

THE GWANGJU UPRISING IN FILMS: POLITICS OF MEMORY AND NARRATIVE



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เหตุการณ์กวางจู 1980 ในภาพยนตร์: เรื่องเล่าและการเมืองของความทรงจำ



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

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เหตุการณ์กวางจู 1980 ถือเป็นหนึ่งในเหตุการณ์การเรียกร้องประชาธิปไตยที่สำคัญ
ต่อสังคมร่วมสมัยของเกาหลีใต้ เนื่องจากได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงความโหดร้ายของรัฐบาลทหาร อีกทั้ง
ทั้งยังถือเป็นหมุดหมายสำคัญต่อการเรียกร้องประชาธิปไตยในช่วงเวลาต่อมา ถึงแม้เวลาได้
ผ่านมากกว่า 40 ปีแล้ว แต่ความทรงจำของเหตุการณ์ดังกล่าวยังคงฝังรากลึกอยู่ในสังคมเกาหลี
เรื่องราวของเหตุการณ์กวางจู 1980 ได้ถูกถ่ายทอดซ้ำแล้วซ้ำเล่า ไม่เพียงแต่เป็นการรำลึกต่อ
ความสูญเสียและความกล้าหาญของเหล่าวีรชนประชาธิปไตย แต่ยังประกอบไปด้วยการเมือง
เรื่องของความทรงจำจากการจดจำและลืมเลือน ซึ่งถูกนำเสนอผ่านสื่อต่างๆ รวมทั้งภาพยนตร์
เพื่อประกอบร่างความทรงจำที่ตอบสนองต่อความศรัทธาในประชาธิปไตยของคนในปัจจุบัน ซึ่ง
ในบทความนี้ได้หยิบยกภาพยนตร์ 3 เรื่อง ได้แก่ May 18 (2007), 26 Years (2012), และ A
Taxi Driver (2017) ที่ถ่ายทอดความทรงจำเกี่ยวกับเหตุการณ์กวางจู 1980 เพื่อตอกย้ำความ
เป็นจริงในด้านที่สังคมต้องการจดจำต่อเหตุการณ์ดังกล่าวผ่านภาพของเหตุการณ์ที่ถูกผลิตซ้ำ
ผ่านมุมมองของผู้กำกับ การผลิตสร้างความทรงจำผ่านภาพยนตร์จึงเป็นหนึ่งในการเมืองเรื่อง
ของความทรงจำในเหตุการณ์กวางจู 1980

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The Gwangju Uprising is one of the remarkable democratic movements in the contemporary South Korean society as it depicted the brutality of the military government. Thus, the incident had influenced the later democratic movement. Though more than 40 years had passed, the memory of the incident still made it present in Korean society. The narrative of the incident had been repeatedly told not only to commemorate the sacrificial of the people but it was also a part of memory politics of remembering and forgetting. The memory of the uprising was depicted through several medias including films to integrate its own narrative that responded to the social believe. In this article, I had selected 3 films, May 18 (2007), 26 Years (2012), and A Taxi Driver (2017) that recreated the memory of the Gwangju Uprising which emphasized the desire truth of the uprising through the perception of the producers. As the reproduction of the Gwangju Uprising through films was a part of the politics of memory which shaped the social's memory of the uprising.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Significant of Study

The Gwangju Uprising, a ten-day democratization movement in May 1980, is one of the most remarkable incidents in modern South Korean society because it was both a watershed moment in South Korea's democratization and a pivotal period in the republic's history of state suppression. Even though time has passed, the Gwangju Uprising's memory has remained tangible through commemorations and memorials in several locations throughout the Gwangju region, demonstrating how unforgettable it is for South Korean society. Not only is the unforgettable incident memorialized in physical locations, but the story of it has also been presented as the protagonist in contemporary mass media such as films and dramas.

The Gwangju Uprising, like other significant historical events, was chosen to be recreated through mass media. Numerous films have been produced over the last three decades, beginning in the 1990s, with varying settings and narratives told through the eyes of protagonists who may have been involved in the incident or had suffered from it. These films varied in their level of audience engagement and the extent to which the main protagonists dragged the audience through the narrative. However, each film that recreates the memory of the Gwangju Uprising emphasizes the violation and injustice of the incident that occurred in modern South Korea.

The films that related to the Gwangju Uprising had been continuously created overtime to narrate the different perspective of the incident. In this study, I'd like to examine three films that was produced during this past 15 years which still related to the current situation. Thus, several recreated of the Gwangju Uprising films resulted in different narrative from the directly telling the story of the incident to the indirective storytelling. The film selecting in this study picked each of them to analyze on how they differed from others in order to determine how films contributed to the integration of the memory of the Gwangju Uprising.

To begin, *May 18* (Kim, 2007), this film chronicled the tumultuous ten-day movement that occurred in Gwangju from 18 to 27 May 1980. The story detailed events during the depressing days in Gwangju through the eyes of the male protagonist, Min-woo, who transformed himself into a main actor protestor. This film allowed audiences to witness the incident through the eyes of victims who, in the aftermath of losing their family, were forced to fight for the remaining survivors.

The second film is *A Taxi Driver* (Jang, 2017), which tells the story of a taxi driver who was oblivious to the political events unfolding in his country but was forced to transport his passenger, a journalist seeking to expose violations in Gwangju to the world, to Gwangju during the days of the massacre. Despite the fact that this film is not an autobiography of the taxi driver or the journalist, it successfully drew the audience into the narrative through the eyes of outsiders who were inadvertently involved in the incident.

