cognitive definition of ends, means, and the field of action (Melucci, 1995). If strategy is

connected to long-term thinking and action with an overall goal, therefore, expressive collective identity embeds strategy and tactics. Collective identity involves the ability to distinguish oneself from others and to be recognised by others (Melucci, 1995; Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Fominaya, 2010; Doherty & Hayes, 2019) and develops a sense of we-ness, them-ness, and bystanders, as identities are constructed in opposition to others.

Scholars widely accept that boundary work and emotions are two major components of collective identity (Fominaya, 2019). Boundary work refers to the process of framing, which involves creating reciprocal identification between group members that express commonalities and differences with reference groups (Fominaya, 2010). Frames are known as the interpretive packages that activists develop to mobilise potential adherents and constituents (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Polletta and Jasper (2001) argued that successful frames are critical in recruiting social movement participants. Emotional and affective ties are noted as powerful elements in constructing collective identity, which create strong group cohesion (Fominaya, 2010; Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Positive emotional experiences within the group create solidarity, enabling the sustaining of commitment even when the political goals are not met (Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Fominaya, 2019). In this approach, actors can strategically deploy their identity in multiple forms to achieve their political goals, so tactical choices are open to creativity and flexibility within the consistency of the overall moral and ideological framework (Doherty & Hayes, 2019). In this understanding, identities play a key role in mobilising and sustaining participation, and Polletta and Jasper (2010) suggested that an exodus from the movement may happen when people stop believing that the group represents them. However, social constructivist approaches are characterised by their variety but fail to provide an explanation of the integrated common framework among the variables (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009). On the other hand, Saunders (2008) highlighted that the ‘we-them’ dichotomy within the same movement is not always beneficial and can work against movement cohesion. She further argued that “a singular collective identity at the movement level does not truly exist” (2008, p. 232), unless “we water down its definition to become virtually meaningless” (2008, p. 249). The history of popular movements shows that there are moments when a powerful collective identity-driven social movement is needed to address significant societal issues. However, in cases of massive-scale, long-term social movements adopting inclusive manners can create better chances for cohesive collective action. This inclusive identity formation is especially crucial in issues that require large-scale social movements, such as the climate crisis movement.

3-3 Student activism

Student activism has played a critical role in shaping society since the beginning of university history and has long been a focus of social movement scholars (Altback & Klemenčič, 2014; Luescher, 2015). Student activism did not draw as much academic attention until the 1970s

(Weiss & Aspinall, 2012), with two opposite views on their actions as either destructive for society or a guiding force for social change. Bryan (2019) concluded in his historical analysis that college-aged students were a driving force, and they determined the direction of South Korea in the past 50 years. Jacoby (2017) described in his journal article that the university is a microcosm of the bigger society; therefore, the issues students address are deeply interconnected with the society's most important and influential course. Altbach and Klemenčič (2014) confirmed that students are a key force in political movements directed towards and have a positive influence on social change. Delgado and Gautreaux (2015) determined in their article that the diversity and heterogeneity of interests and political commitments among students have made fundamental differences in student organising political actions. Compared to class-based struggles, students have fewer restrictions to organise direct actions and mobilise their peers, as found by Delgado and Gautreaux (2015).

Many studies about the motivations of student activists have also been conducted. Gibson and William (2020) analysed 80 essays on the Jena Six protest to examine the personal motivations to be involved in activism for justice. They determined that the motivations differed by gender, where anger was the trigger point for males, and females reacted to their transformative future orientation. Theoretical analysis and peer review of The #MustFall case by Hlatshwayo and Fomunyam (2019) confirmed that economic inequality was a prominent driving force of the movement. Janet Branley (2018) found in her in-depth interview with eight student activists that while there were individual reasons to be an activist, the acknowledgment of inequality, prejudice, or bias as injustice became a critical part of the process of taking action. Jacoby (2017) concluded in the journal article that today's student activism is compelled by moral and social justice issues. Due to the segregated nature of motivation science (Murayama, 2018), the motivations appeared to be influenced by individuality or individual characteristics, which were influenced by environmental factors. However, across these studies, there is consistent evidence that intolerance toward injustice became the major motivation for student activism. It is also evident from the findings of the survey on Motive for Social Justice and Students Activism at University Level by Serafimovska and Markovikj (2018) that personal motivation was the main reason for their participation, and students who tend to engage in socially desirable and moral acts are more likely to be involved in activism at a higher level. Weiss (2012) stated that South Korean students knew in the mid-1980s that the state would use bloody repression measures against them when they challenged it, as the civil massacre had recently happened.

A number of studies also point to the limitations of student movements. For example, Weiss and Aspinall (2012) concluded that student political activities are challenged by the students' lifespan and affected by the academic calendar. On the other side, they claimed in the same article (2012) that students' roles in revolutionary struggles are both the organiser and the leader. Altbach and

Klemenčič (2014) claimed the ‘Iron Law’ of student activism, which means "students cannot control national politics once a regime is removed. While energetic and driven, if students enter the political arena, they may become only a marginal voice" (Altbach & Klemenčič, 2014, para. 7).

3-4 Student activism in Asia

Many Asian-Pacific countries have undergone authoritarian regimes and political disruptions, including military coups, in recent years (McCarthy, 2015). It is a recent decades' history that these authoritarian regimes have fallen due to mass protests (Parvanova & Pichler, 2013). "Social movements and collective activism have played a crucial role in these upheavals" (Parvanova & Pichler, 2013, p. 1). Northeast and Southeast Asian students have drawn global attention as the vanguard of the social movement in the past decades (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012). From South Korea in the 1980s democratisation movement to the Umbrella movement in Hong Kong in 2014, to Taiwanese students' Sunflower movement in 2014, to a series of mass protests in Indonesia in 2019, many countries in Southeast and Northeast Asia have rich histories of student-driven movements (Kim, 2019).

Historically, Northeast and Southeast Asian students have demonstrated high mobility and are linked with other social and political actors (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012; Altbach, 1970). In developing countries like many Asian countries, students are concentrated geographically on a university campus, typically located in the capital and other large cities (Oh, 2020; Weiss & Aspinall, 2012). These capital and other large cities generally dominate politics, and university students often take the leading roles in making political demands on behalf of the broader population (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012). Extracurricular activities and various clubs form close bonds that can be drawn upon in mobilising for protest (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012; Tan, 2017). Weiss and Aspinall (2012) concluded that geographical concentration and proximity to power, leading influence, and perceived elite status, in addition to multiple organisational structures combined with distinct attributes - "students' pre-professional status, their limited responsibilities, their cognizance of the gap between ideals and reality" (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012, p. 13)

When Asian students emerged as a driving force for social change, each country showed slightly different aspects in their role and collective identity. In Indonesia, unlike other groups, university students perceived and were perceived as a purely moral force with no political interest (Aspinal, 2012). This perspective continued from the anti-communist movement of the 1960s to the New Order regime, resulting in students’ anti-government movement having a limited license for subsequent decades (Aspinal, 2012). Stressing students’ uniquely moral and pure political motivations and goals that created separatism from other groups was challenged in the 80s and 90s. Still, university students became a driving force as a moral force for later movements

(Aspinal, 2012). Weiss & Aspinal (2012) concluded that "the notion that students were important political actors with a moral duty to save the country in times of crisis remained important to student identity until the end of the New Order, and it was an important triggering factor in the anti-Soeharto protests of 1998" (Weiss & Aspinal, 2012, p.287). In the case of Thailand, aligned with economic growth, the number of university students increased rapidly, and their dissatisfaction with society and politics in general grew (Kongkirati, 2012; Sripokangkul et al., 2019). Students perceived themselves as responsible for resolving social problems and defending disadvantaged groups with leftist ideology. Entering the late 1960s, leftist-oriented ideologies were diversified; Kongkirati (2012) concluded in his retrospective study that this played a role in strengthening solidarity with other social groups. This led to increased mass mobilisation through diversifying tactics such as boycott Japan products (Kongkirati, 2012; Sripokangkul et al., 2019). Along with the massacre, the students who were the driving force behind democratisation in 1973 disintegrated because of other brutal suppressions that followed. Kongkirati (2012) concluded that students have failed to sense their identity in social roles since then, and, eventually, student activism in Thailand has declined.

Weiss & Aspinall (2012) found that students typically play a vanguard oppositional role when authoritarian political controls demobilise or shut out other forces. A sense of social responsibility is traditionally suggested as the primary motivation of Asian and other developing countries' student activism (Weiss & Aspinall, 2012). They (2012) suggested that this may be generated by their social status as a tiny and privileged elite in an uneducated society. However, Weiss & Aspinal (2012) determined that in the Asian student movements that they examined it is a general pattern that "the expansion of higher education tends to reduce the elite status and symbolic meaning of students, impeding student activism." (p.286)

3-5 Student activism in South Korea in the 1980s

While the 1980s democratisation movement is a fascinating topic among South Korean researchers, much of the research on student activism focuses on the era of presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun (1998-2008). This literature review explores characteristics of Korean democratisation movement in 1980s (Kim SJ, 1994; Kern & Laux, 2017; Yun, 1997), the roles of the student movement in democratic transformation in Korea (Bryan, 2019; Park, 1989), the characteristics of the Korean student movement (Dong, 1987; Choi H, 1991; So, 2017; Shin, 2020), and overviews of existing studies and data (Park, 1989; Bryan, 2019; Kim & Yoon, 2007). Students developed revolutionary ideologies that focused on bringing the working class together and student activism was heavily involved in the working-class movement. However, this chapter does not discuss inter-relationships between students and the labour movement.

Kim SJ (1994) concluded in his journal article that the democratic transition in South Korea was unique and remarkable, especially because it was remarkable that democratic forces could make a robust military regime that achieved double-digit economic growth accept the demands for the popular presidential election in 1987. An analysis of the 1980s Korean democratisation movement has been conducted by Kern and Laux (2017). While the voluntary perspective and structural approach dominate the theoretical frameworks used to understand the democratisation process, the researchers concluded that Korea experienced protest, revolutionary momentum, and negotiation stages, and successfully transitioned to democracy through negotiation. Guillermo O'Donnell & Phillippe (1986) suggested, drawing on elite-focused democratic transition theory, that important divisions within authoritarian regimes are required as a prerequisite for a democratic transition. However, Yun (1997) found in her historical analysis that there were no significant internal divisions among the power holders, and that President Chun still held real power surrounded by the cohesive, united power of the ruling elites. Yun concluded that the democratic transition in South Korea was facilitated by a powerful social movement from below, not by elite fragmentation.

Both Korean and English literatures agreed that the student movement played a major role in this dramatic social change in South Korean politics. Park (1989) determined in his analysis that "the continuing student movement has become one of the most structurally cohesive and tactically operative forces of political opposition in the country" (1989, p.2). Paige Danielle Bryan (2019) analysed existing archives and evaluated student movements in South Korea and their impact on the formation of Korean democracy from the 1960s to the 2000s. He argued that "the students were able to push the government to acknowledge their demands and give impetus to the remainder of the population to demand change alongside them while creating space for other social movements to take root" (Bryan, 2019, p. 59). Bryan (2019) stated that persistent student-led protests toward democracy became credible threats to the stability of the repressive regime for decades in Korean modern history. The threats were realised with the collapse of the military regime in 1987. He concluded that university students were a driving force in determining the direction to move the country toward democracy (2019).

As Park (1989) analysed the literature, the Korean student movement changed its course through underground student networking, which consisted of cohesive and informal small group organisations (Park, 1989). In the 1980s, the student movement had to go underground. Many studies of Korean student activism indicated that there were sophisticated theoretical debates among student activists' organisations; Choi H (1991) summarised the key strategical debate as either preparing to strengthen people's power and organisation or engaging with the immediate and direct task of raising people's political consciousness. So (2017) determined in her historical review that this debate evolved into a similar one, and even after establishing an umbrella

organisation in 1984, the duality of the movement continued due to the failure of integration. Student protest often took violent and disruptive forms until late 1986. Shin (2020) discussed that violent acts in social movements often provoke negative responses; however, under certain circumstances, like the early 1980s in South Korea, disrupted actions could be effective in attracting attention from the public and the foreign media. As many literatures agree, Dong (1987) argued that the student movement in Korea achieved qualitative and quantitative change during that time with the multifaceted recognition and response to the changing political conjuncture. As a result, Dong (1987) argued, the student movement in Korea was unprecedented in its ideological coherence, organisational resilience, and political autonomy. Choi H's analysis of the societal impact of student politics determined that the characteristics of the Korean student movement were "complicated ideological formulations, highly developed organizing tactics, and connections with other social power." (Choi H., 1991).

As much as that, Kim and Yoon (2007) indicated in their mixed methodology study that the Korean literature on the student movement focuses on its history, ideologies, and organisations. Kim and Yoon (2007) found that there are few in-depth and professional studies of the student movement because it has declined sharply since the 1990s. Kim and Yoon (2007) argued that relatively recently there has been further research interest in individual narrative, life history, and movement culture. However, introspective research on the motivations, goals, self-perceptions, and hopes of participants in the democratisation movement is still close to being non existant. Centred around the Korean Democracy Foundation (KDF), established in 2001, the record of Korea's democratisation movement has been expanded on a large scale. Park (1989) concluded that these forms of underground student activism appeared during the long-term military dictatorship era under the Yushin system in 1972 when army troops occupied university campuses and closed high schools. However, accurate information about the underground student organisations could not be obtained due to their high-security nature. Bryan (2019) also stated that one of the limitations of the existing data could be the under-representation or misrepresentation of the events of the democratisation movement by the government.

The purpose of these reviews is to evaluate relevant literature for my research project in terms of two general questions. First, how is contemporary social movement understood in terms of definition and theory? This review suggests two major elements of understanding social movements, which are collectivity and sustained resistant activities for justice. For contemporary social movement theories, Political Process Theory, which is understood as a structural approach for macro-mobilisation, and the constructivist approach, which is an actor-centred paradigm for understanding micro-mobilisation, are introduced. Although both theories are significant, this review shows that the process of social movements cannot be explained by a single theory due to their respective limitations. Second, how did student activism play a role in social change?

Student activism has a deep-rooted history as a driving force for social change. A sense of justice appears as the key motivation for involvement in student activism. Student activism is constructed by the socio-political and geographical context and is heavily influenced by academic calendars. This review identifies the data limitations of the student movement in the 1980s' Korean democratisation movement due to under-representation by the government and the secretive operations of the movement organisations.

CHAPTER 4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Theoretical framework and methodology play crucial roles in qualitative research, particularly for an insider researcher who needs to be mindful of personal biases that can hinder objective analysis. Theoretical frameworks are essential in reducing biases and ensuring a more objective interpretation of the research findings. By establishing a theoretical lens, subjectivity can be minimised. The research methodologies encompass various technical aspects, including ethical considerations, and are integral to the overall research design. This chapter delves into three primary theoretical frameworks: collective identity, political process theories, and feminism for providing justifications for their relevance to this thesis. The methodology section will interweave the processes of data gathering, data analysis, and ethical considerations, all while considering the chosen paradigm.

4-1 Positionality

Scharp and Thomas (2019) argued that critical social science researchers should assess how their positionality might contribute to their interpretations of participants' experiences. In this research, it is helpful to understand my positionality and the lens I take on the data. One of the epistemological assumptions of the social constructionist paradigm is that there is not one reality but many realities "that can be articulated based on the values, standpoints, and positions of the author" (Daly, 2007, p. 33). Thus, I offer these findings as one possible interpretation of these individuals' experiences based on my standpoint as a middle-aged female and a former student underground activist in 1987 in South Korea. Given this individual historical perspective, I wondered how the Korean student movement could persist in its struggle as a powerfully organised force. I learned that the collective actions of students who led the social movement and controlled the pace of democratic change in the 1980s involved various strategies, tactics, and emotions to maintain the identity of the core group and bring about social solidarity. Taking advantage of the privileges of my standpoint, I have positioned myself in dual roles as an informant and an insider researcher. I assessed the research process and data through critical reflexivity and presented results in use of myself which demands massive critical self-reflection.

Chavez (2008) describes that discourse of current insider scholars characterised either total insider or partial insider. I am a total insider who shares multiple identities and profound experiences in the 1987 democratisation movement with the participants in that term. However, she (2008) argues that recent discussions on positionality recommend avoiding the dichotomous separation of insider-outsider and viewing it along a continuum of closeness to, or distance from. Following Bank's (1998) typology, I am an indigenous-insider along an insider/outsider continuum, one who has common ground with the participants and can speak with authority about what happened at that time. This privilege of positionality made it possible for me to actively use myself to present results in the dual role of informant-researcher. This position contributed to gaining participants'

acceptance, trust, and cooperation. Biases in entering the field and selecting participants, compromised professional ethics and/or research results with selective reporting, and difficulty recognising patterns due to familiarity with the community are often recognised as complications to the insider status (Chavez, 2008). Reflexivity is often suggested as a process of opening ourselves up to scrutiny to neutralize them, which involves questioning how we do our research (Cunliffe, 2011). Many definitions of reflexivity foreground different vital issues and are notoriously ambiguous. Among various definitions, I will adopt critical reflexivity to unravel political and social constructions in research. Due to my role duality, I drew upon my experience to a greater degree during data examination and analysis, and in the presentation of results in which my thoughts, experiences, observations, and reactions were used for comparative purposes against those of other project participants. This involves a significant degree of introspective self-reflection, which entails a continuous self-evaluation of my prejudices, representations, and personal backgrounds.

In reflecting this positionality, the methodology is designed to maximise its advantage of it and mitigate the complications to the status in a way that ensures maximum transparency. However, I found that the roles of the informant-researcher were often blurred and overlapped. To mitigate these complications and improve my work's relative objectivity and credibility, I put great effort into maintaining honest and open reflexivity, as Grey (2014) and Creswell (2009) suggested. These efforts contributed to developing successful co-composing narratives and co-constructing knowledge with a relatively equal relationship between the researcher and participants.

4-2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework employed in this thesis serves as a comprehensive lens through which to understand the ongoing endeavours of South Korean student activists in shaping the organisation and maintenance of society (Mayer & Sanklecha, 2016). The study incorporates key theories: first, collective identities for exploring the emotional and motivational aspects of micro-mobilisation, and the tactical and strategical aspect of macro-mobilisation (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009), and second, memory politics for exploring how collective memory impacts on the social movement (Gongaware, 2010; Gusevskaya & Plotnikov, 2020) This framework allows a multi-dimensional understanding of the activists' formal and informal experiences, including networks, culture, and collective action. These theories collectively contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted dynamics within the context of South Korean student activism.

In the context of South Korean student activism, the dual role of being students and agent of social change was essential in mobilising and driving collective action. Thus, investigating collective identity becomes crucial to understanding its role in generating collective action. Detailed

consulting on this theory can be found in the social movement theories discussed in the previous chapter. However, it is vital to understand that constructing a collective identity requires distinguishing us from others. Boundary works and emotions are major components that produce group cohesion, solidarity, and sustaining commitment. Recognising that inclusive practices in shaping collective identity can be more effective in some cases is also essential.

Collective identity theory places emphasis on the network of active relationships and highlights the emotional involvement of activists (Fominaya, 2010). The presence of collective identity and collective memory enables an understanding of how commitment and cohesion are generated and sustained among student activists over time (Fominaya, 2010). Collective memories, rooted in narrative commemorations, bridge the gap between individual activists' beliefs and the meaning attributed to social change and collective action. These memories serve as a link between the past and the present, maintaining group unity and fostering a sense of cohesion over time (Gongaware, 2010). On the other hand, Gusevskaya and Plotnikova (2020) argued that historical memory provides the foundations of the mental core of public consciousness to establish the identity of an individual or society as a whole, "since the preservation of memory is the most essential condition for self-determination of individuals and strengthening the social groups' unity" (2020, p. 1028). Thus, "historical memory is a factor in the formation of this very identity" (Gusevskaya & Plotnikov, 2020, p. 1028). However, the memories of an important historical event by different social groups are constructed in different ways, resulting in the creation of contrasting social identities (González-Castro, 2006).

4-3 Methodology

Determining methodology has become increasingly complex in social science compared to previous decades, and it is heavily influenced by the researcher's paradigm (MacKenzie, 2006). While qualitative and quantitative methodologies each have their own strengths and limitations, researchers argue that the choice should be guided by the research questions (Almeida, 2017). In this study, interviews were conducted using a retrospective qualitative methodology, aligning with an interpretivist paradigm.

The research question for this project is "How did students organise their response to the significant change in the political situation during the 1987 Korean democratisation movement?" The methodology employed in this project is grounded in interpretivism, which posits that knowledge is relative to specific circumstances, such as historical, temporal, cultural, and subjective factors. It acknowledges that reality exists in multiple forms as representations shaped by individuals' interpretations (Benoliel, 1996, p. 407). Recognising the impossibility of establishing an objective reality, interpretivist approaches prioritise understanding and narrating the meaning of human experiences from the perspectives of those who have directly encountered

specific events and phenomena (Fossey et al., 2002). To achieve this, qualitative methodologies and data gathering techniques are employed, allowing for insights into people's perceptions, meaning-making processes, and lived experiences. It also facilitates understanding and explanation of the intricate dynamics of social relations (Almeida, 2017; Haradhan, 2018). This project seeks to deeply comprehend the processes and phenomena of the 1987 Korean democratisation movement, which is inherently difficult to quantify. Additionally, as highlighted by Park (1989), underground student groups appeared to have significantly influenced the trajectory of Korean student activism in the 1980s. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that comprehending the dynamics of these underground student organisations can provide a central understanding of the Korean student movement. However, it should be noted that the veiled activities of these organisations pose challenges when it comes to quantification. Consequently, a qualitative methodology is deemed most suitable for this project.