The final film I chose to study is quite different from the previous two. *26 Years* (Cho, 2012) is a work of fiction set in the Gwangju Uprising universe, though the story and setting depicted in the film did not occur in reality. However, the story cast a real person, Chun Doo-Hwan, as the film's primary antagonist. The story did not directly recount the events of the Gwangju Uprising; rather, it created a narrative about the people who endured injustice during that time period.

With the continuous release of films and dramas, the Gwangju Uprising appears to never fade from the public's memory; however, the event's memory has become more visible in the public's eyes as a result of the mass media. Numerous reproductions of the incident demonstrate the desire for South Koreans, including those in the creative industries such as film directors and producers, to periodically revive the narrative of this critical and tragic story. According to this, the first question to consider is the significance of the Gwangju Uprising in modern society, particularly as a component of national collective memory.

Despite the fact that the Gwangju Uprising had been relegated to the category of democratization movement. Throughout the 1980s, this defeated movement was used as a component of the justice requirement for South Korea's democratization movement. According to this, the incident's central narrative, which

centers on the heroic and courage of the Gwangju people, is widely recognized by the public. However, it is difficult to assert that, even though the central narrative has shaped the collective memory of the entire nation, there is still a debate about conflict memory (Kim, 2011). This is insignificant in comparison to other political incidents; the story was shaped to serve a social desire, which can benefit the social movement in the aftermath. In this case, the Gwangju Uprising was also brought up during the late 1980s democratization movement.

On the other hand, if we look back at that time period, as research on the Gwangju Uprising has revealed, the ten days movement was filled with confusion among the people of Gwangju, who armed themselves to protect themselves and survived the suppression. The movement began with a student uprising at Chonnam National University and erupted into violence when the military invaded the city of Gwangju and used lethal force to suppress the protests. When the situation deteriorated, the military's suppression was not limited to protestors; the massacre took place in the city of Gwangju. Then, alongside the students, Gwangju citizens joined the protests. From this vantage point, there was debate over whether the struggle at the time was for democratization or survival in a crisis state (Keun-sik, 2003; Kim, 2011).

It could not deny, however, that democratic sentiment had been established among Gwangju citizens during the incident. Collective identities associated with the struggle for democracy also developed among those who had fought alongside one another during the suppression. This sentiment contributed to the public's collective memory of the Gwangju Uprising and laid the groundwork for South Korea's subsequent democratization movement. In this regard, the Gwangju Uprising of the 1980s was widely regarded as the defeat of the democratic movement, with this tragic memory ingrained in the public memory. The injustice caused by this state repression was visually demonstrated to the public via the media, including photographs and video taken by foreign journalists. According to that, the Gwangju Uprising became the focal point for the demand for democratization because it necessitated legal action and compensation from the Gwangju Uprising's commanding military. Since then, the narrative of the Gwangju Uprising has gradually

developed and evolved in accordance with the political movement (Kahn-Chae, 2001; Keun-sik, 2003; Young-khee & Sun, 2003).

The following democratization movement in South Korea, dubbed the May movement in reference to the May Gwangju Uprising. Throughout the movement, the story of the Gwangju uprising was used to illustrate injustice. Its story was referenced numerous times during this time period and was used to convey the sentiment of the struggle. From this vantage point, the narrative of the Gwangju Uprising was shaped by the struggle for democracy. Since then, the Gwangju Uprising has become the most remarkable incident, as it did not result in victory but did serve as a catalyst for subsequent movements. Since then, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising has gradually become ingrained in the national collective memory of South Korea's struggle for democratization.

From this point, I'd like to investigate how 1980s memory politics were created. How the May movement aided in the creation and integration of the Gwangju Uprising narrative in light of the political context that shaped contemporary perceptions of the incident. As individual memories became increasingly entwined with the story of the Gwangju Uprising, which was commemorated in the movement at the time. To comprehend the perspective of the Gwangju Uprising as depicted in later period films, I want to first examine how the politics of memory in the Gwangju Uprising played out in the political scene following the event. How the Korean people desired to remember this pivotal event in relation to the country's political situation at the time.

Apart from the memory politics of the Gwangju Uprising, which gradually integrated itself into the main narrative depending on the political situation in the later period, it is clear that the memory of the Gwangju Uprising has remained present in contemporary South Korean society for 40 years. If we look for the Gwangju Uprising's surviving memory in contemporary society, we can see its appearance in films that recreate its intense and formative nature. These films depicted how people sacrificed themselves in the past for the democratization movement, which resulted in a strong democratic sentiment in the present.

From the films I previously mentioned, they used the Gwangju Uprising as a backdrop and contributed to its memory generation through visual media. Accordingly, in the study of the Gwangju Uprising's memory in contemporary society, I intend to conduct an analysis of the Gwangju Uprising's memory as manifested in contemporary films. How those films contributed to society's re-creation of the incident's memory. As film is a contemporary component of visual society and plays a significant role in popular culture. While various elements such as monuments and memorials have been recognized for directly commemorating the incident, films have gained prominence due to their widespread distribution through the media and ease of access from anywhere with one's own gadget.

Films also established a connection between narratives and audiences by involving audiences in the story. This creates a sense of realism for the audience, where they perceive the story and setting as realistic, allowing the audience's experience in films to become ingrained in their memory. This memory can be thought of as a prosthetic memory, as it was created out of empathy and gradually drew audiences into the story. This aspect of film is critical in distributing a story to the general public in today's society. (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008; Landsberg, 2018).