Data gathering utilised three methods: interviews with seven former underground activists, gathering relevant images and letters, and additional interviews with four field-specific experts. Also, as an insider researcher to this project I am including my experiences as part of the research. Brewis (2014) indicated that convenience sampling among friends has been discussed by researchers from many disciplines, including social sciences. Clark (2017, p. 1) indicated that "convenience samples are the most popular type of nonprobability samples used by publishing social scientists." However, Mirriam expressed his concern (2009) that convenience sampling alone might be the cause of information-poor cases. To find the best-fit participants, a mixture of convenience and snowball sampling was applied. Even though I am an insider researcher, I could not identify all the members of the underground activists due to the secretive operational nature of the activists' organisations. Firstly, I contacted potential participants through my personal networks and included them in the recruitment process to identify figures that best suit the research purpose and methodology. Seven of the participants were selected while I mobilised tens of former activists in recruiting; three of them I had a personal relationship with, and the other four participants were referred from the group. In recruiting, the diversity of the participants' backgrounds in terms of gender, discipline, and student ID[3] was considered. To produce information-rich interviews, strict criteria had been applied, requiring participants to have more than one year of underground activism experience, to have been an activist who led at least one group in 1987, and to have been actively involved in 1987. The demographic data of participants in the interview is depicted in Table 4-1.

[3] Student ID: The student ID in Korea starts with two digits of the entrance year. For example, if someone entered a university in 2023, his/her student ID is 23.

Table 4-1 Demographic details of participants

Participants Pseudonym	Gender	Student ID	Discipline
Bongsoo	Male	84	College of Engineer
Sanga	Female	85	College of Art
Jun	Male	85	College of Management Commerce
Jin	Female	85	College of Household study
Gi	Male	85	College of Engineer
Sukyeong	Female	86	College of Art
Park	Male	86	College of Education

Due to COVID restrictions, the interviews were conducted via Zoom meetings with open-ended questions and participant-led dialogues. Examples of the questions include:

- How did you get involved in underground activism?
- What do you remember about 1987?
- What did you do to engage with the public?
- How did the experiences in 1987 impact the rest of your life?

All interviewees were given minimal directions in participant-led interviews (Jessee, 2019). Once the interviewees concluded their life history, some follow-up questions were presented to address any essential research questions that were not discussed.

For delivering meanings of their stories and constructing findings, I used the narrative analysis techniques to understand participants' comprehensive and multi-faceted experiences across time. Narrative analysis is one form of qualitative data analysis that focuses on interpreting the core narratives from the interviewees' personal stories (Earth & Cronin, 2008; Devotail, 2023). The narrative analysis requires in-depth understanding of participants' expression of their emotions, the thoughts, and motivations they experienced rather than focusing on the actual words they have spoken during the interview (Devotail, 2023). I have recorded the interviews as whole and transcribed with 'Naver ClobaNote' transcribing program that granted full access to the entire verbatim narrative of the participant, including silences and verbal crutches. Interview data was analysed manually. I organised the narrative blocks by using inductive coding for creating more complete and unbiased review of the themes throughout the data. I was able to construct how participants process and move through decisions and life events. Narrative analysis is an approach taken to interview data that is concerned with understanding how and why people talk about their lives (Earth & Cronin, 2008). This requires highly interactive interpersonal skill of interaction and communication between the interviewees and interviewer. The interviews were conducted in the manners of co-composing stories towards dialogic mutuality in research (Young & Cooper,

2008). In that way, my experiences and stories were integrated into the findings for the best benefits of analysing the data.

Documentation of the underground organisation's activity was strictly prohibited as it could result in the imprisonment of the activists and the collapse of the organisation (Gang et al., 2017). With the massive support of former underground student activists from Inha University, I was able to collect some meaningful photos and letters. These documents are consistent with the testimonies of the participants and were analysed using thematic techniques. Most letter senders gave consent to use the letters, but they were deidentified for confidentiality reasons.

This project is insider research, conducted by a community member who possesses prior intimate knowledge of the interviewees. While prior knowledge provides advantages in terms of expedient access to the group, positive interaction with the participants, and the opportunity to discuss the issues, insider researchers may face methodological and ethical challenges (Green, 2014). One criticism is the subjective involvement of the researcher. Green (2014, p.4) notes that "greater familiarity can lead to a loss of objectivity, and there is an increased risk of the researcher making assumptions based on their prior knowledge and experience." It is suggested that the insider researcher must refrain from imposing their views onto participants to avoid bias. To mitigate this bias and achieve objectivity, I conducted three additional interviews with field-specific experts in feminism and the Korean democratisation movement. For an academic review of 1987, I interviewed Professor Kim Dong-chun, one of the most dedicated Korean sociological scholars, in conjunction with Yang, who is actively working at the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF). I also interviewed Rho, the top leader of the Inha University underground organisation in 1987, who provided an article detailing the underground organisation and the success of 1987 at Inha University. They provided contextual information based on their experience and expertise to comprehend and enrich the findings from the seven former underground activists' interviews.

Existing literature on the 1980s Korean democratisation movement, including 1987, does not widely discuss the grassroots nature of the event. The contributions of the underground student activists are anecdotal, and their true voices have been muted in the dominant historical narrative. This project aims to uncover the untold history from former underground activists. It is not considered objective data but rather a subjective source of information. By exploring the subjective meaning of past experiences at a particular moment in time, narratives can shed light on the production of historical knowledge surrounding a given topic (Jessee, 2019). This will contribute to the democratisation of history from the dominant historical perspective (Jessee, 2019). Narrative analysis is well-suited for this purpose. "Researchers use narrative analysis to understand how research participants construct stories and narratives from their own personal experiences" (Silver, 2016, p. 145). Narratives are often viewed as an essential part of meaning-

making and the construction of self-identity (Fivush, 2009; Silver, 2016). By analysing common themes in participants' narratives, this project explores how they constructed and maintained collective identity. Fivush (2009) also argued that narratives provide interpersonal meaning and evaluation of events. Therefore, it is important to understand the content and structure of individual narratives while considering how broader social and cultural narratives shape individual experiences (Silver, 2016). Moreover, Fivush (2009) argued that silenced or oppressed groups may develop their own narratives within their groups, often referred to as 'resistance narratives,' which challenge dominant beliefs. The narrative approach is best suited to understanding how underground activists perceived the given moment and created resistance narratives towards democratic changes.

One of the biggest challenges and limitations was the translation of the interview data. The language used by the participants often consisted of terminological code that many translators could not decipher. Additionally, translating from one language to another often results in the loss of original nuances. Therefore, I inevitably performed the translation myself, focusing on conveying the correct meaning faithfully to the language, the verbal action, and choices of the interviewees in the manners of avoiding subjective interpretations by the author. Another limitation is that Seoul was the centre of the student movement, and there was a slight time lag in the trends reaching Incheon. While the overall trend of the student movement in the 1980s followed a similar path, it is questionable to claim that the timeframe of organisational change at Inha University represents Korea as a whole. While the participants provided in-depth and mature understandings of their experiences in 1987, there were minor inconsistencies among their recollections. I did not use these minor conflicting data points in the findings.

4-4 Ethics

Ethical conduct is a significant matter in both human and animal research. Ethical research principles can include voluntary participation, informed consent, and participant safety (Fleming & Aard, 2018).

Voluntary participation requires that participants are free to choose whether or not to participate without any pressure or coercion. To maximise voluntarism, I repeatedly communicated the information about the research topic, purpose, and methodology through verbal communication and written material. I also emphasised that all participants could withdraw or leave the study at any point without feeling obligated to continue. Informed consent forms were distributed and collected to ensure that participants understood the purpose, benefits, risks, and possible data usage before agreeing or declining to participate. To maintain participant confidentiality, I used fake names in the thesis. I also discouraged participants from discussing third parties during the interviews to protect against unwanted involvement. To anonymise personal information, all

personal data, images, and letters were deidentified unless consented or publicly published. The voluntary nature of participation was reiterated during the interviews. Participants were informed that they could review the interviews and have access to their own interview at any time. After data collection, I made follow-up calls to debrief participants and discuss their feelings and thoughts about the interview experiences. I considered the ethical issues of insider research, such as power imbalance between the participants and myself; however, this project was conducted with their involvement, and I received massive support from the former activists. Language barriers remained a limitation in achieving full ethical standards. Since most participants did not understand English, most of them could not review how their data was used in my thesis. One participant was fluent in English, so I sent them the relevant chapter, and for others, I verbally explained how I used their stories in my project.

The theoretical lenses I draw upon are collective identity and collective memory. A balanced mixture of contemporary social movement theories will provide a rich understanding of the phenomena. Sampling consisted of a mixture of convenience and snowball sampling to ensure the best fit for data collection. An in-depth interview-based retrospective qualitative methodology will be adopted to uncover the untold history of the event for this research project, and thematic and narrative analysis will be applied. As an insider researcher, I also used my experiences in the analysis. Ethical conduct is highly regarded in research; however, language barriers posed limitations in meeting all the requirements. Additionally, unexpected data breaches can occur, and researchers need to resolve them through appropriate policies and procedures as quickly as possible.

CHAPTER 5 BUILDING A MOVEMENT: UNDONG-GWON'S MOTIVATIONS, COLLECTIVE IDENTITY, AND STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING ACTIVISM

This chapter explored the micro-mobilisation mechanism of the Undong-Gwons, an organisation central to the democratisation movement in South Korea in the 1980s. Subsequent chapters, namely 6, and 7 explore their interactions with the public and their journey towards achieving success in the 1987 democratisation struggle. Chapter 8 will explore how collective memory impacted the 1987 democratisation struggle and subsequent Korean social movements. These chapters analyse the overt expression of their collective identity through various strategies and tactics, as well as their efforts to transform the public into active participants in the broader struggle at the macro level.

This chapter delves into the construction of Undong-Gwon's collective identity, which played a major role in sustaining and driving the social movement that led to Korea's democratic changes in 1987. The key themes interweaved throughout this chapter showcase collective identity as a dynamic process, as argued by Melucci (1995). Moreover, this chapter explores the significant influence of solidarity as a crucial by-product of collective identity formation. To begin, I lay out the context of Undong-Gwon, highlighting their prominent presence in subsequent chapters as the major players in the social change.

The success of the collective action in the 1987 Korean Democratic Movement was underpinned by the meticulous planning, tactical development, and organisational struggles of underground student activists, known as ‘student Undong-Gwon.’ The term ‘Undong’ translates to ‘Movement,’ and ‘Gwon’ refers to ‘Sector.’ As a prominent force in the 1980s democratisation movement, they were members of activist organisations, typically forming small study cells called T (Team) consisting of 4 – 7 members. These activists prioritised their activism over their studies, demonstrating a left-wing political stance and strong debating skills. Park (1989) estimated that approximately 5-10 percent of university students were Undong-Gwons in 1987, with their influence extending to another 40 – 60 percent, representing the majority of university students, mobilised through cultural factors (Park, 1989). Shin et al. (2007) emphasised the enduring and sustainable nature of the social movement, attributing its success to the organisational infrastructure of the Undong-Gwon. In this respect, understanding the micro-mobilisation of the Undong-Gwon is to reveal the source of power that enabled their continued struggle as the core driving force in the 1987 democratisation movement.

Despite the movement's extensive historical and political significance, the micro-mobilisation dynamics of this underground movement have not received sufficient academic attention (Vinthagen, 2006). This chapter delves into how underground activists recruited, and how they maintained their engagement and solidarity in the face of a harsh dictatorship. As Ionescu (2020)

argues, ideologies are essential in solidifying extensive and stronger collective identity. Undong-Gwons affiliated with a socialistic standpoint, but the public had been exposed to a 'red scare' which was seen to be justification for the coercive intervention from the military regime. Under those circumstances, the anti-government struggle could not openly state its ideological standpoints to the public. Undong-Gwons implemented sophisticated strategies for their micro-mobilisation and collective identity formation. This chapter aims to provide a starting point for discussing the movement in the contemporary academic world by presenting key aspects narrated and detailed by former Undong-Gwon activists who participated in this research.

5-1 Early Beginnings: Unravelling the recruitment methods and motivations of Undong-Gwons

Understanding the experiences of South Korean student activists requires delving into the socio-political and historical context that shaped their collective formation. In this section, I explore the system of recruiting new members and examine the emotional and cognitive factors that led individuals to engage in high-risk activism. The emergence of the 1980s Undong-Gwon was influenced by several political forces in South Korea, including the extreme measures taken by the neo-military government to suppress anti-government movements, culminating in the tragic Gwangju Uprising. As a result, there was widespread antipathy towards the government, which had lost its legitimacy, but freedoms of assembly and speech were severely curtailed under the extreme oppression. During this time, engaging in underground activism became an inevitable choice for collective resistance, as confirmed by all interview participants.

Contrary to the academic literature of the 1970s, where Undong-Gwon activities were less prominent, in the 1980s, they became a significant part of university culture by 1987. Studying the early beginning of this provides an in-depth understanding of their initial engagement in activism. Kim (2010) points out that Korean textbooks after the Korean War were optimised for instilling anti-communist and nationalist ideologies in historical memories. Consequently, many incoming freshmen harboured negative feelings about Undong-Gwon's activities, influenced by advice and warnings from family, teachers, and recent high school graduates. These myths and preconceptions, however, were shattered when they encountered Undong-Gwon members directly on campus. Through such encounters, they learned the truth about the Gwangju Uprising and made a conscious decision to participate in the struggle, overcoming emotional and cognitive challenges – as revealed in the stories shared by the participants in my research. This section sheds light on the methods employed to recruit Undong-Gwons for high-cost and high-risk activism, as well as the initial motivations that led them to commit to the cause.

Recruitment

While student activism was widely recognised as a significant phenomenon among university students, the recruitment of potential members for underground organisations was primarily conducted by senior activists, owing to the secretive nature of the movement. In this study, the term 'recruit' specifically refers to enlisting individuals into the underground organisation.

Park (1989) pointed out that recruitment often occurred through connections with juniors from high school or through established departmental or legally approved circles. He also mentioned that 'outstanding figures,' individuals who displayed strong political awareness and had a wide circle of friends, were commonly targeted for recruitment by senior members (p.59). My research findings align with Park's observations, as we found that potential Undong-Gwons were often sought among outstanding figures with high potential as activists. However, recruitment efforts extended beyond these outstanding figures and employed various methods. In fact, there appear to be four distinct recruiting methods. These four different recruiting methods can be drawn out of my analysis of participants stories about how they became involved and how they actively recruited others into Undong-Gwon. This part aims to shed light on how freshmen became involved in activism from their subjective standpoint, an aspect that has been challenging to discern in existing studies.

As the new semester commenced in March, senior Undong-Gwons were busy engaging in recruitment activities, targeting politically oriented university newcomers. Bongsoo outlined the recruitment system as follows;

> *Bongsoo: It's an alumni association or general open circles and clubs rather than a faculty. Well, after friending and communicating [with members][4] of the open circles, we had separate meetings with somebody with good [political] orientation or serious concern about their lives and society. We asked about their intentions and suggested to them carefully to do something meaningful. That was always the way to recruit new members… The new members brought their friends again and again.*

According to his description, new members were recruited in informal social settings and through the personal networks of the newcomers. He also mentioned that potential recruits were carefully selected. This implies that most of the newcomers approached by senior members were politically aware, critical of society, and had a wide circle of friends. Six out of seven interviewees, including myself, also joined the underground activities through this route. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that small-scale recruitment using social networks was the primary method employed by the end of 1986.

[4] [ ]: The author's annotations.

Another approach used by the underground was to operate open circles to engage ordinary students. Some students voluntarily joined these open circles, and dedicated members from these circles were later invited to join the underground. Park, who served as the chairman of an open circle, shared his experience as follows:

> *Park: In the open circle [aboveground], like "Pedagogy", in a way, we received juniors and facilitated seminars for the kids there … and screened the potential Undong-Gwon. For example, if someone was compatible, those kids were moved separately [into the underground] and held seminars there. Or, if kids were ordinary and couldn't keep up with activism, we left them as members of the open circles only.*

During that time, the underground movement also led the open circles, and many Undong-Gwons, for example two out of seven interview participants in this study, began their involvement in the underground activism through this pathway. This approach offered the advantage of validating new members to some extent, as opposed to random recruitment from social settings. Since 1987, this method became a major route, especially as academic societies, open circles, and student councils became more proactive and revitalised.

Thirdly, as Bongsoo mentioned earlier, existing members often introduced potential new members to their study cells (Ts). Park, who had an underground activist elder sister, recalled his experience:

> *Park: Well, my elder sister talked about that kind of story [the student activism], so I was interested in it. In the meantime, Min suggested, "I joined a circle and acted together with" … That circle studied society, mingled together, and conducted seminars.*

Min, Park's best friend, had already ventured into underground activism before Park. Eventually, Park followed suit and joined the underground movement by becoming part of Min's study cell (T). Leveraging existing friendships in recruiting new members was not uncommon; in fact, 5 out of the 7 interview participants enlisted their closest peers to embark on activism. This method proved highly effective, making individuals with extensive social circles and leadership qualities prime targets for initial recruitment. Consequently, activists often appeared to be ordinary and ideal students, even though the repressive government consistently labelled activism as antisocial behaviour. Jun explicitly expressed this perspective, stating as follows:

> *Jun: I often heard that I was close to the model student… At that time, student movement was a deviation.*

This finding contradicts Porta's (1988) research, which suggests that recruits of left-wing clandestine groups usually have pre-political violent experiences. In a few cases, newcomers to the university actively sought out Undong-Gwon. I personally experienced this on more than one

occasion as a dedicated underground activist. For instance, four shy female students approached me one day, asking for my assistance in becoming part of the Undong-Gwon team. Eventually, they became the cornerstone for the Undong-Gwon, highlighting the significance of employing multiple recruitment strategies to attract a diverse range of university students in 1987. Many Undong-Gwons were reluctant to involve their families because they did not want to put their loving ones in a risky life. In my third year in the university, I suggested to form high schoolers' Ts with our siblings. However, I faced huge reluctances from the members of the organisation. Reluctantly, I formed a T only with my brother and his friends, after which he became a life-long labour movement activist.

The recruits collected through these methods formed study cells (T) and underwent intensive training to become underground activists. As of 1986, there were reportedly 72 cells in 22 universities in Seoul (Park, 1989, p. 60). According to Rho (2022), Inha University alone had 187 underground Undong-Gwons out of approximately 16,000 students in 1987. McAdam (1986) strongly argued that recruitment for higher risk/cost activism should be understood differently from safer forms of activism. In contrast to Porta's (1988) description of recruits being driven by existing intimate relationships, my study emphasises the effectiveness of utilising personal and social networks as the primary pathway for recruitment in the absence of institutionalised infrastructure.

Motivations of initial commitment

The initial commitment to the Undong-Gwon was influenced by the participants' negative impressions of the group, which stemmed from the systemic red-complex education processes. My research suggests that the structured negative image of activism was debunked by two combined factors; firstly, when potential activists had positive experiences of Undong-Gwons as real people; secondly, when they could legitimise the activism. In case of South Korea of 1980s, this came with moral shock of Gwangju Uprising. In this chapter, I unpack that interpersonal relations and cognitive liberations are equally important for the motivations of initial involvement in the high-risk activism.

Sukyeong, who had previously been unaware of issues within the education system, mentioned that anti-communism had been naturally ingrained in her.

> *Sukyeong: I thought negatively of the protesting students because I was full of Red-complex. And, in my case, my life was home and school, back and forth, just wholly ordinary, just ordinary students who were tamed in the school education.*

The systemic anti-communism hysteria initially deterred many young people from considering activism. However, the interviewees revealed that these negative emotions were dispelled when they interacted directly with the Undong-Gwons and saw them as real individuals, realising that

they were not so different from themselves and even perceived them as ideal human beings. Sanga's indicated that her experience of being assaulted by a male on a bus had a profound impact on her perception of activism. A member of the Undong-Gwon stood up for her during the incident, and this transformative act dramatically changed her perspective on activism.

> *Sanga: I was fighting against him [her attacker] on the bus, but everyone was pretending to sleep, even though I was screaming. Then, a guy stood up to protect me… Later, there was a demonstration, and that guy participated, so I went there to protect him.*

Sanga was deeply impressed by the member of Undong-Gwon's willingness to protect a vulnerable person, and she saw this act as an honourable quality. This experience completely transformed her initial 'scary feeling' about Undong-Gwons, leading her to view them as individuals who stood up for what was right. In another case, Jin found ideal role models among the Undong-Gwon. She expressed her thoughts as follows.