Additionally, I am focusing on the Gwangju Uprising's memory as depicted in the films because of the films' social functions. It's difficult to deny that films have become ingrained in contemporary culture as a form of entertainment. Film is considered to be a form of popular culture because it is ingrained in our leisure time and has an impact on numerous facets of life, such as how we think about things. Occasionally, film carries the story of an actual event and recreates it through editing technology, which generates the story's understanding according to the producer's presentation. It can be infinitely reproduced, widely contributed to, and easily accessed from theatre to private gadgets, allowing the general public to easily observe those stories. With these characteristics in mind, it's worth noting how films contributed to the formation of the Gwangju Uprising's memory and integrated the narrative. When we discuss collective memory in contemporary culture, the influence of it as a component of visual culture is undeniably significant (McNeill, 2010).

Films set in the universe of the Gwangju Uprising had been produced several times, each with a unique story. This demonstrates the importance of the Gwangju Uprising's memory in contemporary society. As I previously stated, the memory of the Gwangju incident played a significant role in South Korea's 1980s democratization movement. According to that, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising is not forgotten in the present, but has developed into a significant part of the past that shaped the contemporary South Korean society. To study the Gwangju Uprising's memory in contemporary society, we must consider the influence of popular culture and visual culture, which have become integral parts of social life. Thus, I wish to consider the films that contained narratives about the Gwangju Uprising as a critical component of studying memory in this context. To gain a better understanding of the Gwangju Uprising's memory politics, I chose to observe the memory represented in films in order to analyze the narrative of the Gwangju Uprising that had been generated and recreated for the films.

From the aforementioned, I want to raise a question about how the collective memory of the Gwangju Uprising has been remembered in light of the 1980s political contest. Additionally, because the memory of the Gwangju Uprising retains political significance in contemporary South Korean society, I want to focus on the films that deal with the incident, as it plays a significant role in contemporary culture. As a result, I'd like to discuss the role of films in generating memories of the Gwangju Uprising, which was chosen to commemorate through film. Which narratives were generated by the films.

1.2 Objective of the Study

1.2.1 To examine how the Gwangju Uprising narratives were interpreted and reproduced through film as a form of memory politics.

1.2.2 To engage in a discussion about the Gwangju Uprising's memory politics and how they shaped our understanding of the incident in the present.

1.3 Question of the Study

1.3.1 How was the Gwangju Uprising depicted and remembered in film?

1.3.2 How were the Gwangju Uprising narratives interpreted and represented in various films?

1.3.3 How did memory politics contribute to the current society's recognition of the Gwangju Uprising?

1.4 Conceptual Framework

For the conceptual framework, I'd like to examine how films about the Gwangju Uprising contribute to the politics of memory surrounding the incident. Films created narratives, story settings, and characters during the production process. When audiences watch films and identify with these elements, they become emotionally invested in the story and also identify with the characters. This process culminates in perceived realism, in which audiences regard film experiences as authentic. When audiences form this kind of connection with films, they transform and implant their experiences in them as prosthetic memories, eventually leading to the integration of narratives in films. The politics of memory in films can be established by examining the prosthetic memories absorbed by audiences and the narratives generated by the films.

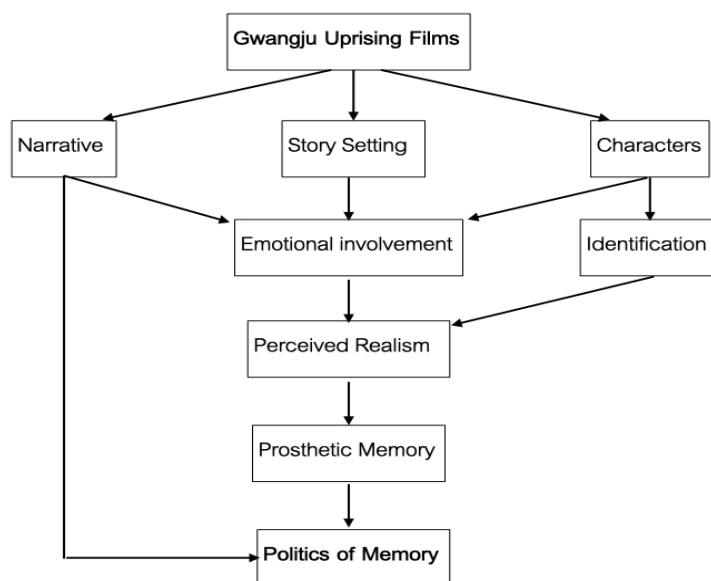


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

1.5 Hypothesis

The Gwangju Uprising is one of the most significant events that contributed to the Republic of Korea's democratization. The significance of the Gwangju Uprising's memory has resulted in the event's prosthetic memory being continuously recreated through a variety of media, including films. Simultaneously, films about the Gwangju Uprising recreated the incident's narrative in a variety of ways, owing to the diversity of the films' protagonists. While the films varied in perspective and setting, they all shared a common central narrative that saw the incident as a tragedy for the political movement and the illegitimacy of the military suppression at the time. These films reproduced memory of the Gwangju Uprising and thus functioned as a form of memory politics.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study examined the memory politics of the Gwangju Uprising in contemporary society, examining how narratives about the incident were generated in the past and recognized through the production of numerous films about the

incident. Additionally, this study examined films whose main plots included the Gwangju Uprising as a backdrop, including *May 18* (2007), *26 Years* (2012), and *Taxi Driver* (2017), in order to comprehend how the Gwangju Uprising's memories and narratives were represented in the films.

1.7 Research Methodology

This study used a qualitative research methodology that included text analysis. *May 18* (2007), *26 Years* (2012), and *Taxi Driver* (2017) are three of the films that will be analyzed in this study. The selection criteria is based on the narratives, characters, and story settings depicted in films. Additionally, these are well-known films that are frequently mentioned when discussing films about the Gwangju Uprising.