> *Jin: [In broader society] Women's [ideal] image was elegant, calm, and good housewife … [but the women in the circle] were like little more stylish, little more educated, and somewhat feelings like new women … there were differences because they were activists… Well, I felt they were cool. Well, maybe they were different.*

For Jin, one of the appealing aspects of joining the Undong-Gwon was the opportunity to reimagine gender identity and roles. Being a part of this group allowed her to contemplate gender norms, challenge traditional perceptions of women, and embrace a new sense of self-expression with a positive outlook. In my own case, despite more than ten senior Undong-Gwon members urging me to join, I initially declined. However, during a seminar in a discussion group, a male Undong-Gwon made a lasting impression on me. His profound knowledge and the powerful energy he exuded from his calm demeanour convinced me that ‘I can do something with this kind of people.’ These experiences highlight that each activist's decision to join the movement is influenced by a unique combination of factors, with interpersonal relations playing a crucial role in the process. It also emphasises the significance of activists embodying their values and demonstrating the potential for change through their actions as part of the movement.

While interpersonal and emotional relations played a vital role in the initial commitment, another significant factor was the Gwangju Uprising. For many interviewees, the Gwangju Uprising served as a pivotal moment that triggered both emotional and cognitive challenges. In the mainstream education and media arena, Gwangju Uprising was muted or described as ‘Some rioters instigated by the Reds from North Korea.’ The Gwangju massacre, an event that the military completely sealed off from entry and exit, was documented by a courageous foreign reporter. A large-scale exhibition featuring videos and photos from this reporter was held at the university, revealing the truth about the Gwangju Uprising. Confronting this truth presented the

first significant challenge to their previously held views. This finding aligns with existing research conducted by the KDF (Heo, 2017; Lee, 2017). Sanga, who led an ordinary life, experienced a moral shock upon encountering a video from the Gwangju Uprising.

> *Sanga: And now I was informed of the 5.18 Gwangju Uprising for the first time… Having watched the thing [the video of Gwangju], which never told us the truth by the [mainstream] education or media, I realised how much distorted education we had received, then I started to study social science in the[underground] circle.*

Sanga mentioned that the Gwangju Uprising raised questions about her cognitive process and the educational systems, motivating her to seek an alternative learning path through the underground Undong-Gwon organisations. Five out of seven participants considered the Gwangju Uprising as a direct turning point, convincing them of the legitimacy of the student movement and leading them to become involved in the organisation.

Senior Undong-Gwons employed various networks and legally approved student activities to recruit new members, carefully assessing the potential of newcomers. On the other hand, newcomers opened to senior Undong-Gwons through interpersonal relations, which shattered their stereotypes of student activists due to the moral shock of the Gwangju Uprising. In essence, the proactive recruiting system expanded the organisation's contact with potential members, and the belief that ‘doing the right thing with the right people’ played a significant role in determining new members' initial involvement. This underscores the importance of employing diverse strategies to recruit new members, ensuring the presence and growth of solidarities at the group level (Hirsch, 1990).

The success of consensus mobilisation strategically aligned the values of the group with its actions, providing legitimacy and presenting an image of social justice and equality to those interested in the group. However, it is important to acknowledge the emotional aspect of recruitees, as their feelings and emotions are crucial in their decision-making process to participate in activism. Other researchers have highlighted that movements can transform cultural representations and social norms, influencing how individuals see themselves and others (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p.283). Sanga saw a sense of justice in the male Undong-Gwon who stood up for her when she faced gendered violence, while Jin was inspired by female Undong-Gwon figures who defied the existing patriarchal social order. These emotional connections shifted the perception of Undong-Gwon from fear to desirability. This suggests that emotions play an equally significant role as strategic intervention in expanding new members for social movements. Additionally, the enormous moral shock of the Gwangju Uprising became a key theme in cognitive liberation and grievances. This study highlights the importance of emotions in the

dynamics of social movements and suggests that they played a pivotal role in the steady growth of the Undong-Gwons in the 1980s, despite the high-risk nature of their activities.

5-2 Building collective identity

Many potential activists were affiliated with family-like organisations and actively engaged in organised activities, which played a crucial role in forming a strong collective identity. According to Melucci (2016), the process of constructing collective identity involves interactively shared definitions of ends, means, and the field of action, along with emotional investment and constructive relationships within the network. In a similar environment to a family-like organisation within a university, activists fought together with theoretical knowledge, working towards a general revolution in society in the long run. This process was structured and collective, facilitated by organised entities. Moreover, the Undong-Gwons interacted with each other as a unique collective, fostering camaraderie and intimate emotional and material care within their family-like relationships. This close bond created profound comradeship, which is central to the formation of social movements (Gang et al., 2017) through organised force. This chapter presents how the Undong-Gwons developed their collective identity as a united entity and how they perceived themselves as activists. This section delves into participants' experiences within the organisation, focusing on their growth as activists and the formation of solidarity through family-like relationships.

Constructing a shared vision: Developing critical consciousness and ideological cohesion

For activists, having a unified vision of the ideal society they aimed to create was of paramount importance. The Korean student movement in the 1980s is famous for complicated ideological formulations via sophisticated theoretical debates and their implications in practice (Choi H., 1991). Participants emphasised that their core activities revolved around theoretical training, with beliefs and social responsibilities serving as the driving force that began and culminated with theoretical arming. They engaged in extensive reading of left-wing articles in social science, complemented by a structured curriculum. Within each Team, group discussions called "Seminars" were held with the leaders called RP[5], and these seminars played a pivotal role in shaping activists understanding. Most organisations followed similar narratives and structures in their curriculum, heavily influenced by Orthodox Marxism and Leninism due to Korea's economic status at that time (Kim, 1997). Consequently, the concept of class revolution was widely embraced until anti-Americanism with public line emerged in late 1986. Scholars such as Weiss & Aspinal (2012) view the collective identity of Korean student activists as a form of militant leftists. As most professors held right-wing views, these curricula were conducted outside the university education system as autonomous student activities. The Seminars were considered

[5] RP: Stand for Reproduction. RPs are responsible leaders of each Undong-Gwon team. They were in charge of facilitating Ts.

highly significant, as they raised awareness of social responsibility and fostered a deep understanding of pertinent issues. Park, who joined the organisation after his best friend, described how intensive theoretical education made him conscious of social problems and his role within the movement.

> *Park: I changed my thought since the MT [Membership Training]. After that, I was more fascinated with social issues than university class study… We've done only seminars for the whole week during the MT … I was not aware of the social problem before, but it's getting bigger and bigger while I was studying. I felt that society was not quite right, through the seminars … We were connected to the kind of ideology of Marx, Lenin, and Mao. That personally became an enormous weapon for me. It became a great power of weapon for the students involved in serious activism.*

For many activists, committing to the underground movement was not merely a response to immediate social phenomena but a result of holistic awareness of the current society and a vision of the society they aimed to achieve. Gi and Sukyeong emphasised that sustaining their participation in underground activism was a product of critical consciousness that developed through intensive study. Watts and Hipolito-Delgado (2015), heavily influenced by Freire, argue that fostering collective identity is intrinsically linked to raising critical consciousness, as it reinforces critical social analysis and promotes questioning the status quo. A total explanation of society and a better future forms ideology, and Marxism can be viewed as an ideological power (Mann, 2012). Mann (2012) argued that "Powerful ideologies provide a bridge between reason, morality, and emotion" (p.2), which requires firm faith and emotional commitment. Jin articulates that ideological cohesion played the foundation of trust toward the group.

> *Jin: I have unlimited trust to the people who share same value system and ideology.*

Ideological power often strengthens the group and enables risk-taking activism. Park asserts that ideology motivated him to be a passionate activist.

> *Park: We were armed with the socialism ideology, it personally became a driving force to put me into activism*

To me, the grand narrative of Marxism was the promise of ultimate victory. It was a comprehensive explanation of my belief that the ruling class's oppression of resistance was natural, and that history inevitably would lead to our victory. Moreover, we believed that democracy, which was considered the primary task at the time, was a tree that grew on blood, and we thought that arrest and torture could happen to anyone at any time. Taking the risk of some members would quit, groups constantly infused ideological faith and determination in their activism. Most of the lives of Undong-Gwons were similar, and this was not something ordinary

people could understand. So, I felt a solid emotional kinship with other activists who similarly shared the vision and risks under a harsh dictatorship. The ideology that was taboo under an oppressive regime paradoxically fuelled emotional bonding and passionate activism among activists. In addition to that, state violent intervention increased while Undong-Gwons were seen as a direct threat to the political system. Altbach (1989) argued that violent repression of student activism could potentially increase the activism's militancy. As a result, the Undong-Gwons formed their collective identity as a military force with a strong sense of solidarity, centred on leftist ideology.

According to Park (1989), the Undong-Gwons of the 1980s perceived themselves as elite among university students, with a stronger ideological cohesion and tactical effectiveness compared to their counterparts in the 1970s, who had a more romantic approach to democratisation. My study suggests that this ideological armament that was achieved through raising critical consciousness played a pivotal role in forming a strong collective identity shared vision among the activists as a military force. Thus, expanding critical consciousness through learning goes beyond being a matter of individual intellectuals; it serves as the foundation for forging a group identity and shared aims as activists.

Collective action: Becoming Vanguard Fighters

Growing up as vanguard fighters was a crucial issue that was systemically facilitated. While there were many social science ‘study academies’ dedicated to left-wing thoughts in the 1980s, putting that knowledge into activism was another challenge, and not all study circles were oriented towards direct struggle. In the case of Undong-Gwons, if members were deemed ready, the RPs would suggest engaging in action-driven activities, such as participating in protests. As Park (1989) provided evidence, Undong-Gwons took calculated risks in their careers, and the decision for their first participation in the struggle was strategically guided by the RPs.

Bong recalled how his RP skilfully utilised emotions and cultural factors while clearly communicating the potential negative outcomes in their personal lives to encourage junior activists' voluntary participation in demonstrations.

> *Bongsoo: Yes, what that means is he didn't approach like "There is injustice in the society and Gwangju massacre. The populace is suffering." [His senior spent an enormous amount of time on daily activities with Bongsoo and other T members] … Like that, he used cultural approaches and insisted on never participating in the demonstration. It was a paradox. Paradox, [he said] "I beg you never join in the rally; you need to be determined that you can be arrested, or hurt, or in a severe case you will be tortured or dragged into the army and dead. So, please don't participate in a demonstration before you build up a firm belief … Later on, I realised that he pursued our deeper involvement.*

My RP always emphasised that theory without action was merely an illusion, and that theory gains true meaning only when put into practice through actions. They stressed the necessity of standing together in the struggle, even though it involved risks. This indicates that the method of mobilising in the struggle greatly depended on the RP's personality. They provided the necessary information for voluntary participation, but the final decision to join was made spontaneously by the members themselves. This case demonstrates two facets of movement activities: intra-activities, which are internal and behind-the-scenes aspects such as preparing protests, fundraising, and decision-making processes, and outer movement, which is publicly visible.

According to theorists like Melucci (1995), who view the development of collective identity as a process, the distinction between latent and visible moments of movement activity is essential. Latent activities involve day-to-day interactions within the movement, while visible moments encompass actions aimed at external factors, such as actual protests. The development of collective identity heavily relies on the continuous interaction between these latent and visible activities (Fominaya, 2010). As activists, evolving as a collective being of vanguard fighters was partly a result of these interactions. Notably, mobilising in the visible movement of high-risk underground activism involved a greater extent of latent movement, as most of the time, these activities remained invisible while they engaged in massive collective actions.

The operation of the movement was democratic, although it was slightly constrained by security concerns. Daily discussions were held to coordinate opinions and distribute roles. Sanga, who was on the university's underground top decision panel during her senior year, recalls;

> *Sanga: It was democratic. That means there was no one-top existing … Yes, if student ID 83 became top, it is composed of a consultative body. And they shared the roles like RP in charge, agitate in charge in the consultative body, they discussed [collectively] and dropped down [orders] … [If a member challenged the orders], then, in the seminar, they discussed "One of our junior raised issues, what will we do about this?" They came up with a solution while the junior did not recognise.*

Fominaya (2010) concurred with Taylor and Whittier's argument in 1992 that the formation of collective identity in social movements involves an oppositional stance against dominant cultural practices. This perspective also applies to the Undong-Gwons' democratic organisational operation, despite its constraints due to security reasons resulting from political repression. Despite these challenges, the continuous risk-taking activities were not coerced; decisions were made democratically, taking into account the need to protect the organisation's security while maximising spontaneity and considering individual characteristics. As a result, the level of participation in collective actions was determined by individual commitment levels, and roles and responsibilities were shared based on the interests and expertise of the members. This approach

facilitated a sense of ownership and investment in the movement's goals, as each member played an active role according to their capabilities and passions.

> *Jun: In my memories, if somebody wanted to carry out a particular task like passionately inciting propaganda, they took those specific roles, or if others felt those tasks as burdens, in an appropriate level, for example, a long time ago when we demonstrated, some threw the Molotov cocktail and armed with timber at the forefront, or others just broke the stones and threw them at the back to the front line, and sometimes the stone hit the back head of other friends (laughing)*

Jun's statement suggests that the seemingly chaotic scene of activism was actually structured in the most effective way, taking into account the abilities and characteristics of individual activists. These experiences helped Undong-Gwons effectively coordinate massive mobilisations during the 1987 democratisation movement. The Undong-Gwon's ideological orientation was not publicly confirmed; instead, it was derived from the shared definition of the group based on common interests, experiences, and solidarity within the organisation. When the public identified the Undong-Gwons as a collective entity, it was through their visible collective actions, such as demonstrations and rallies. In this context, the definition of collective identity can be challenging to pin down, but Whittier's (1995) definition of collective identity as observable phenomena whereas located in action and interaction rather than self-perceptions, attitudes, or beliefs holds meaningful implications to some extent. It highlights the importance of the group's actions and interactions in shaping their collective identity, rather than relying solely on individual self-perceptions or beliefs.

Creating solidarity through a family-like relationship

Polletta and Jasper (2001) have argued that social movement organisations establish a collective identity and develop network ties, known as solidarity, particularly in the absence of institutional infrastructure. Solidarity is deeply rooted in the configuration of relationships that link the members of a group to one another (Hunt & Benford, 2004). It fosters reciprocal emotions among the members and strengthens the bonds within the movement. In the case of underground organisations, affective bonds were especially crucial in holding them together (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2004). Solidarity can have both internal and external foci, but this section is focusing on the solidarity within the group. Despite the organisation having its operational principles, maintaining it successfully required emotional care and interactions since, in the end, it is a human-made group.

Participants in this study agreed that the relationships among members were akin to a family. For those who have faced death together for a common purpose, this family-like bond extended beyond mere friendship. This relationship fostered a stronger solidarity through emotional, social,

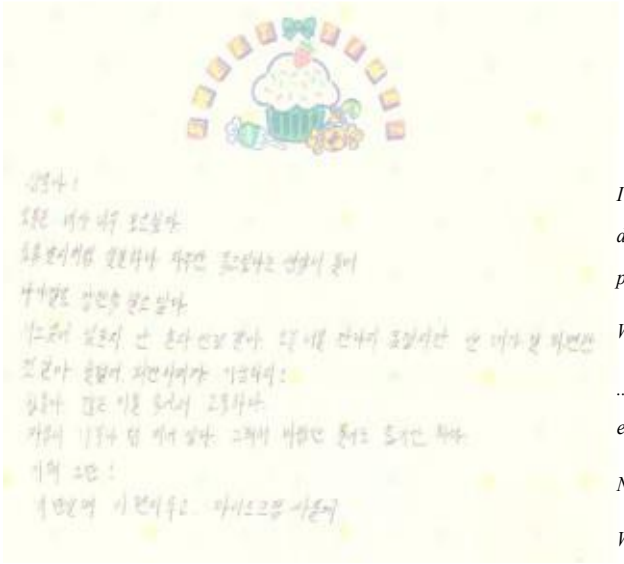
and material support and care among the members. Sanga describes this relationship, where the RPs took care of their juniors like parents, as follows;

> *Sanga: And the student ID 84 and 83, [called us] "our babies, our babies," looked after us like that very well.*

Sanga mentioned that RPs provided comprehensive care for the T members, creating a family-like culture within the organisation. This fostered an intimate relationship where members shared and supported each other emotionally and in other aspects of their lives.

These intimate feelings and thoughts were often communicated through handwritten letters. Image 5-1 illustrates the inner burden of a young activist, expressed on girly stationery and in emotional language.

Image 5-1 A letter of a female Undong-Gwon



I miss you so much today. If the weather is as dreary as it is these days, I keep feeling like I want to die. I am pretending as a strong person.

Wherever I am, I feel like alone.

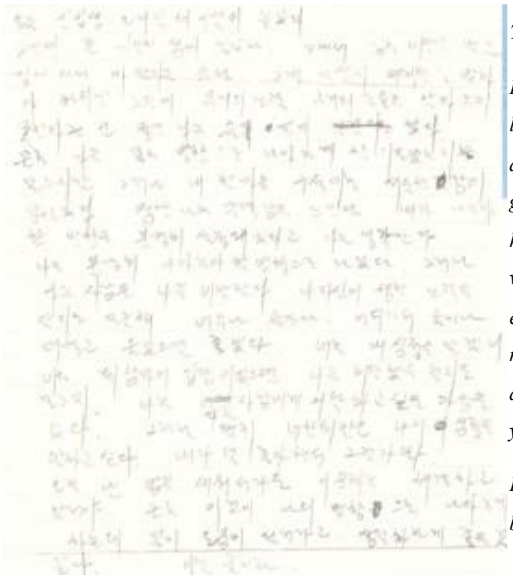
... I'm exhausted. I'm lonely among many people. My heart is whole empty, so I am cold with breeze.

Now stop!

When I see you, I'll pass this letter, and buy you ice-cream.

On the other hand, Image 5-2 is written by a male activist on a notepad, which expressed his frustration after he criticised from his comrades but remind himself of his will to be improved in practice in whipped handwriting.

Image 5-2 A letter of a male Undong-Gwon



Today, the freshmen orientation finished

But I was much underripe So, I received a lot of criticism and writing this letter at home. Yes, I deserved criticism but it made me really sad that they don't understand our efforts and pains. Of course, it may be the intention of giving me right direction but the sad feeling remained at the corner of my heart. I really feel helpless. I think I set a clear direction I need to go. I clearly went that way. But people criticise me without understandings of my life and efforts So sad. I'd love to drink and cry somewhere. Would you understand my feelings? You might criticise me if you stand in the third party position. I don't have the feeling to depend on other people. But somehow I want to tell you my feelings. Maybe, this happens because I like you.

I will solve this problem even with the sleepless night. Maybe, it will be beneficial to think that this will help me to go on my direction. Bye.

This letter vividly portrays various aspects of the collective life as an activist, including collective decision-making, reflecting on individual members' practices, self-reflection on actions towards shared aims, and finding emotional support through solidarity. Solidarity involves a profound process of empathy, understanding, and supporting one another (Hermandez, Kun, & Jekins, 2021). The T members' intimate conversations, both in person and through letters, where they shared their deepest thoughts and even vulnerabilities like suicidal feelings and embarrassing moments, strengthened their attachment to each other.

The culture of solidarity thrived on mutual relationships among T members (Baldwin, 1910). This sense of mutuality was not only present between individual members but also at the group level. Dui-Puri which is social gatherings after daily practice played a significant role in providing comprehensive and systematic care for the emotional and social aspects of the group. Dui-Puri is events followed major gatherings, serving as a form of daily celebration and informal debriefing. After every seminar and struggle, the Undong-Gwons gathered to connect emotionally and address any emotional problems that arose, as Gi explained. This mutual support and caring environment further solidified their collective identity and shared commitment to their activism.

> *Gi: So we might be obsessed with the Dui-puri in some aspects … Anyways, after completing RP, a euphoria popped up … anyways, either fear or other this and that in mind, well, when we kept up doing this, we couldn't say about these constant difficulties in the heart there. Yes, but we took Dui-Puri as a chance to solve the [emotional] problems with comrades anyhow. And, if we didn't have Dui-Puri, we felt we hadn't done something.*

Gi recounted how the Dui-Puri served as a cultural outlet to address emotional burdens in a non-verbal manner. Through activists' songs and conversations over drinks, the Undong-Gwons expressed and sublimated various emotions while reflecting on their daily discussions and struggles. These gatherings became a space where they shared their emotions and traumas with absolute trust and empathy, strengthening their mutual relationship and sense of belonging to the collective identity.

The care and support extended beyond emotional matters and even encompassed financial concerns, particularly for male Undong-Gwons who faced challenges with tuition fees due to compulsory military conscription (Gang et al., 2017). The military government would sometimes forcibly conscript male students involved in activism, leading to tragic incidents like the death of Kim Du-huang. In response, the Undong-Gwons demonstrated solidarity by assisting their male comrades who couldn't afford tuition fees, offering joint labour during vacations, and organising fundraisers. Sanga recalled experiences of fundraising efforts to save juniors facing conscription.