The data collection method was primarily based on secondary sources, which included journals, articles, and research on the Gwangju Uprising to provide context for the incident's understanding. Additional primary sources such as newspaper articles and online articles about the Gwangju Uprising, as well as films, will be used to help understand the current state of the subject.

This study's research methodology is limited in that it relies solely on textual analysis because the situation precludes conducting a survey

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

To facilitate comprehension of previous research on the topic "Memory of the Gwangju Uprising in Films," I have divided the studies into three categories in this section. To begin, I would like to review the topics that have been studied in recent studies about the Gwangju Uprising incident in order to gain a better understanding of how the Gwangju Uprising has been studied in the recent period. Then, in order to gain a better understanding of the concepts that will be used in this study, I'd like to focus on collective memory and memory politics, as they play a critical role in understanding how an incident can become a significant memory in a society. Finally, because I'm focusing on memory in films, I'd like to discuss how film as a visual culture contributes to the conduct of a visual image on a single memory, assisting in the integration of a memory's story, and its advantage in disseminating a memory to a broader public.

2.1 Gwangju Uprising

The Gwangju Uprising, a ten-day struggle for democracy that took place between 18 and 27 May 1980, was widely regarded as a watershed moment in South Korea's democratization. Recent studies have examined the incident on a variety of issues, but the majority have concluded that the defeat in the Gwangju Uprising did not end the cycle of struggle, but rather contributed to the continuation of the fight for democracy in South Korea during the 1980s.

The Gwangju uprising was a protest against General Chun Doo-military Hwan's repression. Along with the uprising of university students across the country on 17-18 May 1980, the military put an end to it. However, suppression was not easy in the South Jeolla region, where violence had increased during the ten-day incident.

The majority of studies divided the ten-day incident into three stages. The first stage took place between 18 and 19 May, with the majority of protesters being university students. Beginning on the morning of the 18th, troops began violently

suppressing protesters on the street and expanded to include passers-by. The massacre in the first phase incited the citizens of Gwangju to become involved in the uprising. The second stage of the struggle occurred between 19-21 May, when the uprising spread to the citizens of Gwangju. The protesters grew in size and aggression to the point where they were able to occupy City Hall and the troops withdrew from the city on the morning of the 21st (Kahn-Chae, 2001; Keun-sik, 2003).

The incident reached a third stage with the armed uprising that occurred following the protesters' attack on the province office. This stage may be referred to as liberated Gwangju, as the city was cut off from the rest of the country by the troops' blockade following their withdrawal from the city. Between 22 and 26 May, the Gwangju region was a self-governing and self-defense autonomous commune. Additionally, protesters staged daily rallies in support of their demand for a declaration of Democratic Citizenship Principles. The troops did not re-enter the city until the morning of the 26th. On the morning of the 27th, a fight between troops and armed protesters at the Provincial Hall ended with the protesters being defeated and several citizens being killed (Kahn-Chae, 2001; Keun-sik, 2003).

The Gwangju Uprising struggle was recognized as instrumental in establishing the democratization movement. Several scholars acknowledged that this incident resulted in the formation of the movement's collective identity and community. Kim Young-khee and Han Sun (2003) examined how protesters constructed their collective identity during the ten-day uprising through the *Fighters' Bulletin*, a newspaper for protesters. The newspaper was published by the Deulbul Yahak group. At the time, the military controlled the national press and broadcasting station, rendering them incapable of accurately reporting on the Gwangju Uprising. The newspaper's purpose was not only to disseminate movement news, but also to instill a cognitive and emotional sense in the residents of Gwangju. The journal established a collective identity for the protesters by referring to them as "we" who fought for democracy against the antagonistic troops. Following the phrase of self-identification, the journal became more emotionally charged and detailed the protester's five guiding principles of action. During the incident's most intense period, the journal evoked more intense emotions among the protesters and suggested self-

sacrifice for the cause of democracy. Even though the uprising ended in defeat, the collective identity formed during this time period endured until South Korea was successfully democratized. The collective identity established during this period also became a part of collective memory later on, as those involved in the event gained an understanding and memory of it through the medium that contained their collective identity.

Not only did the Gwangju Uprising generate collective identity, as Jung Keun-sik (2003) suggested in his article "The Experience of the May 18 Uprising and the Communal Imagination," but it also generated a collective commune, which fueled the struggle throughout the 1980s. The community imagination was formed during the intense period when troops began shooting protesters, forcing the populace to arm themselves and form a community in order to resist the government's violence. Throughout the period of liberated Gwangju, the community maintained self-government by its citizens. Following the incident, this community imagination developed into the historical community, which sought to protect their human dignity, established the community order, and made self-sacrifices for the truth throughout the 1980s.

As a result of the defeat of the Gwangju Uprising in 1980, the universe of the Gwangju Uprising did not end with the ten-day incident but continued throughout the 1980s as the May Movement, a movement for democracy that culminated in the victory for democracy in South Korea. The government labeled the Gwangju Uprising as a riot during the struggle, but after the truth about the incident was revealed, the country continued to struggle for the truth about the Gwangju Uprising. During the first five years following the incident, activists, including university students, made self-sacrifices to demand justice for the incident's victim. The organizations associated with the Gwangju Uprising were founded and have continued to operate on the basis of a demand for the truth and justice surrounding the Gwangju Uprising. The May Movement's five stated principles were developed, which contributed to the success of democratization in the subsequent period. Even after the 1987 constitution transformed South Korea into a democratic system, the struggle following the Gwangju incident persisted. Throughout the 1990s, the demand for special laws to

punish military leaders persisted. According to some studies, the Gwangju Uprising's shocking effect on the nation was the factor that sustained the struggle for democracy in South Korea to its triumphant conclusion (Kahn-Chae, 2001; Keun-sik, 2003).