> *Sanga: Like mother's heart, I wanted to keep him under me rather than let him go to the army … His college applied more expensive tuition fees … they are costly, but he didn't have money ... So, I've been to all the classrooms for fundraising, "Please help, one of the democratic mates now is facing being expelled and forced to go to the army. He has to fight for democracy. Please help," I cried and tore...Some students said, "She is crazy." But at that time, many participated. So he was able to enrol.*

Overall, the Dui-Puri and the financial support demonstrated the strong bond and caring nature of the Undong-Gwon community, further solidifying their collective identity and shared commitment to their activism. Giving up personal resources or collectively working in the labour market to raise funds for comrades at risk of being withdrawn from the university was a common practice among the Undong-Gwons. This collective effort showcased the power of solidarity and mutual support, encouraging each other to overcome challenges. The family-like caring and the financial support they provided reinforced their sense of connection and inspiration, creating a strong sense of community that could sustain them through difficult times.

Jin and Sanga both expressed their feelings of being connected as collective beings.

> *Jin: I liked being there with them together … To do something together. We are one.*
>
> *Sanga: This family-like, what would I say, the sense of belonging to the group. Now I am not alone, I am not alone and I have my comrades.*

For Jin, the Undong-Gwon community offered the possibility to reimagine gender roles and identity, inspiring her to embrace a new sense of self-expression and empowerment. Sanga, on the other hand, found a sense of justice and support when a male Undong-Gwon stood up for her

during a distressing encounter, transforming her perception of activism and deepening her sense of connection to the group. These experiences highlight how the Undong-Gwons' collective identity and solidarity played a vital role in fostering a supportive and connected community, motivating them to persist in their activism and pursue their shared goals.

These experiences of spontaneous heroic acts born out of deep solidarity were quite common among the Undong-Gwons. I, too, have been rescued by my comrade's numerous times and have extended help to others in need. This form of virtuous action, rooted in the heart, aligns with Tischner's argument (2005) that true virtue arises from solidarity itself, rather than from coercion or compulsion. The belief in the collective power to achieve great things, the trust in one another that stems from solidarity, the profound empathy that they are not alone in the challenges of being activists, and the selfless camaraderie they foster – all of these elements fuelled their motivation to continue the struggle. The shared experiences and actions of the Undong-Gwons played a significant role in forming and solidifying their collective identity as a social movement. Solidarity requires a high moral and ethical sentiment (Tischner, 2005; Kokers, 2016) that calls for cooperation and helping behaviour. The Undong-Gwons, as a revolutionary vanguard unit, formed a profound camaraderie as members of a family-like organisation, creating a deep sense of solidarity. This camaraderie, coupled with their shared pursuit of a common goal, served as the driving force that enabled the student movement to endure despite severe oppression (Seo et al., 2017). Emotions and emotional ties played a pivotal role in sublimating the group identity into collective action. The organisation's systematic care approach contributed to this strong sense of solidarity, complementing the intellectual agreement towards their shared objective.

Some social movement theorists, like McDonald (2002), Saunders (2005), and Davenport (2015), question the link between strong collective identity and sustained movement. Additionally, some scholars advocate for an inclusive identity, arguing that a rigid boundary can limit the mobilisation of the masses in global-scale social movements. In subsequent chapters 6 and 7, I will explore how a strong sense of collective identity and solidarity sustained collective actions. This thesis will also delve into how activists continuously pursued inclusivity within their exclusivity.

Chapter 5-3: Mechanisms of Sustaining Motivation in the Social Movement

Despite their high commitment to activism, living as an Undong-Gwon demanded tremendous effort, and many activists ultimately chose to leave the squad due to the overwhelming responsibility and risks involved. Numerous male activists quit to serve in the army, while female activists became hesitant and withdrew from public visibility. However, despite negative pressures, a significant number of Undong-Gwons persisted in the struggle. The previous chapter explored the processes of constructing collective identity and fostering a strong sense of solidarity, which contribute to generating collective action and sustaining the movement. In this

section, I delve into the mechanisms that motivated individual Undong-Gwons to maintain their dedication to the student movement.

The First Step: Learning and Building Beliefs in Activism

While many studies have identified sensing justice as a motivation for involvement in social movements, Undong-Gwons demonstrated a more cognitive-driven approach to sustaining their activism. Although they were certainly sensitive to matters of justice (Park, 1989), Gi offered an alternative explanation.

> *Gi: Anyways, it wouldn't be possible to study [left-wing theories in the cell], protest every day, develop flyers, and make and hang placards for years … with simple waves of anger I had or the sense of justice which I couldn't tolerate injustice, continuous [of activism] itself wouldn't be possible. It is impossible to continue this [activism] for years only because the person is simply good or resistant to injustice… I said before that this is learning with a systemic order and continuing to build up beliefs due to learning.*

While the participants acknowledged that Undong-Gwons indeed had a heightened sensitivity to justice, just like Gi, they emphasised that their sustained activism was more a matter of cognition than emotion, even after experiencing significant moral shock. The legitimacy and belief in the movement were recurring themes stressed by the interviewees, and the establishment of these beliefs can be seen as a pivotal factor enabling individual activists to sustain their commitment. Gi highlights the significance of systematic learning in shaping their beliefs in activism. Similarly, Sanga articulates that her motivation was sustained through the structured seminars, which provided her with a sense of legitimacy and strong beliefs in the cause.

> *Sanga: The world was different [from what I thought]. I realised alongside the meetings that I saw the world with a narrow vision, yes, with the seminars. Yes, I already had an awareness of the world. I knew I was doing the right thing, so I had to keep doing it.*

The seminar played a surprisingly transformative role in developing critical consciousness for all the interview participants, including myself. Growing up in a deeply traditional and male-centric family, I had experienced gender discrimination firsthand within my own household, which intuitively made me aware of structural issues in the world and left me with a sense of unease. However, it was through the systematically structured 4-year Undong-Gwon learning curriculum that my intuition evolved into a scientifically informed critical perspective of the world. The curriculum covered various aspects, from critically examining the existing social order to understanding the methodologies of revolution. Over time, my conviction grew stronger that the world requires comprehensive change, history is in progress, and we have the power to be agents of that change.

Social responsibility

When engaging in high-risk activism in an oppressive environment, activists often encounter numerous challenges and may question the purpose of their actions, burdened by emotions and life-threatening situations. Many existing social movement theories are Western-focused, leaving a gap in knowledge from non-Western perspectives. Research papers often compare Western individualism with Korean collectivism, highlighting Koreans' strong sense of community. In Korean culture, the emphasis is often on *we* rather than *me*, and individuals see themselves as part of a larger community. This collectivistic nature enables Koreans to prioritise their role within the community over their individual interests.

Undong-Gwons, too, viewed themselves as part of a bigger picture - the community - and recognised their roles and responsibilities at various levels. This sense of collective identity and responsibility provided them with tireless motivation to persist in their activism. As Sanga pointed out, understanding the right responsibility to the right person served as a strong bond that tied individual Undong-Gwons to their commitment in the movement.

> *Sanga: That could be the sense of responsibility. In some respects, I was responsible for my kids [juniors/junior T members]. On purpose, no, the seniors gave the responsibilities and assigned roles to the juniors. So, they couldn't run away [from the activism]. … I never thought I would be an RP, but they gave me the role of RP. Because that is the responsibility … So, appropriate to the current plans, provided the proper roles.*

Sukyeong also emphasises that her knowledge of the truth and the responsibility to continuously inform society were the reasons she continued to live as an activist. During my time as a student activist at Inha University, I remember the high role expectations that the public had on me as a dedicated activist. These expectations created roles and responsibilities for me as an RP, the mobiliser of the key structure, and the leader of mass struggles. These roles became the driving force behind my involvement in underground activism. This aligns with Park's (1989) argument that Undong-Gwon in the 1980s saw themselves as successors of the 4.19 Revolution and viewed social reform as their responsibility, a finding that resonates with my own experiences.

Historical consciousness

Bongsoo mentioned that sustainable activities are possible when social responsibility and historical consciousness are high.

> *Bongsoo: We must be aware of what kinds of meaning we can give historically to our dangerous and radical movement ... In the end, isn't it a principled or fundamental social responsibility and awareness of the times and history?... I've always emphasised those two historical perceptions and social consciousness when I facilitated RP … We can be here and not run away from this dangerous and radical movement only when we know*

> *the historical meaning. Ultimately, isn't it a principled or fundamental social responsibility and awareness of the times and history?*

To a great extent, the Undong-Gwons had a strong sense of responding to the call of their era throughout history. During the 20th century, when the Undong-Gwons were active, history was perceived to progress in a specific direction for the purpose of emancipation (Šubrt, 2014), providing them with positive energy and the belief that their victory was inevitable. I often told to my juniors that "We are the Revolutionaries who are fighting for one perfect victory [revolution] after overcoming 99 defeats." Personally, this sense of history as the ultimate winner greatly contributed to overcoming the exhausting daily life as an activist.

According to historical philosopher Rüsen (1987), historical consciousness is about making sense of the past to understand the present and anticipate the future. It shapes people's attitudes towards the present and future, reinforcing the formation of individual and collective identities through the consciousness of collective memories, the assessment of the present, and shaping a common future (Šubrt, 2014; Clark & Peck, 2019). In this reason, Šubrt (2014) agreed to Miroslav Hroch (2010) that history is argumentative, and historical consciousness incentives for self-identification and group cohesion.

This historical consciousness contributes to the construction of collective identity and the formation of solidarity. In this regard, the Undong-Gwons' sustained motivation to engage in high-risk activities was driven by an accurate awareness of their actions through learning and a sense of responsibility rooted in social and historical awareness. They understood that taking on their role as activists was inevitable, and this conviction became the key driving force behind their activism. Such mechanisms of developing faith in activism provide a strong basis for continuous struggle until specific goals are achieved. While collective identity plays a significant role in the movement and is constructed through systemic and structured mobilising efforts, it is not the sole determining factor for the entire movement's development. Undong-Gwons were the key political actors in the social movement of 1987, and successfully coordinated mass mobilisations of the largely unexperienced public. Their initial motivations may have started with emotional dimensions such as moral shock and sensing injustice in society. However, their sustained commitment and consciousness with their ideology have persisted as the driving force behind their high-risk activism.

CHAPTER 6 PRE 1987 ONGOING STRUGGLE, VIOLENCE AND THE VANGUARD ERA

Chapter 5 explored micro-mobilisation mechanism of the Undong-Gwons, a central organisation to the democratisation movement in the 1980s. This chapter 6 focuses on understanding their strategies and tactics for constructing collective identity and the enduring determination that empowered them to persevere despite oppression at micro and macro levels.

This chapter aims to examine the period preceding 1987, marked by self-sacrificing vanguard struggles that persisted even as the military government intensified its internal and external suppressive measures. Controversies arose, including incidents related to the Gwangju Uprising and the decision to retreat during Seoul's spring. During this period, the theory of leading political struggle gained significant support, culminating in the transformation of the ideological landscape of the student movement in 1986, heavily influenced by anti-Americanism (Lee, 2017). Until the emergence of the popular struggle line in 1986, there was a consensus that the underground organisation and struggle were vanguard-led (Gang et al., 2017; Lee, 2017), where frontrunners played a crucial role in accepting Lenin's concept of vanguard (Lenin, 1902). The identities of both the masses and the vanguard during this time were decisive factors in determining the strategies and tactics employed in the struggle. This chapter discusses collective identity and inclusivity, followed by an examination of two axes of the vanguard struggle strategy: the conscientisation movement and the continuous vanguard struggle. Additionally, this chapter explores the care and respite strategies employed to address emotional and cognitive burdens during this era. Finally, the chapter discusses the achievements and limitations of the struggle, providing insight into the context that gave rise to the emergence of the public struggle line in 1987.

6-1 Collective Identity and Inclusivity

In the preceding chapter, the process of forming the collective identity of the Undong-Gwons was discussed. However, throughout the history of resistance in modern Korea, their appearance and relationship with the public evolved over time. The era under consideration is often referred to as the vanguard era because, during this period, the Undong-Gwons predominantly engaged in vanguard struggles, taking on the role of frontrunners in Korean social movements. It was a time when the government's efforts to counter-frame the anti-government movement were intense and socially convincing. Despite this, the Undong-Gwons, operating in an era of strong boundary work, sought to expand the social acceptance of their actions through an approach of inclusivity. This section explores the malicious counter-framing by the government and the Undong-Gwons' efforts to construct a socially inclusive framing process and collective identity in response.

The dictatorship stigmatised the Undong-Gwons as Reds, accusing them of destabilising the country and being influenced by North Korea. The label ‘Riots, Reds’ became a widely accepted

description used in the counter-framing of the Undong-Gwons. Sanga indicates that this counter-framing was systematically propagated through education.

> *Sanga: So, the problem with our [mainstream school] education was that there were a lot of [stigma] against university students [that they were] a disturbing force.*

The authoritarian government's framing of the social movement reverberated throughout society via various channels, including media, education, and word of mouth. As Sukyeong points out, the prevailing sentiment in society was one of a 'Red scare,' deeply influenced by the government's anti-communist ideology. Within this socio-political climate, such phenomena served to justify and legitimise the state's violent intervention against the social movement. Bongsoo further emphasises the severity of the student movement's suppression during that period.

> *Bongsoo: Everyone was a bit scared because it was such a harsh time when people were arrested and tortured for appearing at the checkpoint with a note in their back pocket that said, "Long live democracy."*

Several pieces of evidence from relevant literature support this assertion. For instance, Gang et. al (2017) reported that 1,363 students were expelled from universities due to their involvement in anti-government protests after the Gwangju Uprising until the end of 1983. The universities also implemented constant surveillance systems with intelligence agents or police officers to prepare for potential protests. In response to the growing violence in demonstrations and the regime's efforts to label the anti-government movement as a disruptive force causing social chaos, the Undong-Gwon had to reframe their struggle as just and aligned with the goal of abolishing the existing unjust social order. This endeavour took on various cultural and symbolic forms, such as using the Taegeukgi, the Korean National Flag, as a representation of their cause. The Image 6-1 shows Taegeukgi as a uniform in a protest as below.

Image 6-1 Inha University's male Undon-Gwons occupied Bupyeong station

Imagee supplied by Yeon Jongyeop

The sentiment of recognising the Taegeukgi as a symbol of national solidarity in the Republic of Korea has steadily grown since the March 1st Independence Movement in 1919 (Noh, 2017). The photos below serve as evidence, illustrating the widespread use of the Taegeukgi from the 3.1 Independence Movement in 1919 to the June Uprising in 1987:

Image 6-2 3.1 Independent Movement in 1919

Image 6-3 8.15. Independent day in 1945

Source: Hangyere Daily https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/784775.html

Image 6-4 4.19 Revolution in 1960

Source: Hangyere Daily: https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/784775.html

Image 6-5 June Uprising in 1987

Source: Hangyeore Daily https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/784775.html

Using Taegeukgi, the Undong-Gwons demonstrated their acknowledgment as patriotic successors to the unfinished 4.19 Revolution, aligning with Park's research (1989). This collective self-perception coincided with the significance of Taegeukgi as a symbol that evoked collective

memory tied to patriotism and resistance. In East Asian intellectual circles, particularly those who endured the colonial era, the presence of patriots was believed to determine a nation's fate (Son, 2015). Korea, too, emphasised nationalism and patriotism from the Japanese invasion period to the modernisation process (Kim & Jo, 2022). For Koreans, who share a 5,000-year history as a single ethnic group, nationalism and patriotism are deeply intertwined and represent vital psychological variables for the maintenance of Korean society and national integration (Yoon, 2017). Therefore, when the Undong-Gwons referred to themselves as patriots, it was not an attempt to create a dichotomy between patriots and non-patriots or an ‘us versus them’ mindset. Instead, it was a way to bridge the divide and express the message, ‘We are also people like you.’

In this chapter, the authoritarian governmental framing, referred to as "counter-framing," has been shown to legitimise and justify repressive behaviours, including the state's violent intervention (Edel & Josua, 2018). Collective identity is known for being a concept that lacks consensus, primarily because the identity itself consists of multiple layers. The student Undong-Gwon, too, exhibits a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted collective identity, encompassing (1) a shared aim as revolutionaries, as discussed in the previous chapter, (2) an external role as vanguard units during this era, and (3) a sense of action imbued with the meaning of patriotism. The relationship between collective identity and collective action forms a virtuous cycle, with reciprocal ties among activists. This cycle is rooted in the process of boundary work, which plays a fundamental role in shaping collective identity. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Undong-Gwons engaged in strong boundary work; however, they were also proactive in expressing inclusivity and made considerable efforts to promote their image as patriots.

6-2 Tactics and strategies of the era

During an era marked by intense repression from the dictatorship and limited access to information, a top-down approach to organisational operations and relationships between the Undong-Gwons and the masses was prevalent. In the face of a pervasive anti-communist policy that suppressed all social movements, achieving social consensus from all segments of society was crucial in their quest to overthrow the dictatorship through cognitive liberation and direct or indirect struggle. To accomplish this, the Undong-Gwons focused on a conscientisation movement, widely targeting university students to raise awareness and engage in ongoing struggles that questioned and challenged the existing social order. This section will delve into two major strategies employed during the conscientisation movement. The first strategy involved mass organisation through raising awareness, aiming to mobilise a broad base of individuals within society. The Undong-Gwons sought to foster a collective understanding of the injustices and oppressive systems, encouraging people to become conscious of their situation and take action. The second strategy was centred around vanguard struggle against the government. The Undong-Gwons assumed the role of frontrunners, leading the way in the fight against the

oppressive regime. They utilised bold and decisive actions to confront the authorities, inspiring others to join the struggle and build momentum for change.

Conscientisation Movement

According to McAdams (2022), cognitive liberation, a process that involves collectively understanding the current unjust situation and recognising the potential for change through group action, is crucial for translating political opportunity into collective action. Achieving cognitive liberation requires two interconnected elements: an awareness of the injustice of the present circumstances and a realisation of the effectiveness of collective action.

During the period under discussion, cognitive liberation found extensive expression through the conscientisation movement, particularly among university students. Rooted in the ideas of Paulo Freire, conscientisation in South Korea aligned with the revolutionary project that emerged after the Gwangju Uprising in the 1980s (Lee, 2008). The primary focus of this movement revolved around political and class conscientisation. As part of the discourse, the conscientisation movement inherently involved challenging the dictatorship as an immediate task in the pursuit of a democratised society. It provided a blueprint for an ideal society where complete liberation and freedom could be achieved and emphasised empowering individuals to recognise their self-competence, freed from external oppression (Seong, 1991). Both internal and external approaches were employed in conducting the conscientisation movement. Internally, intensive programs were organised, complemented by methods such as propaganda, agitation through images and documents, and small-group discussions to engage the public (Seong, 1991). In this regard, the conscientisation movement involved direct engagement with the masses, aiming to raise awareness, foster critical consciousness, and mobilise collective action toward transformative change.

The first goal of the conscientisation movement was to raise awareness about the atrocities committed by the regime and the legitimacy of the movement's objective to overthrow the dictatorship. Throughout the struggle and in everyday conversations, opposing opinions often included the fear-mongering notion that any action taken would result in North Korea's intervention. At this time, I often heard people say, “If you do this, North Koreas will come down”. The government perpetuated collective lies at a high level to fuel anti-communism hysteria, attributing the Gwangju Uprising to North Korea's influence. Prominent left-wing politician Kim Dae-jung was even falsely accused of being a North Korean spy, and the force behind the student movement was also portrayed as connected to North Korea (Gang et. al, 2017).

To counter these misconceptions and dispel the illusion of an impending war to maintain the regime, it was imperative to initiate a large-scale conscientisation movement. The focus of this movement was to question the existing societal structure, particularly highlighting the violent

nature of the military government and the involvement of the USA in Gwangju Uprising. Undong-Gwons spearheaded this movement on campuses (Kim, 2017). The strength of the conscientisation movement stemmed from the fact that the true essence of the Gwangju Uprising had been entirely obscured in society. Therefore, an essential task was to inform the public about the reality of the events and alter their perception. Society's perspective had been blinded to the extent that some believed "South Korea's society, facing North Korea, required a dictatorship" as Boongsoo mentioned.

Sukyeong emphasised that the Gwangju Uprising held the key to transforming public perception, and as a person in a position of responsibility, she felt compelled to undertake this task. The conscientisation movement aimed to break through the misinformation and create a collective understanding of the truth, paving the way for broader support and mobilisation towards the movement's goals.

> *Sukyeong: Well, I thought myself the world had to be changed, and I had to keep informing people about it, which made me participate. Well, I was in an official position. I thought I had to inform more students and people about the truth [of Gwangju Uprising].*

During my experience, I fostered a positive relationship within the faculty, actively engaging in various social settings to discuss social issues. Through these interactions, I successfully convinced the majority of students about the legitimacy of the student movement. Identifying the advanced masses[6] who showed more active involvement, I formed a group of 12 individuals and initiated an academic society[7] by the end of 1986. This society, named Pedagogy, later evolved into an open circle that played a pivotal role in mobilising the college of Education in 1987. This process enabled the Undong-Gwons to differentiate ordinary students from the more actively organised advanced masses, further strengthening the movement.