The Gwangju Uprising is still remembered in contemporary South Korea. However, Kim Hang (2011) discussed how the memory of the Gwangju Uprising should be remembered differently from how the public understands it in "The Commemoration of the Gwangju Uprising: of the remnants in the nation states' historical memory." Kim contended that a gray area existed between the citizens who fought to protect themselves and the army, which fought blind to the truth of what was occurring in front of them. He added that both actors were victims of the incident, and while the citizens of Gwangju were remembered as heroes of the democratization movement, the soldiers of that era were still suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Kim proposed that the incident's memory be revised in light of the grey area in which the action's objectives from both parties differed from our current understanding. Despite the fact that there is a grey area between criminal and victim, Kim believes it is unjust that the incident is remembered solely for the heroics of the Gwangju people and the dramatic nature of the incident, while some truth from both sides is overlooked.

Even though the Gwangju Uprising was put down in ten days, its universe has continued to shape South Korean politics to the present day. The incident's memory and trauma were critical factors in South Korea's democratization movement and have persisted in modern Korean society. I'd like to introduce the concept of collective memory and memory politics in the following section in order to foster a better understanding of how memory functions in society.

2.2 Collective Memory and Politics of Memory

Memory, as a fragment of a past event that is remembered, contributes to the way the present appears. People's perceptions of the current situation are shaped by their memories of the preceding incident. Collective memory is a type of memory that is stored collectively within a society. A case in point is the collective

memory of the Gwangju Uprising, which South Koreans remember as a pro-democracy movement. The shared memory of this event is significant in terms of how the Gwangju Uprising was commemorated politically following the incident. The establishment of various evidences, such as a monument and an annual commemoration, conveyed to the public the significance of how this incident should be remembered. The news and documentary coverage of the incident are also reshaping the incident's narrative. The memory has been reproduced and incorporated into a single narrative in accordance with how the public wishes to remember that event in the present day. However, during the process of creating a memory, there is a conflict of memory that results in some memories being remembered and others being forgotten to serve the authoritarian's desires. This is how memory politics developed and gained prominence, particularly in relation to memory that was included in the political sphere.

To begin this study and to gain a better understanding of how memory politics operated during the 1980 Gwangju Uprising, I would like to review the prior literature on how people in contemporary society understand a memory of a single incident. To investigate how it was remembered as it generates subsequent actions in the present and future, I would like to introduce the concept of collective memory in order to investigate how a memory can be conducted and reproduced in contemporary society in order to generate public understanding of a particular event. Then I will discuss how memory politics developed and played a significant role in a society.

To begin, I'd like to use the term collective memory to refer to the collective memory that exists within a society and has the capacity to establish a shared identity and sense of belonging. According to Martin J. Murrey (2013), collective memory has the ability to simplify the past and connect personal experiences to social memories. Collective memory is significant because it has the ability to generate the past, shape the present, and inspire the future. Individual memory will gradually be shaped to correspond to collective memory as it develops. By this definition, collective memory refers to the space where some experiences have been chosen to be remembered through the act of remembering, while others have been

marginalized and forgotten. The memory that was articulated, interpreted, and reproduced in a manner beneficial to society became the public's collective memory.

Individual memory is distinct from collective memory. While an individual's memory is kept within the individual and quickly fades away upon death, collective memory is shared by a society and can be preserved and transmitted across generations. It interacts with other people and external knowledge and is capable of absorbing information through the learning and reading of a narrative story. Thus, when it comes to collective memory, it is indistinguishable whether it is a memory derived from personal experience or a memory derived from media such as books, autobiographies, or films. However, this type of memory is associated with the collective identity that is formed during the process of integrating collective memory. To establish a sense of belonging or collective identity within a society, a shared set of values is required; memory is one such value that can be constructed as part of the formation of a group identity. Normally, social groups such as nations do not have memory in the psychological sense; rather, nations construct collective memories through a process of selection and exclusion of the information they wish to remember. Memorial signs such as texts, images, rites, locations, and monuments are tangible manifestations of memory that can carry the story and serve as a reminder to those who interact with them of the story they contain. From this, it is clear that collective memory is a type of memory that is embodied in a society and is shared by its members in order to create a collective identity within their group (Assmann, 2008).

If an individual recalls a single incident, this is referred to as individual memory. It must be constructed for collective memory to exist. The story integration of the political unrest in the United States is an example of how collective memory has been conducted. Jill A. Edy (2006) described how Americans remembered the Watt riots of 1965 as a result of the period's economic deprivation. Indeed, this riot was motivated by racial discrimination against Black people; however, this aspect of the story was overlooked, with economic deprivation serving as the gestalt of the story throughout several journals and newspapers, particularly in 1992. The public

media brought the story of the Watt riots to light in 1992 and used it to help people understand the recent social unrest that occurred at the time. This phenomenon not only resurrected the incident's memory, but also reshaped it to the satisfaction of political authorities. The interpretation of the preceding story as the cause of economic deprivation could be used to provide context for the current event in that location. In the process of recreating memory, different presses created variants of the story during that era. Despite the fact that the details of the event may differ, the core of the story is largely identical. The gestalt narrative of economic deprivation is well-served by the political authorities' demand. The conflict stories were also resolved gradually through the gestalt. As a result of this example, the collective memory of a past story was not generated spontaneously, but rather was created and interpreted in the context of the current social condition. While the details of the Watts riots vary, the central plot of the incident is evident in the majority of the stories told in publications, as this is the story that consoled the public and political authorities.