A central aspect of this movement was a comprehensive questioning and challenging of the capitalist social structure, identified by the Undong-Gwons as the root cause of the prevailing injustice. The 1980s witnessed the intensification of monopoly capitalism, leading to worsening conditions for the working class, accounting for 42% of the total working population (Kim, 1997). Kim (1997) asserted that the situation for peasants was even more dire. Such circumstances contributed to the widespread acceptance of orthodox Marxism with class revolution at its core among the Undong-Gwons and left-wing activists (Kim, 1997). Various discourses were

[6] Advanced mass: While there is no consensus definition, this term widely used to describe Undong-Gwon-friendly but non-activist mass.
[7] Academic society: Small groups studying leftist sociology with their own curriculum. It was largely autonomous and existed widely within the university or in the region.

disseminated to raise awareness that the poor conditions faced by the lower classes were a result of the structural contradictions inherent in capitalism.

Jun described the perception of the Undong-Gwons' role, depicting them as vanguard leaders supported by the masses. This movement aimed to address the deeply entrenched social inequalities by challenging the capitalist system itself, making it a transformative endeavour with far-reaching implications for societal change. By critically examining and questioning the prevailing social structure, the Undong-Gwons sought to pave the way for a more just and equitable society.

> *Jun: [Through learning about the transformational movement], we could produce the logic of the justification and methods of making it transformable with the analysis and judgment on the issues. That kind of thing is about presenting it and taking the right path to the masses by instigating publicity and propaganda. We took the leaders' role who guided the right direction at that time.*

The transformational movement referred to here was essentially a revolutionary movement pursued by the Undong-Gwons, with a fundamental focus on class revolution. It highlighted that the conscientisation movement, which aimed to stir public awareness, was also addressing the structural issues within society. During that time, many students hailed from impoverished backgrounds and acknowledged the plight of workers and peasants, yet this awareness did not necessarily elicit sympathy from the advanced masses for a revolutionary movement. A close friend of mine, who was a member of an autonomous left-wing academic society, once remarked to me, “I understand what's wrong with capitalist society, but I am content with it."

This illustrates that, while they generally supported the immediate overthrow of the dictatorship, they still questioned the abolition of capitalism - the very issue activists deemed fundamental. In essence, ordinary students expressed empathy for the student movement at a level they were comfortable with. This holds a crucial implication for organising social movements, as it underscores the reality that these individuals lead their own lives. Conscientisation, in the terminology of Paulo Freire (1968), places emphasis on public subjectivity and equal interaction. Thus, Freire (1968) expressed serious concern about the objectification of the public by activists or the people by revolutionaries. As Jun explicitly mentioned, activists often guide the direction, and the masses follow suit. Therefore, in promoting collective action, be it cognitive liberation or conscientisation, it is imperative to recognise that the public we aim to work with are real people with their own reflections, perceptions, and emotions.

By acknowledging and respecting the individuality of the public, social movements can foster meaningful engagement and collaboration, leading to more genuine and lasting transformation in society. Understanding the complexities of people's lives and perspectives allows activists to

tailor their strategies effectively and build solidarity based on shared understanding and mutual respect. Conscientisation is the transformation from naive to critical awareness of reality. In 1980, it involved micro-level interactions and a factual approach. While a shift in consciousness doesn't immediately lead to direct action, it fosters a consensus crucial for large-scale mobilisation. Just as the masses agreeing to overthrow the dictatorship didn't guarantee a united revolutionary movement, in conscientisation, the masses perceive themselves as conscious subjects, not mere objects.

Vanguard Struggle

The student activists found inspiration in the 'theory of immediate leading political struggle' following the tragic events of the isolated Gwangju massacre in 1980. This theory emerged as a reflection on the withdrawal of demonstrators from other areas to preserve the capacity of the student movement. The strategic expectation was that the students' fierce political struggle would not only strengthen the vanguard struggle within the university but also help the capacity of the people, the subjects of the revolution, to mature.

During the early 1980s, as state violence under the neo-military dictatorship peaked, student activism faced unprecedented repression. While repression against movements produces mixed results, Altbach (2012) argued that while violent repression frequently works in the short run, it sometimes increases unrest and the militancy of the movement later on. By the mid-1980s, Korea's student movement was rapidly radicalised as a military force, and the size and scope of the movement gradually increased. Despite the grave risks involved, including death, the students dedicated themselves to the public good of democracy, rather than seeking personal gain. Scholars widely acknowledge that the self-sacrifice of the student movement profoundly impacted the future participation of the public in the struggle for democratisation, providing a decisive opportunity for the transition to democracy. Alongside the conscientisation movement, daily leading and immediate struggles emerged, aiming to reveal the truth of the Gwangju Uprising and to call for the overthrow of the dictatorship. These efforts were undertaken independently or in coordination with each university, demonstrating the determination and resilience of the student activists in their pursuit of a democratic society. Jin illustrated that the demonstration was major tactic, and the Gwangju Uprising was the key issue to raise.

> *Jin: When we saw the Gwangju Uprising, nobody nor the situation could possibly explain that issue. It was a situation where we constantly let people know that through the demonstrations.*

Informing the truth of the Gwangju Uprising sometimes took intense forms, like protest suicides. Eight students, including martyr Kim Tae-hoon and martyr Park Seon-young, sacrificed their lives from 1981 to February 1987 to expose the regime's violence and US responsibility for the

massacre (Lim, 2016). Among the 441 registered martyrs for democratisation, 135 were resistance suicides (Lim, 2016).

Activists also staged sit-down or arson protests at the U.S. Information Centres in Korea to highlight US involvement in suppressing the Gwangju Uprising. All four main centres were attacked during the 1980s democracy movements, indicating the significance of anti-Americanism as a source of pro-democracy activism (Shin et. al, 2007). This sentiment later fuelled national liberation from American imperialism after 1986. Campus demonstrations, both large and small-scale, also became common during this time. Table 6-1 below shows the trend of resistance tactics over time.

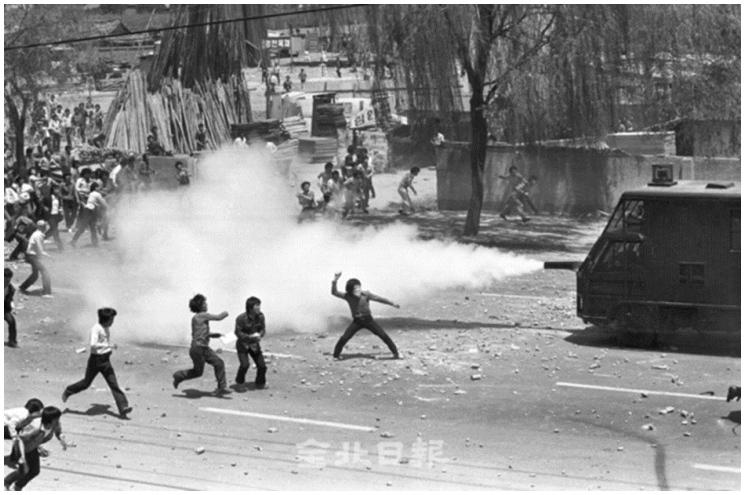
Table 6-1 Main tactics used in protest by political context

1970s	**Percent**	**1980-1987**	**Percent**	**1988-1992**	**Percent**
Demonstration	18.94	Demonstration	23.03	Demonstration	24.19
Declaration	18.85	SMO founding	12.39	Meeting	9.42
Meeting	8.55	Declaration	12.27	Sit-in, take over space	8.93
Requests	8.14	Sit in, take over space	12.27	SMO founding	8.77
Propaganda	7.31	Propaganda	6.76	Parade or march	6.17
Other	38.21	Other	33.28	Other	42.52
Total	**100.00**	**Total**	**100.00**	**Total**	**100.00**

Source: South Korea's Democracy Movement (1970-1993): Stanford Korea democracy project report, 2007

Demonstration has consistently been the most prevalent traditional tactic of resistance, as depicted in the data. After the president Chun declared a state of emergency across the country, police presence increased in university districts which provoked violent form of resistant. Consequently, many participating students were arrested or, in the case of male students, compelled to join the military (Gang et. al, 2017). Image 6-6 displays a typical scene of demonstrations in those days.

Image 6-6 1980 students' demonstration



Source: Geonbook Daily Press, https://www.jjan.kr/article/20201026719124

Upon entering the university, freshmen encountered violent university control, a subpar educational environment, and the harrowing truth of Gwangju. Nearly all university students united in their agreement to overthrow the military dictatorship and developed strong sympathy for the anti-dictatorship democratisation slogan of the student movement (Lee, 2017). Gi illustrated the public sentiment as follows;

> *Gi: The accumulated political situation, and we, well, we knew earlier than others, kept eyes on, and studied and discussed every day. But I think our ordinary friends knew this was an odd country, and something had to be changed.*

During my time in the college of Education, where future secondary teachers were trained, I served as the vice-president and was the sole Undong-Gwon in the faculty of Korean Education (in the college of Education) in 1986. Despite being the only one, I received immense support from my classmates. Most of them had positive sentiments towards my actions, though they couldn't actively participate due to the potential impact on their teaching careers. One of my close friends, coming from a conservative family background, showed support by passing me bread and milk on struggle days, saying, "You know I can't participate. I want to be a high achiever in teaching career, so eat this and fight double for me."

Participating in the vanguard struggle in 1986 carried high risks, but ordinary students sympathised with us. They viewed Undong-Gwons as brave and innocent individuals taking significant risks. The fact that the Undong-Gwons were not questioned about their morality played a decisive role in mobilising the public as a moral force in 1987. However, the boundary to actively join the struggle together remained too high for many of them. Despite their sentiments, they admired the dedication and courage of the Undong-Gwons while navigating the challenges that pursuing the movement entailed.

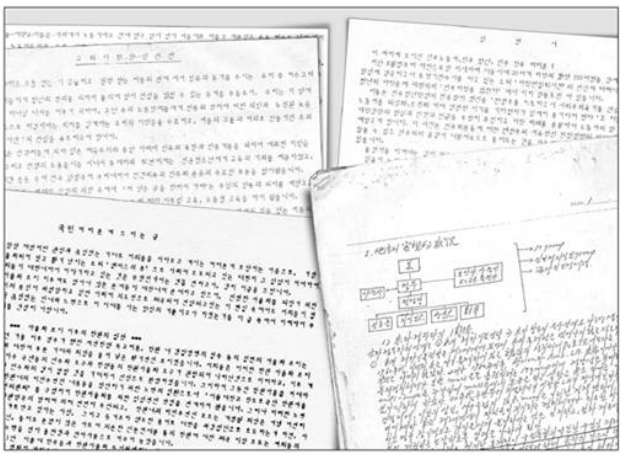
Interaction and communication with mass

During the vanguard era, the interaction and communication with the masses followed a top-down approach, confined within a closed and secretive organisational system. While the conscientisation movement necessitated extensive interaction and communication at the micro-level, it often took the form of leading dialogues to persuade the masses. Bongsoo reminisced about that era, stating the following.

> *Bongsoo: Some intellectual curiosity and superiority … At that moment, as well as the intellectual curiosity, it was the era of being proud of being cleverer, knowing more, and reading more books, that kind of era … I broke them down with logic [when he was implementing new theories in the organisation].*

During that time, Bongsoo described a communication style based on intellectuality. The Undong-Gwons, having engaged in extensive reading and studying of social issues and sciences, had a profound knowledge advantage, which influenced their communication with the masses. As a result, the interaction often felt driven by the Undong-Gwons' perspectives. Participants in the movement acknowledged that the masses were somewhat objectified as mere targets to be "informed" of the truth. Moreover, the lack of digital resources at that time forced the Undong-Gwons to confront the mainstream media, which was controlled by powerful capital and authorities, by relying on hand-produced papers (P) and wallpapers as their means of communication as Image 6-7, 6-8, and 6-9 10 display.

Image 6-7 P in 1984



Souce: Hangyeore Press, Saturday report, https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/590935.html

Image 6-8 Students reading wallpapers

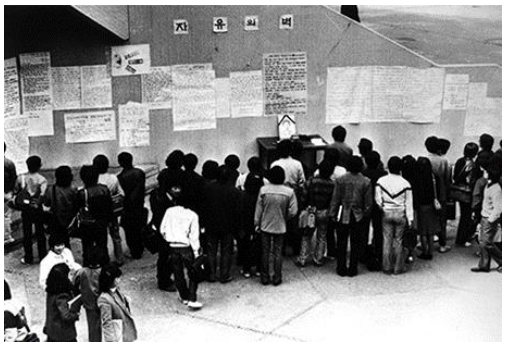
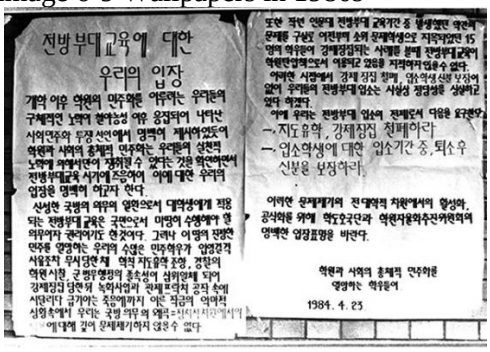


Image 6-9 Wallpapers in 1980s



Source for 11 & 12: Seoul University Press,
http://www.snunews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=16856

Jin stated that they strategically waged a public opinion battle against the big press using this clever approach, which proved to be a unique and powerful means of communication.

> *Jin: At that time, the most frequent way to inform the people was by writing the wallpapers and distributing Ps. Nowadays, such SNS has powerful information dissemination, but at that time, the best things we could do was to write and post the wallpaper and distribute it to the people… At that time, the newspaper was the popular form. Like that, each P was the most powerful tool.*

The creation of P or Wallpaper occurred within a strictly limited and secretive environment, which hindered the inclusion of public opinions or the possibility of receiving feedback. Gi pointed out that the production of Ps and wallpapers lacked the involvement of public opinions.

> *Gi: It was chirashi [Another name for P]. Developing chirashi, making Molotov cocktail, that kind of thing. Or making a placard was really not easily produced by anybody. That's why so-called underground circles shared the roles.*

The only method available to obtain feedback was through observing the crowd and their reactions. Bongsoo mentioned that they collected data by observing the public's responses, but it didn't seem like they actively sought out public opinions during that process.

> *Bongsoo: Well, we had to observe and give statistics. Then, for example, some people folded it [P] carefully and put it in the pocket, some others threw it away without watching any, or the others just watched the title and threw it away … [For example] We considered a successful P if bubbly girls thoroughly read it.*

As evident from the above discussion, during the vanguard struggle era, the Undong-Gwons played the central role in the mobilisation structure and skilfully guided the democratisation movement. The injustice of the military dictatorship was apparent, and the student masses offered unwavering emotional support, even at the risk of their lives.

Yet, due to the oppressive political climate of that time, where distributing Ps could lead to immediate arrest, the scope of the struggle faced significant limitations. Despite persistent and repeated efforts, the movement struggled to gain widespread public visibility. Bongsoo recollects this period as one where "It was only our own struggle." Nevertheless, the military dictatorship failed to halt the determined struggle. Slowly but steadily, the movement continued to grow even as the intensity of repression increased. The Undong-Gwons demonstrated resilience, and their efforts persisted, paving the way for the movement's progression despite the obstacles.

6-3 Emotional sustaining strategies

During the vanguard era, Undong-Gwons faced heavy emotional and financial burdens under the oppressive ruling measures. They found solace in familial support within their respective Fam's T, fostering strong camaraderie among them. Fear emerged as a prominent constraint, impacting their actions, while other negative emotions like scepticism also had to be addressed. Feelings of guilt were identified as a long-lasting negative emotion, but they also relied on the emotional bonds they shared to cope with their frustrations. While positive emotional experiences of activism were shared to uplift each other, negative emotions seemed to be overlooked.

The intensity and significance of their experiences during the 1980s activism were profound, leading some to still be haunted by dreams of that time and, in severe cases, experiencing trauma. Even 35 years later, the fear from that period continues to manifest as Sukyeong attested to in her statement.

> *Sukyeong: I am still haunted by dreams. The combat police sat for distrust check on every corner of the street, I still dream. The other day, I was tortured in a dream.*

In my experience, fear was indeed prevalent, and after witnessing the severe suppression of the demonstrations and the lack of unified resistance from the masses, a sense of defeat occasionally crept in. The continued sacrifices made with little impact on the unyielding dictatorship led to skepticism and doubts like, "Can we truly overthrow the dictatorship? Will our efforts really make a difference?" For me, these questions didn't imply a need for a complete strategy overhaul, but rather served as intuitive reflections on the seemingly endless struggles. Such emotional and cognitive disturbances were not uncommon among Undong-Gwons. The weight of these uncertainties and challenges weighed heavily on the minds of many involved in the movement. Gi expressed his inner conflict and skepticism about the activism as follows;

> *Gi: I never talked about it, but I often thought, "Is this really feasible? And that's all right. This is the right way. This has to be done for the universal lives, but why me?" …Well, I thought sometimes it would be okay if someone else did hard.*

RPs offered personal counselling to juniors who faced such struggles, and they also confided their own concerns with trusted members. Gi specifically mentioned how he shared his burdens with other members in a collective and supportive approach.

> *Gi: When I went through a difficult time, I talked to them [his comrades], that meant solving the problem together.*

Dui-Puri and other social gatherings involving alcohol played a significant role in providing respite from these burdens. Alcohol holds a significant place in Korean culture and socialisation. As Cakar and Kim (2015, p. 289) note, "Alcohol consumption is not only a matter of taste but also a part of the socialization process in Korean culture. Moreover, this aspect of the culture affects organisations, and drinking plays an important role in workplace socialization." Therefore, it is common for Koreans to come together and share drinks after completing daily tasks to unwind and relax. Park emphasised that drinking alcohol served as a major stress management strategy for the Undong-Gwons during those challenging times.

> *Park: It was almost alcohol by that time. We relieved the stress while we drank. I bought a meal and alcohol to the juniors, that's it.*

As Gi mentioned in the previous chapter, Undong-Gwons didn't openly express their negative emotions within the group settings. Instead, we tried not to dwell too much on the negative feelings and often used humour, even making jokes about ourselves and the major political figures in the dictatorship regime. Park also recalls that our Dui-puri were filled with pleasant memories, providing a much-needed break from the intensity of our struggles.

> *Park: Well, it was challenging to prepare, study, and conduct seminars, but the Dui-Puri and that kind of time was fun a lot. Yes, we drank rice wine with fun at that time. Yes, that was really fun.*

Sanga also recalled that caring words and silly jokes helped to ease the tensions.

> *Sanga: The [care] method, well, I think it was a warm word. We comforted each other and "Did you have a meal? Did you do something?" like that. It's tiny talk, but wasn't that empowering each other? I think so, just worry about each other's safety and warm words … And because I like pranks, I told silly jokes. Just something we could use to ease our tension.*

Reflecting on the struggles of that time, we exchanged positive energy during debriefing sessions, especially when discussing the inspiring heroic actions of our comrades. We would share positive messages to remind ourselves of the reasons why immediate change seemed elusive, yet we remained determined to keep fighting. Singing struggle songs played a significant role in stress

management. These songs carried strong social messages, providing relief and fostering a sense of solidarity among us and our fellow comrades. The strong bonds and camaraderie formed among students who shared emotions, learning, and struggles within their organisations were indeed powerful and enduring (Seo et. al, 2017). Sukyeong described the comradeship like this.

> *Sukyeong: They also were the activists, then after I realised that when I saw that person on the street accidentally, it was so so so good and thrilling even though we couldn't greet each other … Not only me, that person also was living hard like that, it was so glad.*

The Undong-Gwons had a distinctive outfit that made them easily identifiable, and Sukyeong shared how encountering a fellow Undong-Gwon on the street filled her with positive energy. Jun noted that the emotional burdens of being an Undong-Gwon couldn't be shared with just anyone but only with their comrades.

> *Jun: Like that, with their own sense of justice and sense of duty, there were so many pressures and feelings of fear. However, not many of them could discuss [about it] and comfort [each other]. This 'misery loves company'; they were the comrades who were the people who acted together.*

Relief and respite strategies took various cultural forms, such as warm words, jokes, alcohol, and singing. These activities played a crucial role in fostering a strong sense of comradeship among the collective beings, empowering them to endure the challenges of state violence and oppression. This highlights the significance of positive emotional experiences in sustaining activist efforts, even when political goals may not be immediately achieved, as Fominaya (2010) argued.

However, it's important to note that while these strategies provided empowerment, personal fears were not easily overcome. Self-discipline at the micro-level became essential to persist in the struggle despite the emotional burdens. Though not extensively covered in previous chapters, this aspect of self-discipline played a critical role in the ongoing resilience of the Undong-Gwons. Gi reflected on this:

> *Gi: For example, if I went home alone, I felt that I would be weakened. I lived in Bucheon then, but I deliberately stayed around the university. In my heart, I might still have the temptation [for a comfortable life] ... like the ordinary students who generally entered the university and studied well and got a good job. Well, I stayed with the friends [other Undong-Gwons] deliberately because what if I followed their way [non-activist's life] when I stayed home alone.*

In his pursuit of motivation and solidarity, he found solace in the support of others, choosing not to isolate himself at home. Similarly, as an RP, I always positioned myself at the forefront, not just due to my responsibility for my juniors but also because I couldn't allow myself to cowardly

retreat in front of those who trusted and followed me during protests. Nevertheless, I must admit that my personal experience has been dominated by overwhelming fear when exposed to violence. Fear, as a ruling measure of violent states, is deeply ingrained without needing to consult the literature.