As mentioned previously, collective memory is not the memory that retained the factual details of the event; rather, it was recreated by selectively recalling and omitting details of the incident in order to create the narrative. How a memory is remembered or forgotten is inextricably linked to political issues, as the way people remember an event can vary depending on the political context. The memory that contributed to political authority during a particular period will be commemorated, and as political power shifted, a conflict between remembering and forgetting certain memories may have occurred. According to this phenomenon, memory politics exist, which is a form of memory that plays a significant role in the political sphere. When memory politics existed, memory became more than a shared sense within any social group; it became a tool for political authority in constructing an understanding of current events in the present.

To understand how the politics of memory were generated, it is necessary to examine the narrative surrounding that particular incident. David Myer Temin and Adam Dahl's (2017) article "Narrating Historical Injustice: Political Responsibility and the Politics of Memory" discussed how the narrative of a past event created by

political authorities can be used to effect political accountability in the present. The story can take on a variety of forms depending on the protagonists. Political leaders' public speeches were analyzed to determine how the event was remembered and what future action should be taken in response to it. It can be generated in a romantic manner in which the protagonist expresses profound regret and redemption for a past event but ends up desiring to forget about past social discrimination. In this narrative, the protagonist attempts to ignore the past by forging a united future. Diverse accounts of the same event are also created according to the political authorities' preferences for who should be held accountable for the event, while an anti-narrative in the form of satire may also be made public. Diverse narratives result from the present-day reaction to a past event, which is why political authorities construct the narrative that satisfies their demand. From this vantage point, the politics of memory are considered in terms of how contemporary narratives about the event were constructed.

Apart from the narrative, the act of commemoration can also contribute to the memory of the event. Monuments and memorials are places where spaces, stories, and histories have been gathered and interacted with the public consciousness of the event that is commemorated there. The politics of memory can be observed in how society commemorated the event through the establishment of monuments and memorials.

Katharyne Mitchell examined the relationship between the politics of memory and the construction and destruction of monuments and memorials in her article titled "Monuments, Memorials, and the Politics of Memory." She argued that monuments and memorials are the primary fabric upon which the collective memory is constructed, which is inextricably linked to political issues. The act of commemoration establishes the monument and memorial in the precise location that contained and stuffed time, space, and the story of the event. They also communicate with the populace through the manner in which their hegemonic political power ensured that the incident would be remembered. In this context, the incident's memory can be articulated to serve a particular social ideology at a

particular time. The commemoration's public speech, march, and memorial event all contribute to shaping public memory of the incident (Mitchell, 2003).

The transformation of memory in places can also occur as a result of changes in political power and ideology. A case in point of this phenomenon can be found in Russia post-Cold War, following a shift in the nation's conceptualization. During the Soviet Union's existence in Russia, monuments to communist ideology were erected. However, following the end of the Cold War in 1991-1999, monuments such as the Lenin Mausoleum on Red Square were contested, as the monument itself symbolized the Soviet Union's past failure. The controversy surrounding the monument and memorial built during the Soviet Union period revealed the problematic past that persists.

The meaning of a monument's commemoration can evolve over time, which can result in an anti-monument movement. Brianne McGonigle Leyh observed the recent Black Lives Matter movement in his work "Imperatives of the Present: Black Lives Matter and the Politics of Memory and Memorialization," which included the destruction of several monuments commemorating the suppression of the Black people during the colonization period. The commemoration of these monuments reflects the conflict between Black people's collective memory and their collective memory of suppression. On the subject of memory politics, the author acknowledged the movement of devastation of monuments as a means of delegitimizing the suppressors in the public's memory. Additionally, the author stated that in light of human rights concerns, the act of commemorating public memory, as well as the management of those legitimate memories of the suppression of Black people and other marginalized groups, should be reconsidered in light of humankind's right and equity (Leyh, 2020).

The public memory is connected to political issues in terms of generating the memory of an incident in a way that served their ideology and profited from the way the public remembers the incident. The monument and memorial are critical spaces in the act of remembrance because they dictate how the public should remember a past occurrence. However, the appearance of visual technology such as film created a visual image that allows audiences to think deeply about and interact with the

incident, gradually forming memories about the incident. The following section will discuss how films, as a visual technology, reproduce people's visual memories.

2.3 Films and Memory

As I discussed in the previous section, collective memory is created and plays a role in politics. From this point, we can see that how an event is remembered is inextricably linked to the authority's political actions and the social conditions of the time. Rather than focusing on commemoration through public discourse and monuments, I would like to discuss the role of media such as films in generating collective memory in contemporary society, as films have played a significant role in mass communication via the public. Films have evolved into a medium that engages audiences through their engagement with the narratives in films and their perception of them as a realm of realism.

Historically, individuals' memories of specific events were primarily preserved through written texts, bibliographies, diaries, and journals, or architectural fragments such as monuments and museums. These elements serve as a reminder for the past memory, whose method of storage became ingrained in human culture and was instrumental in generating a society's understanding of the past in the present. However, memory technology evolved with the invention of photographic and film technologies, which enabled people to record events visually. This innovation has continued to alter human culture, transforming it into a visual culture in which people are influenced by what they see in daily life.

The remarkable feature of films is their ability to compress a specific time and space into a moving image, allowing viewers to revisit the event indefinitely as time passed. This function recreates the event's memory and gradually shapes the viewer's understanding of the event in accordance with the images shown in the films. However, the memory depicted in films cannot be considered authentic because it may have been distorted during the editing process. Memories in films are primarily constructed through editing within the contexts and narratives of the film's director. In this context, films have the potential to reproduce viewing experiences in visual images, altering and transforming viewers' original memories, as evidenced by

the political speeches in the first part. The distinction between films and public speeches or journal entries is that films recreated the event visually, thereby generating visual memory. With the ability to recreate a visual memory, it enabled films to distort and transform one's experience even within the experiences themselves, transplanting the memory to the films' audiences (McNeill, 2010).

Films can play a critical role in integrating the narrative of an event; as I previously stated in the section on memory politics, if the main narrative is consistent, the narrative of that incident will be empowered. In the following section, I'd like to introduce the concept of perceived realism into this study in order to gain a better understanding of how films' narrative interacts with audiences' recognition.

Perceived realism is a term coined by mass communication literature to describe the process by which an audience perceives a story from texts or films as realistic. In this regard, perceived realism is a study of how audiences engage with and absorb the narrative of the story as realism, not the actual experience with which the audience was confronted, but narrative experiences in films or fictions with which the audience can interact and immerse themselves as if they were actually there.

Rick Busselle and Helena Bilandzic's article "Fictionality and Perceived Realism in Experiencing Stories: A Model of Narrative Comprehension and Engagement" examined the mental models that engage audiences with the narrative experience in fiction. Three models comprise the mental models. The first is the situation model, which is the narrative that generates the story's events and actions. The second model is the character model, which entails the identities, characteristics, and motivations of the story's characters. The final model is the story world model, which encompasses the story's structure, setting, and logic. The three models work in concert to create a sense of reality within the realm of fictions, allowing audiences to transpose their experiences into the fictional world. The authors defined this as the act of transporting oneself into the story and identification, in which audiences identify with the perspective of a character in the story. To engage audiences with the narrative experience in fiction, the narrative's authenticity must be consistent. If the narrative is disrupted, the transportation and identification processes are also

disrupted. To consider the narrative's realism, one of the two realism perspectives, external realism, the point at which experience in fiction is consistent with reality, or narrative realism, the point at which the narrative's story is coherent without conflict, must not be interrupted. This implies that, in order for the audience to perceive realism in a film, even if the film is fictional, the story should be coherent and free of inconsistencies in the narrative's reality in order to facilitate transportation and identification with the narrative experience in the film. Thus, even though a film is a work of fiction, audiences can perceive it as realistic as a result of the narrative experience contained within the story (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008).

Hyunyi Cho, Lijiang Shen, and Kari Wilson conducted research on the dimensions and roles of perceived realism in narrative persuasion in order to gain a better understanding of how perceived realism worked. The dimensions introduced in the study are *plausible*, which refers to the possibility that narrative behaviors and events could occur in the real world, *typical*, which refers to the possibility that narrative portrayals are similar to the audience's experience, *factuality*, which refers to narratives that depict a real person or event in the real world, and *narrative consistency*, which refers to the narrative being coherent and consistent without contradicting itself. The similarity between this study and the previous one is the emphasis on the narrative's consistency in generating perceived realism. While this study introduces additional dimensions of perceived realism by focusing on how familiar an element of the narrative is to the real world, it also fosters an audience's intense involvement in the story. In the previous study, the process of transportation and identification was analyzed. This study divided the process into three steps that result in narrative persuasion. To begin, *identification* occurs when the audience develops a bond and connection with the narrative's characters as a result of the typicality and factuality dimensions. Second, *emotional involvement*, the process by which the narrative influences the audience, which can be enhanced through plausibility and factuality. Finally, *message evaluation* determines the message's persuasive potential within the narrative, which can be predicted based on narrative consistency and perceptual quality. This study expanded on the previous study by including dimensions in perceived realism and demonstrating the direct relationship

between dimensions and their roles in how audiences process perceived realism (Cho et al., 2014).

The effect of perceived realism on audiences was examined through its influence on film tourism. Two studies on film tourism in South Korea (Kim, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2018) demonstrated the critical role of audience involvement and emotional involvement in film tourism. When television dramas, specifically Korean dramas, interact with audiences and elicit audience involvement and emotional involvement, there is a greater likelihood that the audience will visit the locations depicted in the dramas as a result of their emotional connection to the story setting. The studies demonstrated that locations in dramas had been reimagined as ritual locations by imaginative audiences. As I had previously stated, the experiences in dramas that audiences become involved with through the process also have an effect on their memory structure.

Perceived realism explained how films interacted with their audiences. As we've seen, films play a critical role in creating a sense of realism for the audience, I'd like to discuss the memory that audiences may absorb from watching films by introducing the concept of prosthetic memory. Alison Landsberg (2018) examined the role of films in generating collective memory in this situation. In her article "Prosthetic memory: the ethics and politics of memory in the age of mass culture," she discussed how a memory could be transplanted to those who did not witness the event directly through a process called "prosthetic memory." Landsberg observed that films serve as a repository for memory in a particular time period and can also serve as a medium for memory reproduction and interaction with audiences. By developing an understanding of empathy, we can explain how others can participate in the experience of others. It is the cognitive component that generates the sense of empathy that enables one person to relate to the experience of another. She stated that films have the potential to do so through the use of reproduction technology.

In this study, the process of establishing empathy for audiences is consistent with perceived realism, in which the audience identifies with the character in the film; empathy is established in the sense of cognitive connection to the character. This aspect of empathy and connection is what enables the prosthetic memory to

be implanted into one's memory through film viewing. The study used the film "Rosewood" as an example of how the producer depicted racism in Rosewood through the eyes of a white boy. However, at the film's conclusion, the boy rejects racism as seen through the eyes of a black boy with whom he interacted. Landsberg stated that the film allowed not only the white boy to see the world through black eyes, but also the film's audience. In this film, Landsberg attempted to describe the perspective of black eyes as identification with the characters and to establish the memory of this experience as prosthetic memory. In this context, memory of an incident is not limited to those who live in the area where it occurred; rather, the audience who watched the film may also develop a prosthetic memory for that incident.