As my study progresses, it becomes evident that self-discipline deserves academic attention. This aspect is actively researched in the field of leadership, as noted by renowned leadership expert John C. Maxwell (1995), who quoted that "Great leaders always have self-discipline - without exception." Interestingly, this quality carries significant social influence and is vital for social activists. National Democratic Institute (NDI, 2016) also stated that activist should be convincible to the public as the people who stand for true ethics and ideals of society. Therefore, while somewhat diverging from the subject of my research, I propose that activists should strive to embody ideal leadership and live by the values the movement seeks to realise.

Guilt is another prominent negative emotion experienced by Undong-Gwons. I recall a close former Undong-Gwon who was arrested, and he carried the burden of not being able to protect his organisation and comrades. As a result, his organisation faced significant trouble, with members disintegrating and being arrested. He blamed himself for the organisational issues and eventually decided to quit activism. His feelings of guilt have persisted throughout his life. Similarly, Sanga shared that one of her seniors, who played a role in her arrest back in 1986, continues to apologise to her even in the present year of 2022. These lingering feelings of guilt demonstrate the profound impact of past experiences on the emotional well-being of the activists. Bongsoo stated;

Bongsoo: Yes, I can see many around me who have those feelings of guilty.

Bongsoo emphasised that feelings of guilt were not uncommon among Undong-Gwons. The oppressive methods used against them during that time often led to situations where they couldn't protect their organisation and comrades from torture and persecution, resulting in lasting self-blame. These negative experiences and emotions had psychological impacts, including traumatisation. Unfortunately, there was a lack of professional psychological care available for Undong-Gwons. Activists enduring the intense and prolonged period of absolute control faced numerous heavy emotions. It is suggested that implementing a professional psychological care system would be beneficial for individual well-being and sustaining their struggles.

6-4 Achievement and limitation

The vanguard era played a crucial role in paving the way for political opportunities, especially in the face of high repression and limited capacity to mobilise the masses. During this period, various assets were cultivated within the social movement, laying the foundation for the significant struggles that took place in 1987.

Through intense and self-sacrificing vanguard struggles and the conscientisation movement, public awareness of social issues escalated, leading to a surge in new students joining the Undong-Gwon organisation (Gang et. al, 2017; Kim, 2017). Additionally, the structured recruiting and training system strengthened the underground organisations, making them resilient against any form of oppression (Gang et. al, 2017). Sanga aptly captured this transformation in her own words.

> *Sanga: Even if [the government] tried to disintegrate, it was not the organisations that would be disbanded to that extent. Because even if the government broke them [activists' organisations] down, they could rise again and again. Even though one or two disappeared, it wasn't the system that would collapse actually.*

During this period, the Undong-Gwons' culture became a prominent phenomenon, while ordinary university students were being educated in collective resistance, expressing their emotions collectively, and developing symbols of their collective identity and messages. These practices became valuable assets for the university students' collective action towards democracy in 1987. The use of Ps and Wallpapers to convey messages became a widespread culture within universities, and in 1987, the public themselves produced pickets and placards through autonomous discussions.

Amidst the ongoing struggles and conscientisation movement, a consensus emerged among university students that the dictatorship must be overthrown. Spontaneously, left-leaning academic societies led by the students were formed. Advanced public members, who were consciously awake and crucial for mass mobilisation, were identified based on their individual characteristics. The self-sacrificing struggles upheld the purity of the movement, and the leadership of the Undong-Gwons gained widespread acceptance, evident from the General Student Assemblies in major universities being controlled by Undong-Gwons during that era (Gang et al., 2017; Seo et al., 2017). This proven leadership led the Undong-Gwons to take control of student assemblies and academic societies at all levels in 1987.

The relentless protests by university students, especially during the visits of Pope Paul II and the 1986 Asian Games, forced the government to withdraw its resident police and enter an appeasement phase in 1984. This resulted in the disbanding of the University's Student Protection Corps and the revival of student councils (Gang et. al, 2017). The continuous struggles helped ease university control, providing wider spaces for Undong-Gwons to interact and communicate with the masses. Although there were heated debates among the Undong-Gwons on how to participate in and utilise the student council, eventually a popular line emerged, and the student councils played a decisive role as self-governing bodies for organising and mobilising the student masses (Lee, 2017).

As the protests turned increasingly violent and demanded significant sacrifices, the barriers for public participation in the struggle became too high. The citizenry also seemed sceptical about the student movement, leading to the realisation that the leading struggle had its limitations in encouraging public participation and expanding its reach. This prompted a need for self-reflection among Undong-Gwons to renew their relationship with the public. Sanga highlights that the existing tactics and strategies had limitations, and there was little support from ordinary citizens.

> *Sanga: Yes, there was subjugation, and the most important thing was the public response. The citizens' responses were actually not enormous…. [The demonstrations] were suppressed within 3 minutes [and public] had no interest… Hey, think about when we were at the demonstration. How many of us were there? Every day, the same people, wasn't it? We were the only people being serious (laughing).*

Gi asserted that the public should be the base of Undong-Gwons' action and hinted the relationship between the vanguards-led and masses-followed had to be renegotiated.

> *Gi: If there is no base [public support], that base has to be established first, and then there is someone or some triggers which enable the water to flow in that direction. When there is no base, even though one or two out of hundreds shout hard, only a few people will follow that. That's the basic.*

During this time, the Undong-Gwon organisations leading the struggle operated secretly, centred on small-closed circles, which hindered efficient communication between lower-level and upper-level organisations (Jeon, 2006). With the increasing number of new Undong-Gwons and their expanding roles, the existing Fam structure became less systematic and efficient, limiting some members' active participation in the student masses (Lee, 2017). Additionally, the closed-circle organisational approach was inadequate to engage with various left-leaning academic societies (Kim, 2017).

The student masses' awareness increased during the appeasement phase, which also provided them with opportunities to utilise various open spaces. Consequently, a need arose to alter their approach to participation and communication. In 1986, the May 5 Incheon Incident, a significant rally, turned violent and triggered a backlash. Later that year, the Kondae Incident resulted in the arrest of 1,288 Undong-Gwons during an occupation. These events prompted introspection regarding the leading vanguard struggle within the movement. As a result, the mass struggle line emerged with the banner of 'Into the public,' demanding changes in organisational structure, operational strategies, and tactics of struggle. By the end of 1986, this approach had a sweeping impact on the nationwide student movement.

These events demonstrate that repressive control methods cannot effectively suppress persistent social movements. The tireless challenges by activists led to a decline in the state's repressive capacity and weakened its legitimacy. This shift in legitimacy provided more and better opportunities for activists, enabling them to be more receptive and proactive in their approach (Poletta, 1999) and access better networks and resources. Bongsoo suggested “If you don’t give up and fight to the end, the opportunity will come.” The lack of legitimacy in Chun’s military regime was not a natural occurrence but rather a product of constant challenges by activists. Therefore, this study proposes that political opportunities are not fixed structures beyond the control of individuals but rather created as a result of the proactive efforts of the activists.

CHAPTER 7: THE ERA OF "INTO THE PUBLIC"

In the preceding chapter, we delved into the dynamics of underground activism during the early and mid-1980s in the Korean context, discussing its achievements and limitations. This chapter explores the transformation of Undong-Gwons revolutionary movement as it expanded its reach aboveground, setting the stage for the successful mass mobilisation of the momentous struggle in 1987. Here, we focus on the strategies and tactics employed by Undong-Gwons to renegotiate their relationship with the public, thus forging a collective identity that allowed university students to spearhead the social movements as a formidable collective intelligence within the mid-80s Korean socio-political landscape.

The turning point arose with the sexual torture incident at the Bucheon police station toward the end of 1986, which saw an increase in innocent victims under the military dictatorship, and subsequently intensified the demand for democratisation in 1987. All pro-democracy forces united against the repressive government, leading to sporadic yet large-scale struggles across the nation and from all walks of life. Within this context, the popular struggle line of "Into the public" emerged, acknowledging the limitations of the leading vanguard approach and making a significant impact on the student movement throughout the country in 1986. The core of this new struggle line was centred on organising the public as a partner in the movement, rather than treating them as mere objects to be guided. The implications of the public struggle position were designed to lower the boundary to position shown by Undong-Gwons and to adopt more inclusive practices. This involved dissolving the existing underground-centred student movement and taking control of various student self-government associations that had been opened during the appeasement phase. Consequently, Undong-Gwons' strategy and tactics underwent a revolutionary shift, and university students emerged as the most potent organised force within the pro-democracy camp, leading the charge in the great struggle of 1987.

Within this chapter, I delve into the multifaceted implications of ‘Into the public’ as a strategic and operational dimension of mass mobilisation. This study also explores how university students shaped their collective identity, uniting under a shared purpose to generate collective action within the contemporary movement landscape of 1987 Korean socio-political and cultural context. x

7-1 Implications of "Into the Public"

The genesis of the ‘Into the public’ strategy can be traced back to a critical analysis of the political landscape during the appeasement phase, wherein Undong-Gwons found themselves relying on the student council and the vanguard-style struggle. However, despite their persistent efforts, this approach failed to garner widespread support from the broader society. Consequently, Undong-Gwons underwent a revolutionary transformation that encompassed every aspect, from organisational form and struggle strategy to culture and language, all with the aim of connecting

with the public on a deeper level. This section closely examines the strategic shifts in organisational structure, communication and interaction, and struggle tactics that propelled Undong-Gwons' successful mass mobilisation.

Organisational changes to organise the masses

In late 1986, despite the apprehension of potential police exposure for all members, a significant reorganisation within Undong-Gwons took place, focusing on organising the masses. In Inha University, a similar restructuring occurred, where three out of the four existing Fams were amalgamated and reorganised alongside the respective colleges (Rho, 2022). The primary goal of this reorganisation was to strengthen the connection with the public and broaden the base of support from the end of 1986. However, breaking away from the past RP-centred point organisation and transforming it into a more battle-ready mass organisation, where the leadership roles were shared among those in charge of struggle, propaganda, education (RP), and the student council, proved to be a challenging endeavour (Rho, 2022). After overcoming numerous challenges, the activists finally organised themselves into disciplined ranks, with each member diligently striving to gain control over student councils and academic societies at various levels. Gi said:

> *Gi: At the end 1986, we discussed going into the public more actively. Then, we should have joined the student council and become the president of the faculties or the colleges.*

Gi vividly described the action directions during that era, guided by the banner of 'Into the public.' This approach proved to be remarkably successful, as most student councils and academic societies came under the influence of Undong-Gwons or the advanced masses who supported their cause. Furthermore, the Undong-Gwons actively encouraged the organisation of consciously advanced masses, leading to the emergence of numerous progressive circles and academic societies, including cultural clubs, all championed by Undong-Gwons.

These newly formed groups tailored their interventions based on the unique characteristics of different majors or hobbies, allowing them to connect with and engage a diverse range of individuals. Moreover, the learning curriculum incorporated progressive theories that aligned with the specific attributes of each college. Gi articulated this growing trend as follows;

> *Gi: Then, I don't know about other places, but in the case of the Catholic students' association, so-called liberation theology, not simply Christ but the real being that he approached people was actually for populace [lower class]. He came to enrich their lives as human beings … We included that in the curriculum [in the Catholic students' association].*

From my perspective, the college of Education needed to leverage the unique characteristics of its students, many of whom would become teachers, while also acknowledging their conservative leanings, where Undong-Gwons were a rarity. Given that there were only three active Undong-Gwons in the entire college, it was clear that we lacked sufficient manpower to solely control the student council. Consequently, we strategically placed dedicated students, identified as the advanced masses during the vanguard era, as presidents in various faculties and the colleges itself. Simultaneously, I established an academic circle named "Pedagogy," aiming to initiate an educational movement by harnessing the distinctive attributes of the college of Education. Moreover, an academic society was formed, uniting influential juniors within the faculty of Korean Education. The curriculum for Pedagogy were carefully developed, delving into critical questions about the existing education system and extending to explore Paulo Freire's "the Pedagogy of the Oppressed" and other progressive theories. This approach, combined with the organisation led by the advanced masses, became the driving force behind mobilising the college of Education. It challenged the dominant ruling ideology and presented progressive theories to the public with diverse grounds for overthrowing the dictatorship. Reducing the boundary between activists and non-activists opened the possibility for mass participation in social movements, albeit not as a military force armed with revolutionary ideology.

In this manner, all members of the organisation actively utilised legal spaces [aboveground] and expanded their interactions with the public. However, the underground aspect of the movement remained crucial, serving as a structure to nurture key activists and make important decisions. Sanga concisely expressed this sentiment, acknowledging that while Undong-Gwons dominated the student councils, the underground continued to play a significant role in the struggle's continuity.

> *Sanga: So, we [top panels of the underground] discussed every night, then down the decisions to the bottom. And we controlled the student councils …. We took over the president of the student councils of colleges and the general student council. Then we were able to organise the legal mass struggles. However, important decisions were still made by the underground. So, they [the underground] discussed and enforced the rallies and the street demonstrations.*

Sanga also recollected that the underground system was an essential and effective strategy during that period in Korea when social movements faced severe suppression. Under repressive regimes, rebellious actions were met with punitive measures, leaving oppositional actors with no choice but to operate underground to evade harsh persecution (Chen & Moss, 2019). From my own memories, I recall that key activists were constantly at risk of arrest, detention, and being on the wanted list. Given this reality, the underground form of organisation became imperative for the

continuous and cohesive functioning of the student movement, even as we expanded our aboveground organisational boundaries. The organisation, operating consistently underground, served as the central vehicle for systematically coordinating a wide range of mass mobilisations. Without such continuity, these mobilisations might have become lax or fragmented into isolated incidents. However, in the digital era, we have observed instances where collective action can be coordinated even in the absence of central social movement organisations, often resulting in significantly reduced costs (Waker & Martin, 2019).

The essence of ‘Into the public’ lied in moving away from Undong-Gwon-centric dialogue and embracing interactions that empowered the public to be active decision-makers. This approach brought about revolutionary changes in communication and interaction. Two-way communication between activists and the masses became the norm, promoting voluntary decision-making by the masses. To effectively persuade the public, Undong-Gwons made a tactical shift in their messaging, abandoning extreme language that felt disconnected from everyday speech. Bongsoo, in reflecting on the vanguard style, highlighted the significance of this tactical change in conveying messages to the masses during The 1987 movement.

> *Bongsoo: Our methods were only our debates and stories, but we couldn't get the ordinary students' support. I was deeply thinking about the reason, and terminologies and other things were too radical and had a sense of heterogeneity [disconnect from daily language]. …. So, previously, the Ps, which typically started with "Students comrades who are eager to the democratisation~" were changed into "My mother used to talk to me like this~" I insisted that the languages used had to be modified that way.*

The production of Ps was tailored to evoke emotions in a manner easily understandable to the masses. Emotion plays a crucial role in social movements, acting as "the glue of solidarity and what mobilises conflict" (Jasper, 1998, p. 399). It is viewed strategically as means to foster both micro-mobilisation and macro-mobilisation. Whittier (2001) draws from Arlie Hochschild's 1983 perspective that activists' public emotional expressions aim to influence the emotional responses of the masses to promote movement goals. In her study, Whittier (2001) also found that the emotional display of resistance can evoke similar feelings in others, fostering a sense of solidarity. Kane (2001) revealed that emotions are often conceptualised and described symbolically and metaphorically. These emotional narratives contribute to building solidarity within the movement. Gi expressed the necessity of changing terminology because the conventional Undong-Gwon terms were inadequate in conveying their meaning to the masses. In essence, the deliberate use of emotionally resonant messages and the transformation of terminology were vital aspects of ‘Into the public,’ serving to evoke public empathy and strengthen the sense of collective purpose within the movement.

> *Gi: It should anyways be accepted by the people … For that reason, the words we use, in the tactical term, if we speak in a language we know alone, are meaningless. We should use so-called public-understood languages and actions.*

Furthermore, to enhance the readability of written materials, diverse techniques were incorporated into the Ps and wallpapers. These tactics bolstered communication with the public and garnered greater empathy for the activism. Bongsoo observed that Undong-Gwons began to embrace cultural forms as means to approach the masses more closely.

> *Bongsoo: The half top of the Ps was suggested to be written in moderate terms and contents. I sought super soft words and suggested drawing cartoons at the bottom half. Making the students read the P up to the end is more important by drawing their attention to the comic cartoons… On purpose, I kept telling them to lower the level [up to the public's eyes]. "Please make sure that people do not feel repulsed when they have finished reading, but make sure to convey the right message." … supply Ps with many cartoons or pictures and short explanations. So refine it [the language in use] and broaden [our boundary].*

In the case of Ps, the complex manual production process in the technology-limited environment of 1987 made it difficult for the public to create them on their own. However, by increasing the approachability of these materials, the masses gradually began to produce wallpapers themselves during the same year.

The intense criticism directed at the government, which had lost its legitimacy due to the death of innocent students and its attempts to prolong the dictatorship through constitutional measures, garnered immense sympathy from the public. The movement to refuse classes and final exams in universities became a powerful expression of the struggle for democracy against the dictatorship. The slogan 'Abolition Hoheon[8], Overthrow the Dictatorship' succinctly captured the essence of the cause and was easily understood and embraced by the public, in contrast to the more convoluted slogans of the Vanguard era, such as 'Let's overthrow the military fascist that suppresses the survival of the populace.'

During June 1987, the desire for democratisation surged within universities like never before. Even in traditionally conservative college of Education, a strong determination emerged, with students feeling the need to take actions. For the collective refusal of classes and final exams in the June Uprising, Undong-Gwons aimed to minimise visible intervention and instead encouraged the masses to engage in bottom-up decision-making. Even if progress was slow, the emphasis was

[8] Hoheon: Keep constitute with the provision of indirect presidential election.

on arriving at conclusions through a democratic measure. Bongsoo recalled his order for mass-led decision making as follows.

> *Bongsoo: Everybody knows who Undong-Gwons are. Never speak first. If you stand up and reach your fist high, then leavers will occur [Some people will leave and won't participate] ... If you push the debate in one direction, some of the study worms will leave the seat with the thinking of "Obviously [Undong-Gwons]." So, wait and be patient until the end and make the decision with the cliff-hanging game…utilise the advanced and trustworthy ordinary students. Pass the activists' point of view to them and let them talk with their ideas. Monitor the discussion atmosphere up to the end carefully and put in a secret ballot for decision-making. Never count with raised hands or via agitation. People cannot leave because they voted… I said, "Even though you are tired and bored with the process of speech and voting while other people are joining the rally already, never stand out but take the form of being spontaneous by the masses.*

He described how Undong-Gwons indirectly intervened by utilising the advanced masses identified during the Vanguard era. My approach to achieving collective decision-making in the college of Education followed a two-track strategy. Firstly, I mobilised the members of the 'Pedagogy' group, engaging in preliminary discussions with them to understand the current situation and the role of university students in driving social change. Encouraging active participation, I urged them to join discussions with other faculty members. Concurrently, I held individual meetings with advanced and influential students from the college of Education who were already disillusioned with the violence of the military regime. They believed that overthrowing the dictatorship was inevitable and demanded action. Acknowledging their sentiments, I provided them with diverse information to expand the scope of discussion. I deliberately chose not to attend faculty discussions for collective refusal of classes and exams, yet all six faculties in the college of Education eventually reached a collective decision to refuse and participate in the rally. Afterward, several students from the faculty of Korean Education, to which I belonged, approached me. Although most of them were supportive of the Undong-Gwon, they used to hesitate to join the demonstration due to fear. Nevertheless, they voluntarily came to me, shared the discussion's outcomes, and asked me to help draft a statement. Collaborating with them, we crafted a wallpaper representing the faculty's position. Post-June Uprising, whenever political situations were shaken by events like presidential elections or national unification issues, they continued to hold discussions and organise their positions autonomously, without excessive needing my intervention. Barton (2002) argued that public participatory procedures in decision-making tend to be excessively formal and slow process, however, public participation promotes the legitimacy and credibility in eyes of public. Therefore, the decisions made by public participation can create more implementable and sustainable actions.

Framing, whether "diagnostic," "prognostic," or "motivational" (Snow, Vliegenthart, & Ketelaars, 2019, p.392), ultimately depends on how the public is approached and persuaded through a collective understanding of the world (Hauwaert, 2020). To gain broad public support during the framing process, it must be articulated with careful consideration of persuasive language, emotions, and cultural context. A public-friendly approach proved not only effective in conveying the message but also aided the masses in evolving as active participants in the struggle and fostering solidarity.

Tactical and strategical implication of 'Into the public'

The tactical and strategic implications of 'Into the public' involved popularising the existing leading struggles while employing various approaches to lower the threshold for mass participation. Leading struggles, such as bloodstaining, fasting, shaving heads, and street propaganda, continued under the guidance of the student council executives (Heo, 2017). However, new tactics were introduced to enhance mass involvement, including adjusting the form of the struggles and encouraging participation from mass-led circles.

To increase transparency and engagement, all struggles were organised openly through the student councils, with directions discussed and provided by the underground. For instance, a ceremony was held to commemorate martyr Park Jong-cheol's death, where advanced members of the public and I each wrote a letter with their blood, symbolising their commitment to democracy. I cut my finger with the knife to write the blood letter, and unstoppable bleeding on my finger provoked a few classmates approach for the first aid. In this process, I felt that the public had received a powerful message, and we marched together through the campus holding the blood letters in front. Blood writing considered as the ordinary ritual in political protest in East Asia, which inspires both performers and their audiences (Yu, 2020). As it promotes high level of self-sacrificial commitment (Yu, 2020), the solemn emotional masses promoted a so-called "collective effervescence" in Durkheim's term, promoted a high moral density. Commemorative events and protests were held in universities and on the streets with visible increasing of public participation.

Despite facing violent suppression from riot police, the protesters refrained from unnecessary violence and adopted a defensive stance. Diversifying their methods of struggle, they actively attracted social groups connected to specific issues to maximise public spontaneity. For example, the 5.18 Gwangju Uprising held special significance for members of the Honam Village Association, as Gwangju is in the Honam province.

> *Bongsoo: I would like to discuss the struggle to commemorate the 5.18 Gwangju Uprising. I proactively involved the 800 members of the Honam Village Association, and their spontaneity was demonstrated at a maximum level.*

During the period following the death of Park Jong-cheol, the voluntary participation of the public was still somewhat hesitant, and struggles for commemorating 5.18 Gwangju Uprising continued in the form of a vanguard-style approach. However, despite these challenges, he successfully mobilised a group of 800 protesters by transforming the demonstration into an identity-driven movement, a significant increase compared to the usual 200 attendees. The consistent presence of around 1,000 participants after that marked a notable achievement.

Many individuals around Undong-Gwons were joining the protest for the first time in this period, seeking guidance on how to participate effectively. To encourage the maximum participation spontaneity of the advanced masses, appropriate responsibilities were assigned to them. By empowering them with specific roles, their engagement and involvement in the movement were enhanced. This approach not only strengthened their sense of ownership but also contributed to the overall success and impact of the struggle. Bongsoo's reflection highlights the substantial involvement of the advanced masses, who were entrusted with significant responsibilities, and their strong trust in the leadership of the Undong-Gwons.

> *Bongsoo: For example, we named the non-Undong-Gwons as the president of the Circle Federation. And then, since he took the responsible role, he expressed a great sense of responsibility. He rang me in the dark night and said, "What do I have to do with this now? I am so worried about it." Then I responded, "Don't worry too much about it. Whatever the materials you need, I'll make all for you." Then he said, "I've never done a public speech." And I said, "No need [to have pressure for] public speech." I developed the draft and sent him, "Look at this. And speak according to your thinking like talking to your friends, comfortably."*

It becomes evident that the activists played a vital role in fostering the growth of the advanced masses as leaders throughout the process. The delegation of responsibilities to the advanced masses was carefully aligned with their unique specialties and personalities. According to Bongsoo's argument, providing the public with opportunities to showcase their talents encouraged much more voluntary participation, proving to be more effective than merely planning the movement itself.

> *Bongsoo: The spontaneity of those people was extensively demonstrated. Among them, if somebody is good at calligraphy, then with calligraphy, or if somebody is good at drawing, then with drawing, they melted that kind of various specialties into [the struggle]. It was very surprising, and I was very happy about its enormous effects.*

This approach not only empowered the advanced masses but also contributed to the overall success and dynamism of the movement, as their individual skills and abilities were harnessed in

a collective effort. The reciprocal trust and collaboration between Undong-Gwons and the advanced masses were instrumental in advancing the cause of the movement.

By providing the masses with opportunities to utilise their talents and assigning them roles that align with their personalities, their spontaneity is maximised. In 1987, the movement deliberately avoided unnecessary violence and instead utilised various symbols, rituals, and cultural elements for protesting that were easily accessible to the public. These strategies facilitated the quantitative expansion of the struggle. The masses learned a fighting culture, including a few fighting songs and how to shout slogans, contributing to their rapid growth and empowerment, with the support of the Undong-Gwons. Ordinary masses witnessed their friends, rather than Undong-Gwons, participating in protests, receiving powerful messages through symbols and rituals. This allowed them to engage in low-level resistance, bringing the masses one step closer to the great struggle in June.

Through reorganisation and dedicated efforts to fight alongside the public, on June 15th, just before the end-term exams, an impressive 12,000 out of 16,000 Inha University students organised a large-scale demonstration for the anti-dictatorship democracy struggle (Rho, 2022). The success of this demonstration can be attributed to the inclusive and empowering approach that resonated with the public and led to their active and passionate participation in the movement (Rho, 2022).

Moreover, starting from June 1987, the leadership of the public also came to the forefront. As a large number of students took to the streets day and night, coordination became essential. To achieve this, Bongsoo states that a systemic division of roles was organised with guidance from individuals who had military experience in coordinating and controlling situations.

> *Bongsoo: [With the advice of] people with military experience also created the so-called Situation Room. Something like, we learned a lot of things from them which we could utilise inside the organisational form at that moment. For example, some female Undong-Gwons were appointed as the situation reporter. They made up their face with heavy makeup like a bar girl and [reported to the Situation Room] "We are in front of the Jemoolpo station. Please send more Molotov cocktails and this and that."*

He illustrated that active input from the public increased, resulting in effective organising and co-ordinating the mobilised public. This approach ensured effective leadership and management of the mass mobilisation, allowing the movement to progress cohesively and efficiently. Since then, university students have continued to be at the forefront of the democratisation movement, serving as the most powerful subgroup in the struggle.

As discussed in the Pre-1987 and The 1987 eras, the identity of the Undong-Gwon leading the student movement is not fixed. In the Pre-1987 era, they functioned as vanguards, taking on a leading role and raising societal issues through intense struggles. However, in 1987, their role shifted to supporting the public, enabling the movement to become a mass-led struggle in the future. Tilly (1998, p. 478) describes identities used in political claim-making as contingent relationships that change with shifting political networks, opportunities, and strategies. To create a favourable political and social environment, continuous struggle is essential at each stage, and the strategies employed will evolve according to the changing identity. The 1980 democratisation movement in Korea exemplifies the co-evolving relationship between identity and struggle strategy.

7-2 How did university student construct their collective identity in 1987

In the preceding section, the discussion centred on how the Undong-Gwons effectively mobilised university students through their mass-friendly strategies. By the end of May 1987, the National Movement Headquarter to establish a democratic constitution (Gookbon) had been launched, and it played a pivotal role in uniting various democratisation forces. This movement orchestrated simultaneous struggles throughout the country (Seo et al., 2017). Notably, the university students of the June Uprising emerged as a formidable and leading faction within the democratisation movement, acting collectively as a powerful force. In this chapter, the focus shifts to examining how university students managed to sustain their influential collective actions and gain public support, primarily by forming a strong collective identity. The student movement's exceptional strength is placed within the context of institutional, social, cultural, and historical factors. Each of these themes plays a crucial role in laying the groundwork for the construction of the students' collective identity and their successful mass mobilisation. This section, therefore, discusses how university students were able to inspire solidarity and encourage bystander participation by constructing their collective identity in a way of creating positive sentiment publicly. Additionally, I discuss their collective identity as the leading force of contentious repertoires during June Uprising.

Genuine and brave youth

Being a youth played a crucial role in shaping the collective identity of university students, enabling them to mobilise and gain public trust. Korean Confucianism exerted a significant influence on the ethical consciousness of Koreans, emphasising moral perfection and viewing morally upright individuals as ideals (Park, 2013). Consequently, moral victory held great importance in determining the success of social movements in Korea, as Confucian values demanded high moral standards (Kim, 2017).

Despite strict government control over the press, which led to the exaggeration and distortion of protests to fuel anti-communist sentiments, the purity of the student movement itself remained unquestioned by most citizens (Seo et al., 2017). The moral triumphs of the students stemmed from their innocence and bravery, transcending political and economic interests. They were perceived as earnest and courageous young individuals, contributing to the creation of a public consensus on democratisation. This perception of youth in Korea at that time played a pivotal role in legitimising the students' struggle. Kim and Yang (2022) argued that the students' identity as youth provided them with opportunities to genuinely pursue the public interest without being swayed by personal motives. Such youth-led social movements have been a tradition in developing countries since the Russian Bolshevik Revolution (Kim & Yang, 2022). Additionally, in less democratic countries, students tended to articulate broader visions due to their youthful idealism and impatience for change (Altbach & Luescher, 2018).

Sanga highlighted that the students' courage to strive for an ideal society stemmed from their youth, which afforded them political and economic freedom to experiment and learn through trial and error. This sense of youthful liberation empowered them to envision and pursue transformative change in society.

> *Sanga: I think it's the young zeal. Because when you start to get older, you begin to look around and you have to look after your family. These things exist … so I think it was like that in those days. One of the things about being young is that we constantly challenge and shout, and even if we fall and fall, we can get up again.*

The consensus among all interview participants was that their great courage during that time stemmed from their youth. Being young and unburdened by economic or familial responsibilities enabled them to take on powerful forces without seeking personal gain. This demonstration of fearlessness portrayed university students as innocent, brave individuals, selflessly engaging in actions that others might not dare to undertake.

According to Park, the public sentiment towards the self-sacrificing university student activism was overwhelmingly positive.

> *Park: The university students at that time, university students, could get a job well [for a comfortable life], so it was something worth living for. I think, as they sacrificed their vested interest, the citizens showed their positive sentiments to the kind of fighting and devoted struggle.*

Their willingness to stand up and fight for what they believed in garnered admiration and support from the public. The students' actions were perceived as a testament to their dedication and a reflection of their genuine commitment to social change. Consequently, a public consensus

emerged, driven by curiosity and emotion, as people pondered the reasons behind the fervent and courageous actions of young university students. Sanga indicates that as follows:

> *Sanga: People thought that there should be something when the young kids are doing that, and such little ones came out for [protest]*

This became a pivotal question that ignited overwhelming support for the democratisation movement. The public's fascination with the students' determination and fearlessness fuelled an explosive surge of backing for their cause, contributing significantly to the momentum of the movement.

According to Altbach (as cited in Luescher, 2018), student activism can wield significant effectiveness in countries where the government lacks legitimacy. In this context, the legitimacy of student activism itself becomes a crucial consideration. The university students, with their collective identity of youth, garnered substantial political legitimacy by fearlessly challenging those in power and speaking the truth. While some may view the innocence and courage of modern youth as mere recklessness, this paper contends that young people have the potential to be a powerful driving force behind social change. Given appropriate opportunities and trust, young individuals can evolve into a major force at the forefront of leading social change. Their potential impact should not be underestimated, and nurturing their capabilities can lead to meaningful and positive transformations in society.

University students – the intellectual elites

In 1987, the status of university students differed significantly from their present-day counterparts. While today's universities are often seen as gateways to employment, back then, Korean university students held the esteemed position of being the intellectual elite with a strong political voice. They perceived a profound social responsibility to address the nation's crises as the intellectual leaders of society. This sense of social responsibility was shaped by complex social, cultural, and historical factors, moulding the Korean intelligentsia's critical outlook on society during that time. This part of the discussion delves into these contextual elements and how they motivated the students' mobilisation and garnered social respect for their claims.

According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Korea Educational Development Institute, in 1985, the number of four-year university students reached 931,884. When accounting for two-year colleges and other types of institutions, the total number of tertiary students was 1,365,644 in a population of over 40 million. However, only 20 percent of university entrance rates provided a promising future for these students. As a result, university students were seen as a selective and small group of intellectual elites. According to Luescher (2018), Altbach described universities as factories of new ideas, providing students with ample opportunities to

explore, debate, and mobilise around new concepts. Jin articulates that university students, as intellectuals, were in the best position to access and disseminate information.

> *Jin: Intelligent people … Provably, the [university] students who can approach study media or academic research, these [social issues] more quickly… The university students may be most free, well, and can obtain information and take action?*

Consequently, university students possessed a high level of social awareness, as they were exposed to a wealth of knowledge and information both within and outside the university environment.

In addition to that, Confucian culture had influence over the role expectation of the intellectuals. Confucian ideals traditionally emphasised the creation of an ideal and harmonious community, and intellectuals were seen as having a mission to translate these ideals into reality (Park, 2013). This belief naturally led to high expectations for the role of university students within society. Moreover, looking back through history, the roles of intellectuals in Korean society can be traced back to the Joseon Dynasty, a remarkable six centuries ago. During this period, intellectuals were portrayed as critical thinkers who fearlessly challenged societal wrongs and those in positions of power, all in pursuit of a just and equitable society (Kim & Yang, 2022). This historical perspective further reinforced the idea that university students, as intellectual elites, carried the torch of this longstanding legacy, making their responsibility even weightier in their pursuit of a just society. Professor Kim (2022) explicitly illustrates the role of students as intellectuals as follows:

> *Professor Kim: If the king made a mistake in any personnel or policy, Sungkyunkwan students [Yeong intellectuals in Joseon Dynasty] immediately protested to the king at the time. So, for example, a class hunger strike, such as a sit-down, followed by a refusal of class. Intellectuals have been doing it since the Joseon Dynasty [since late 14th century in Korea], and that's because, in Confucian culture, the society had a solid respect for these intellectuals and people who studied and had a strong voice. That is, the voice of the students and young intellectuals have a powerful voice in Korean society… People admit they are more concerned about public than private interest.*

He described Korean students as well-respected intellectuals with moral and pure political motivations and goals. In this context, sensing moral duty in times of political crisis has been regarded as the social responsibility of the intellectuals. When I attended during the mid-1980s, the university environment was rife with 'ivory tower[9]' controversies, and debates regarding the

[9]Ivory Tower: One of the definitions of university, which sees the university as the place for staying away from social and political reality to pursue of academic truth.

legitimacy of the university's role in society were common in classrooms. However, contrary to the perception of detachment, university students, instead, prioritised their role as intellectuals and their social responsibility. In 1987, they took the lead in the democratisation movement. Jun, for instance, expressed that he joined student activism driven by his sense of social responsibility as an intellectual.

> *Jun: The university students are the best intellectuals to a certain degree. I think I took my responsibility in my own way. I think [the student activism] was what the intellectuals and intelligent people should do.*

During the 1980s, knowledge and information were predominantly concentrated among intellectuals, a scenario quite distinct from the current digital era. Universities, as institutions responsible for nurturing the foundational intellectuals, pursued broader public interests and universal values. They delved into the contradictions and issues present within the existing system, seeking knowledge that could contribute to a more progressive and harmonious society, in addition to imparting professional vocational skills (Gang J., 2017).

Consequently, university students faced elevated social expectations and possessed strong political voices as the moral force. This environment instilled social trust in their perspectives and actions, especially during their active participation in the democratisation movement of 1987. Sanga explicitly highlights this dynamic:

> *Sanga: … So, [people thought] the educated ones spoke out, that might be right.*

This generated a social respect, grounded in the belief that ‘they know something we don't know.’ Jin emphasised that these social assumptions amplified the political voice of university students, which, in turn, reflected the deep respect society held for them.

> *Jin: In the case of our country, the universities such as Seoul University and Yeonse and Korea University, if the educated student said something, wouldn't it be trustworthy, or wouldn't it be different from what uneducated people said. I think people would have that kind of thought.*

In society, university students were held in high regard, and their social responsibilities as the educated segment of the population played a pivotal role in their active involvement in the social movement. All interview participants agreed that the public gave credit the democratisation movement of university students in 1987. Those given credibility and respect became one of the root causes of public support and solidarity.

The role of intellectuals in social movements has been extensively questioned nowadays by scholars like Foucault and Deleuze (1972). Moreover, in the digital age, where knowledge and

information are readily accessible, the concept of intellectuals and their roles has become increasingly ambiguous. This paper underscores that collective identity is a construct, particularly concerning the understanding of the role of intellectuals. Once a strong collective identity that galvanised university students to take to the streets, the notion of intellectuals no longer carries the same meaning in contemporary Korean society.

Students – who should be care for

Throughout Korean history, there has been an unequivocal rejection of the victimisation of students, often igniting mass movements. From the 4.19 Revolution to the June Uprising, instances of students being victimised have acted as catalysts for widespread public outcry. This section explores how the heightened empathy towards student victimisation fuelled greater mobilisation among university students, and how the compassionate culture towards students inspired bystanders to participate in demonstrations.

The events of 1987 were particularly impactful as they directly involved university students, evoking a stronger sense of sympathy and solidarity. Notably, a series of protest suicides by university students between 1982 and May 1987 heightened public attention. Eight student martyrs took their own lives, deliberately shedding light on the oppressive nature of the regime. These protest suicides, carried out in public places, conveyed a collective message reflecting the broader societal context and aims rather than individual needs (Gang T., 2017; Im, 2016). Such powerful struggles, including the deaths of fellow students, evoked profound empathetic sentiments among their peers, as Sukyeong mentioned.

> *Sukyeong: Well, it was a student who was sexually tortured… Park Jong-cheol was a university student, [students were] dead, and at last more strongly Lee Han-yeol was shot by the tear gas gun. Many students protested, and people were shocked by his death.*

The news of university student Park Jong-Cheol's death by torture triggered an overwhelming response from mothers of university students, flooding newspapers with phone calls. The distraught voices of these parents conveyed a shared sentiment that the safety and well-being of their children should never be subject to such brutality. “This will never be considered a business for any parent on this earth, spoken with a crying voice that parents are fearful to raise children in this country” (KDF, 2017, p. 284). This powerful reaction exemplifies the prevalent culture of caring for and protecting students in Korea. Regarding this, Jun said:

> *Jun: It might be funny, but the social care or respect for the students and social care ... at least when [the students] were captured by police or when people watched our injuries while we protested, they cared for us and acted as a shield.*

In the early days of 1987, bystanders would often watch from the sidewalks as students protested in the streets. However, the situation took a turn in May after Chun Doo-hwan's Hoheon measure was implemented. As students rushed into the streets, they were immediately met with riot police. During this time, reports to the situation room began to highlight that street demonstrations were able to persist for longer durations due to citizens stepping forward to block the police and protect the demonstrators. The visible support and protection provided by these citizens became increasingly evident.

I have two poignant experiences to share from that period. In one instance, a courageous lady saved me from the clutches of police officers who were attempting to arrest me. She bravely wielded a wooden pole like a baseball bat to fend them off. In another touching encounter, an elderly woman broke through the police blockade and walked alongside me when I found myself alone, with police officers sealing off all nearby alleys. When we finally parted ways, she even gave me her pocket money to ensure I could buy dinner. These examples are just a few among many instances where demonstrators received help and support from caring citizens, allowing them to escape arrest.

The affection and caring expressed by these citizens towards the demonstrators played a crucial role in inspiring solidarity and eliciting voluntary participation from bystanders.

Organised force

Student-led movements thrived in a context where democratic civil society had not yet fully developed, and university students emerged as a highly organised force. This section explores the conditions that facilitated the organisation of university students and the pivotal role played by the PPT as a mobilising structure, leading to a cycle of protests and contentious actions through persistent struggles with this organised force.

Upon entering the university, students' active participation in classes increased consistently each year (Gil, 2016), fostering a strong sense of belonging to the university at that time. Furthermore, a significant portion of students joined various clubs and organisations within the university, actively engaging in campus life. These clubs not only played a central role in nurturing university culture and individuality but also provided students with a diverse range of enjoyable experiences (Obooni, 2022). This level of active participation within the highly structured institution of the university (Burton & Tobbel, 2015), created an opportune environment for generating collective action among students, making them a well-organised force.

The long-standing history of university student activism worldwide finds its rationale in the conducive nature of campuses for organising. Campuses provide ecological benefits for recruitment, mobilisation, and coalition building due to the close proximity of students to the school and their availability of free time between or after classes to discuss issues and coordinate

(Earl et al., 2017, p. 2). In this regard, the ‘Into the public’ organisational strategy, which sought to rally the public around colleges and clubs, proved to be highly effective. These favourable conditions provided university students with the opportunity to assume a leading role in the 1987 democratisation movement, as they were able to function as a well-organised and mobilised force, driving significant change during that crucial period. Gi articulates the students were able to lead the struggle because they were an organised force.

> *Gi: [Students] were at the front. In addition to being at the forefront, I was able to respond as the organisational force. For example, if there was an announcement that there would be a protest in the Myeongdong Cathedral at 6 PM, even though the social atmosphere has become favourable, joining the rally would be challenging for ordinary citizens. There was a need to show reinforcement as the leading power … the [university] students were the organised [force] at that time.*

In this way, university students consistently engaged in familiar collective actions at predetermined locations and times, demonstrating to the public ‘what to do’ and becoming the driving force behind the sustained and prolonged struggle. University students can be understood as a leading force of contentious repertoires in the June Uprising. In understandings of public mobilisation, repertoires of contention suggests that anticipatory actions of social movement actors are a key strategy for mass mobilisation. Thus, knowing ‘when and what to do’ encourage the public to participate in the movement (Doherty & Hayes, 2019). A series of consistent and routinised struggles by university students increased the public’s anticipation of their actions, resulting in encouraging public participation in the struggle.

During the June Uprising, university students appeared in multiple roles, including as youth, intellectual elites, students, and as the driving organisational force. They adeptly crafted a convincing collective identity both internally and externally, earning trust, respect, and affection from those supporting the political protest (Jasper, 1998). In this sense, Korean students in 1987 took advantage of their elite status and symbolic meanings as much as the well-structured institutionalisation. While Undong-Gwons remained as the military force, university students in the June Uprising could be seen as a moral force. This was because of the notion that students were important political actors who had a moral duty to save the country when it was in crisis. Their ability to evoke positive emotions played a pivotal role in inspiring solidarity and encouraging bystanders’ participation. Additionally, their continued adherence to expected collective actions and their leadership in protest cycles and contentious activities solidified their collective identity and strategic persistence, making student-led movements possible. This strategic approach also facilitated bystanders' participation in the demonstrations, opening the gates for broader public support and engagement.

CHAPTER 8 COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND LEGACY OF 1987 DEMOCRATISATION MOVEMENT

The collective and historical memory of the 4.19 Revolution played a significant role in the nationwide spread of the June Uprising. The legacy of the June Uprising left a profound mark of confidence and collective victory in the realm of modern Korean social movements. During this process, university students, as the leaders of the struggle, restructured their collective identity, becoming the guiding force for the progressive camp in the future. This section explores how the Undong-Gwons effectively bridged the past events with the current political context and how the movement's outcome contributed to the reconstruction of their collective identity.

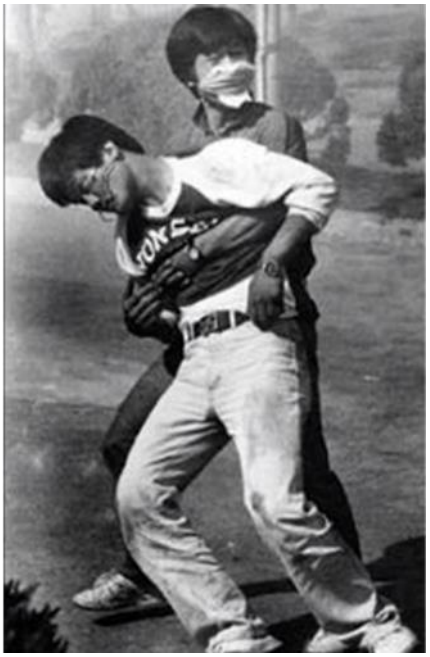
Prior to the June Uprising, the public may have harboured anger against the regime, but constraints and taboos surrounding social movements, created under the label of ‘Reds,’ prevented them from stepping forward. Sanga said that despite the growing size of the student movement, mass mobilisation proved challenging, as individual beings remained hesitant to join the struggle, even though they were collectively angry.

> *Sanga: If the university students didn't cry out and agitate about that kind of thing, I think the struggle so-called 87 or June Uprising in 1987 wouldn't have existed ... Everybody had anger inside, but they didn't know how to express it because they were individual beings.*

Nevertheless, a powerful photograph of martyr Lee Han-yeol being struck by a tear gas canister evoked a resurgence of collective and historical memories from the 4.19 Revolution, breaking the longstanding taboo surrounding social movements. This impactful image reverberated with the memory of another young soul, Kim Joo-yeol, who tragically lost his life due to a tear gas canister hitting his eye. The photograph intensified feelings of sorrow and anger over the sacrifice of an innocent student, while also instilling fear of the potential extension of the oppressive dictatorship. Let us now compare the two images below.

Image 8-1 Kim Ju-yeol at 4.19 Revolution

Image 8-2 Lee Han-yeon at the June Uprising



Collective memory, as described by Halbwachs (1992), refers to how individual minds function collectively in society, shaping the way individuals remember events in a coherent manner within a group context. Thus, a successful anchoring collective memory project can serve as a crucial element in driving a social movement. The wide distribution of photos depicting martyr Lee Han-yeol across the nation sparked a significant response from the public, leading them to question, 'Why do students have to be sacrificed like this?' and firmly asserting, 'We can't leave it like this.' Sanga articulates explicitly this process as follows:

> *Sanga: People may think he was a terrible president. Then, most importantly, he announced the 4.13 Hoheon Measure. "I am not gonna change the constitution," Chun said. Yes, so this is what triggered it. He took the Hoheon Measure, so students shouted, "Abolish Hoheon, overthrow dictatorship." However, the public didn't move until then … That time, Han-yeol was shot by a tear gun bullet. A long time ago, Kim Ju-yeol died from a tear gun bullet in the 3.15 corrupted election. It was the 1960s. Then, even though 80 years passed, a university student was killed under a tear gas gun in the middle of a demonstration! Yes, and he died, the public anger was picked.*

Subsequently, fuelled by the emotional instrument of anger and by stimulating the anchoring of collective memory, the students garnered unwavering support from all corners of the nation and continued their fierce fight until the military dictatorship ultimately conceded defeat with the June 29 Declaration. Jansen (2009) contends that collective memory is not an automatic outcome of social movements; rather, it results from proactive memory work. Images appeared an effective tool to link current phenomena to the past event. To my recollection, the stimulation of collective

memory through a mnemic project was spontaneous. People can easily find a connection with a 4.19 Revolution and the series of students' victimisation through a single photograph of Lee Han-Yeol. I distinctly remember feeling deeply saddened and enraged by the sacrifice of innocent lives, and a strong urge to reveal the dictatorship's efforts to maintain its power.

In the first presidential election held after the June 29 Declaration, after several twists and turns, Roh Tae-woo, the second-in-command of the neo-military, was elected president. Though it was dubbed a 'half' victory due to this outcome, the June Uprising is widely recognised as a triumph. Consequently, the public gained newfound confidence in their ability to effect change within the existing social order. Gi says:

> *Gi: We were completely broken in one way or another before, but since Roh Tae-woo, one of the centres of power, accepted the direct election, which we sloganised alongside the mass at that time, people raised the consciousness that we could change the system and gain the confidence as the result of that.*

The sense of victory and newfound confidence experienced during the June Uprising is embedded in a historical and collective memory. Throughout Korean modern history, the nation has witnessed four nation-wide mass movements that culminated in victories, establishing a pattern where mass movements have become routine in Korea. Bongsoo emphasises this sense of victory during the June Uprising and highlights how the individuals who played leading roles at that time continued to actively participate in the progressive movement that followed.

> *Bongsoo: Yes, the experience of victory is amazing. The experience that the impossible became possible was the top 3 events in our lives, even for the non-Undong-Gwon friends. I met them in the "Candlelight movement" co-incidentally, so I can say the experience of victory is so valuable.*

Since 1988, with deepening political divisions within the student movement, Undong-Gwons were increasingly divided into two political camps (Park, 2012). The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 profoundly impacted the ideological orientation of Undong-Gwons, which were heavily influenced by orthodox Marxism-Leninism (Park, 2012). This contributed to the decline of the student movement in South Korea, losing their social role and collective identity. However, confidence from sensing victory fertilised subsequent social movements in South Korea. Bongsoo stresses the sense of victory profoundly inspired by a social movement.

> *Bongsoo: Victory gets into a habit as much as failure. Therefore, victory or failure, if you have the choice, you have to make it victory by putting your life there.*

Jun expressed his immense pride in having played a role in creating a better world through his dedicated efforts. In addition to the confidence that victory gives, they are proud of the

democratisation movement. Jun illustrates his pride in creating a changed society by doing the right thing as follows.

> *Jun: I am proud that we are the leading force for the democracy of the country, which made a big turning point in the democratic transformation. That's how the young generation can receive the opened education. Well, I am also thinking that now the economic environment has improved much much better, and the social culture of the relationship consciousness towards the individual human rights and people first concept have been developed based on the sacrificing of our generation.*

His comment indicates that "pride" is a pivotal emotional outcome for self-sacrificing activists who do not seek political or economic rewards. Their sense of pride has a lasting impact on their lives. They continue to live with a profound "pride" in having done the right thing and actively promote positive values in their surroundings.

It is difficult to typify the subsequent life trajectory of the former activist and participants of the 1987 Demonstration movement. The former activists or participants who played a role in achieving victory in 1987 are known as the Democratisation Generation or 86 generation, initially referred to as the 386 generation (where 3 represents ages in their 30s during the 1990s, 8 stands for student IDs of the 80s, and 6 denotes those born in the 60s). As they reached their 30s in the mid-1990s, they emerged as the driving force behind progressive movements in politics, economy, society, and culture, and they continue to be the backbone of the progressive camp. Empowered by the collective memory of 'Confidence in Victory,' and 'Price' the Korean public now leads daily social movements.

In Korea, where mass movements have become a frequent occurrence following the significant struggles that resulted in victory in 1987, the success or failure of framing largely hinges on the implementation of effective mnemonic projects. These projects play a crucial role in countering manipulated memories, which can give rise to taboos and constraints within social movements. As these mass movements evolve, emotional and cultural elements play an ever-expanding role alongside collective memory. Korean mass movements have become more sophisticated in shaping collective identities and formulating strategies, encompassing greater emotional, cultural, and symbolic dimensions. To effectively use the past to contextualise the present, "the capacity to adapt to a narrative format is a central resource... for a mnemonic project as well as for accessing the audience of a social movement" (Zamponi, 2013, p.29). Collective memory not only reflects the outcome of protests but also serves as an instrument in constructing new mobilisation efforts. The interplay between collective memory and ongoing mobilisation further strengthens the Korean public's resolve to bring about positive change in society.

CHAPTER 9 DISCUSSION

In this thesis, I extensively explored prominent social movement theories, with a particular emphasis on collective identity and mass mobilisation. Additionally, I delved into the strategies of micro-mobilisation employed by indigenous organisations, and I discussed how the process of macro mobilisations is influenced by strong emotional factors that impact people's participation. In this chapter, my main argument centres around the importance of constructing collective identity in inclusive ways. I will delve into the concept of counter-framing and explore the significance of emotional care for activists.

9-1 Constructing Collective Identity with Inclusivity

Through my research on collective identity, it becomes apparent that its definition is inherently complex and multifaceted. It can be seen as both a process and a product, characterised by hierarchical structures and blurred lines within the context of social movements. However, a consistent theme that emerges from the research results is the importance of inclusivity in the construction of group identity.

During the Vanguard era, boundary work was a dominant force, but it was also a period where activists faced challenges in mobilising the masses. As subsequent movements evolved, with wider boundaries and more inclusive approaches, the scale of the struggle and the success rate increased. This suggests that embracing inclusivity in the process of constructing collective identity can be instrumental in achieving greater impact and success in social movements.

Many scholars trace the roots of collective identity back to Marx (Snow & Corrigall-Brown, 2015), who conceptualised society's class structure into bourgeois, petty bourgeois, and proletariat categories. This classification mirrors the understanding of the main actors in social movements, often categorised as ‘we-them’ and ‘bystanders.’ However, it is essential to remember that Marx's perspective focused on the structure of capitalism and regarded the collective identity of the proletariat as an ‘exclusive’ role with unique historical significance (Marx & Engels, 1846; Marx & Engels, 1848). With the advent of postmodernism, values of deconstruction, diversity, and coexistence have gained prominence, leading modern social movements to adopt a different approach. The grand narrative that once defined movements has faded away (Wettergren, 2005). Eskridge Jr. (2001) observed that late twentieth-century social movements aimed to uplift marginalised groups. He asserted that movements such as civil rights, women's liberation, pro-choice, gay liberation, and disability rights sought to challenge societal norms and demand recognition of their constituents as equal citizens, worthy of the same respect as the white heterosexual male. These identity-driven movements often seek ‘social inclusion’ as equal members of society, deserving fair sharing of progress made by humanity.

In constructing collective identity and striving for social persuasiveness, activists must be conscious of their social location and role within the broader community to achieve better results. Recent research on collective identities has revealed intriguing findings:

1. Saunders (2008) discovered that a strong collective identity and solidarity within organisations can sometimes lead to divisions, making solidarity at the movement level not always beneficial.
2. Basir, Ruebottom, and Auster (2022) conducted a study on Libya post-Gaddafi and observed that two groups with different histories co-evolved by renegotiating boundaries, resulting in the construction of an inclusive collective identity. However, this heterogeneous group faced challenges at a later stage.
3. Wendell (2013) emphasised the importance of adopting egalitarian and inclusionary practices when generating collective action and identity, as this approach proves most advantageous for social movements.
4. Guenther, Mulligan, and Papp (2013) argued that permeable manners through crossing boundaries can have positive contributions in constructing collective identity. For instance, the ongoing success and social impact of the KTC movement are attributed to their pursuit of correcting the distorted form of education, rather than being driven by vested interests, such as those of teachers.

My research also indicates that inclusive collective action, strategically, ontologically, and ideologically, tends to draw in larger numbers of individuals who identify with the struggle, contributing to the growth and impact of the movement on a larger scale. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement provides some interesting insights on this question.

The Black Lives Matter movement, sparked by the death of a black man, George Floyd, at the hands of a white police officer in the United States, has emerged as a powerful force aiming to combat structural racism. BLM movement actively named and humanised victims whose lives were ontologically destructed by police, resulting in their names turning into a vehicle for thinking of systemic racism and inequalities (Williams, Mezey & Singh, 2021). Many observers agree that the BLM movement has dramatically raised people's awareness of deep-rooted racial inequality and effectively educated society. This rise in awareness ignited activism for racial justice, and inspired solidarity from all possible allies (Williams, Mezey & Singh, 2021). Its impact has transcended national borders, resonating in other countries like England and New Zealand, where it has taken up the cause of not only black communities but also other minority ethnic groups (Silverstein, 2021). Moreover, a recent report shed light on the demographics of BLM protesters, revealing the majority of participants in their respective cities were found to be white.

> *A substantial majority of the protesters were white, in the cities where the data was gathered, with the highest percentage in Minneapolis (85%), followed by Los Angeles (78%), and Atlanta and New York (both at 76%). A total of 18% of the protesters were African American in Atlanta, 11% in Minneapolis, 13% in New York and 3% in Los Angeles. Those numbers remained steady during the night-time hours. Hispanic and Asian American participation was less than 10% in all four cities. (Source: Mobilewalla 18 Jun, 2020, 08:38 ET)*

This dynamic highlight the widespread support from diverse backgrounds, as people of various ethnicities come together to address issues of systemic racial injustice and inequality. Even if it is unreasonable to accept the above demographic statistics uncritically, the main actors of the movement were certainly not limited to black Americans. As this movement set dignifying lives and humanity of black people as a global agenda (Waker et al., 2021), BML was able to inspire intersectional and other allied groups. Although it is still questionable whether the process of this movement was Black people-driven activism, the result of the movement converged strengthening the identity of black people, and "it inspired a robust conversation about Black empowerment, pride, representation, and resilience" (Williams, Mezey, & Singh, 2021, p.23).

9-2 Understanding Collective Identity and Counter-framing.

Although there is no universally accepted academic definition of collective identity, we must establish a clear understanding within this paper, considering the hierarchical nature of identity spanning the individual, social, and collective levels. For the sake of clarity, we adopt Michael White's definition of identity, influenced by Foucault, as a "description of people's lives and relationships" (2004, p. 126). In this context, collective memory and narratives also play vital roles in shaping identity.

This approach significantly impacts the framing process, as it reflects either social perceptions or self-perceptions of individuals. Notably, the collective memory of resistance history is frequently manipulated by those in power to serve their own interests. To describe the phenomenon of external group identities stigmatising social movement subjects through distorted historical memories, my research introduces the concept of 'counter-framing.' The struggles between framing and counter-framing revolve around conflicting collective memories and historical narratives. The relative persuasiveness of each narrative may ultimately determine the success or failure of mass mobilisation efforts. Understanding this interplay between collective identity, framing, and counter-framing is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of social movements and their outcomes.

The creation of stigma has had detrimental effects on social movements, leading to their isolation from society, facilitating oppression, and, in extreme cases, legitimising violent state

interventions through strategic dominant ideologies. Notably, in the context of the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests in 2019, China depicted them as illegal demonstrations causing social chaos and even labelled the protesters as terrorists (Jung, 2019). Similarly, silent protesters in Myanmar, who opposed a military coup in February 2021, were unjustly branded as terrorists, subjecting them to the application of the Anti-Terrorism Act (Joe, 2022). Such counter-framing has imposed numerous constraints and taboos on public participation in social movements, making it a crucial challenge to overcome in determining the success or failure of these movements.

Given that counter-framing arises from manipulated historical narratives, one could argue that the struggles of the Undong-Gwons have largely revolved around mnemonic projects. To uphold the spirit of the significant social movements, rallies commemorating events like the 4.19 Revolution or the 5.18 Gwangju Uprising have been organised, where the names of martyrs who lost their lives in the struggle are loudly proclaimed, and visual representations of their stories are exhibited. These events also serve to connect current phenomena to past events, reinforcing the collective identity of activists.

In the face of strong counter-framing by those opposing the Undong-Gwons, the activists have adopted the collective identity of patriots, imbued with the belief that their actions are just and in the best interest of the nation and community. This sense of patriotism is deeply ingrained in the shared history of Koreans, who have a 5,000-year-long ethnic heritage, signifying a commitment to working for the greater good. By identifying as patriots, the Undong-Gwons do not create divisions between themselves and others; rather, they strive to lower barriers and emphasise their common humanity with those they seek to reach and inspire.

9-3 Emotional and Psychological Care for Activists

My research highlights the presence of negative emotions such as fear, guilt, and skepticism among activists, which can lead to long-term psychological damage. It is evident that strategies for emotional and psychological care at both the individual and group levels are essential to address these challenges.

Various emotional and psychological burdens plague activists, including anxiety, guilt, isolation, anger, sadness, irritability, pessimism, disappointment, numbness, fatigue, lack of motivation, and physical symptoms (AMNESTY, 2020). Coping with these issues is crucial for sustainable activism, and self-care strategies have been widely emphasised in the literature, as reviewed by Barker, Martin, and Zournarzi (2008).

However, emotions are often treated as personal matters, with individuals expected to seek support for their own emotional problems (Barker, Martin, & Zournazi, 2008). This individualistic approach may not be sufficient, especially when fear and guilt are common among

activists, as revealed in my study. In oppressive environments, activists may be unable to seek professional help due to the need to conceal their status. In such cases, internal resources become crucial, and in-depth emotional and ideological dialogues within the activist group are necessary.

Undong-Gwons have widely practiced co-counselling as means to support one another in integrating their thoughts, feelings, and actions, adapting to the immediate situation (King, 2005, p. 156). While co-counselling has had some positive effects, my study suggests that it may not be enough to prevent psychological damage for several reasons. Firstly, activists are not professional counsellors or psychologists, so they may lack the expertise needed to address deep-rooted psychological issues that can result in lifelong damage. Secondly, the effectiveness of co-counselling can be limited by various factors, such as cultural differences, knowledge of emotions, and the activists' roles within the group.

Relying solely on co-counselling may lead to the neglect of negative emotions that can have significant impacts on activists. A more comprehensive approach to emotional and psychological care, including professional support and resources, is necessary to ensure the well-being and sustainability of activists in their endeavours.

CONCLUSION

Korean student activists who were the driving force behind the democratisation movement in the 1980s were ideology-driven militant leftists. Ideology strengthened their sense of collectivity in the high risk-taking activism they were taking a part of. However, recruiting activists and maintaining their engagement and solidarity under the harsh dictatorship meant they faced severe repression from all directions. Being forced to go underground, they developed sophisticated recruiting strategies, creating a caring culture within the intimate relationship called comradeship and self-discipline. They infused ideological ferment with a massive program of reading and discussion. Although there were restrictions to protect activist organisations in the face of violent repression, attempts to run the organisation as democratically as possible and maximise individual activists' autonomy helped maintain activist engagement. They appeared to release their burdens as activists within the cultural context, such as through alcohol, humour or singing. Negative emotions were often muted, and some had a lifelong impact. They ascribed to an ideology that was taboo in South Korean society, and although they had a strong we-ness as vanguards who took risks for shared goals, they practiced inclusivity where possible. In the Vanguard era, when dictatorial oppression was severe, their struggle was heroic, but the barrier to entry into activism was high. Based on the achievements of the continuous struggle during this period, student activists lowered the boundaries. They actively utilised the aboveground to increase inclusivity as the appeasement phase passed. This was a revolutionary shift in strategies for mass mobilisation. The relationship between activists and the public was successfully renegotiated from guidance to support, resulting in the expansion of the scope of public participation. Based on this, Korean university students became the centre of the 1987 June Uprising as a moral force along with their elite status. They traditionally believed in social meaning and responsibility. in response to the tragedy committed by the dictatorial government in 1987. The collective memory of the 4.19 Revolution ignited public support. The 1987 June Uprising serves as memory of victory and pride and fertilised subsequent social movements.

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