Additionally, prosthetic memory can be used to convert one's private memory to public memory. Paula Hamilton observed the role of prosthetic memory in establishing the nation's collective memory in "A Long War: Public Memory and the Popular Media". The study examined the transformation of the private memory of Australian POWs during the Second World War, who were forced to suffer from trauma memory during their days in Japan's POW camps in Singapore in the aftermath of the war. These memories remained a prisoner of war's private memory for several decades prior to the release of the television series "Changi." The visual representation of the torturous experiences brought the torturous experiences to the public's attention and transformed the private memory of POWs into the collective memory of the Second World War for the entire nation. Even though this film dramatized the event and included details that contradicted the real experience of a prisoner of war, Hamilton argued that this television series successfully transplanted the prosthetic memory of this event to the public, demonstrating the films' ability to generate collective memory. Following the broadcast of this television series, Australians began to recognize the traumatic events of the Second World War as a shared national experience (Hamilton, 2010).

However, the concept of prosthetic memory has limitations in the analysis because it is a one-way communication in which the author viewed the audiences as recipients and expected mutual comprehension of that memory for all of the diverse

audiences. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz (2010) demonstrated the future direction of research on the relationship between film and memory, as both are interconnected, and when it comes to the politics of memory, an audience from diverse backgrounds may receive and interpret the story in the film in relation to their own experience, thereby creating their own memory of that incident.

Apart from the concept of prosthetic memory, the 1980s Hollywood films about the Vietnam War provided an example of the role of media in articulating memory. John Storey (2018) examined the memory industries through the lens of the film, examining how it can compel audiences to think and remember events that they did not personally experience in the way the film portrayed. The defeat of the Vietnam War shocked American society, which continued with opposition to the Persian Gulf war. The author of this paper viewed films as a political mechanism for generating American memories of the Vietnam War by creating and reproducing the image of the United States Army as a war hero, and war defeat as a result of a weak leader. The films about the Vietnam War during this era emphasized the image that Americans desired to remember while ignoring the part that Americans desired to forget. As a result of the articulated memory about the Vietnam War evinced following the conquest of the Persian Gulf War and the recalling of the American army's role in relation to the film, the Americans demonstrated their liberation from the memory of defeat in the Vietnam War. As a result of this paper, it is clear that the films analyzed there also served as a narrator, generating the narrative of the Vietnam War in the collective memory of Americans in the same way that other political acts did.

The significance of the media as a visual mechanism was examined through the lens of David Shim's film "A Taxi Driver" (2020). He highlighted two pivotal moments in the films in his study. To begin, he argued that the journalist Hinzpeter's story exemplified the critical role of visual culture in the democratization movement. The film's story demonstrated how the visual image aided in uncovering the truth about the Gwangju Uprising by demonstrating how visual images and moving images captured by the journalist aided in effective communication with the outside

world. On the other hand, through the protesters' symbolic movement, "A Taxi Driver" also represented the Gwangju Uprising as a turning point between the "Old" and "New" South Korea. Symbolics such as the national flag and the absence of national symbols on the military side were represented in the film through the editing function. Shim analyzed this montage, noting that the film represented the "New" and that the protesters held the future of South Korea in their hands. According to his research, visual images have become an integral part of comprehending and reimagining incidents depicted in the media, and on the other hand, the editing function of the film can also influence the meaning of the event.

Films have insisted on recreating the visual image of memory as their primary function. Film editing has influenced the narrative of the event and altered the memory of the event, which is not limited to the experiencers but also transplants the prosthetic memory to the audiences. While it is debatable whether the memory generated by films can be considered authentic, the function of films and their role as mass communication should not be overlooked, as they can actually generate shared experiences through the people who watch them.

CHAPTER III

THE GWANGJU UPRISING

To understand how the Gwangju Uprising began and gained significance in South Korea's political history, I will first recount the story of the Gwangju Uprising from the politics of South Korea prior to the outbreak of the struggle in Gwangju to the Gwangju people's darkest day. Then, I will discuss how Chun Doo-hwan's government and people reacted to the event in the subsequent period following the struggle that resulted in the movement toward democratization. The story of the Gwangju Uprising did not end during the struggle, but was later incorporated into the mainstream collective memory, which is still evident in contemporary South Korean politics. The story of cruelty became the impetus for South Korea's democratic transition.

3.1 Prelude to the Gwangju Uprising: South Korea Politics before May 1980

The republic of Korea, also known as South Korea, one of the few post-colonial countries to achieve democracy, has not had an easy political landscape since its independence in 1948. In comparison, South Korea's political history is replete with obstacles to the establishment of democracy. Since the beginning, there was a long period of authoritarian rule under Rhee Syng-man, followed by a brief period of democratic government following the people's victory in 1960-1961. It was, however, deposed in 1961 by military dictator Park Chung-hee in a coup. Park Chung-hee later became South Korea's president in 1962 and ruled until his assassination in October 1979. The Gwangju Uprising is the struggle that occurred during the transition period following Park Chung-hee's death. To comprehend South Korean politics during the Gwangju Uprising, in this part, I will first introduce the Park Chung-hee regime's final years which was the causation of the Gwangju Uprising.

3.1.1 The Yushin System and people resistance

Park Chung-hee began his regime in 1961 with a military coup and a political ideology centered on anti-Communism and economic growth. With the success of economic growth during his first decade as president, Park was able to retain his position for two consecutive terms with the support of a South Korean society that had been afflicted by economic suppression since the Korean War. However, with economic growth slowing and public demand for democracy increasing, Park narrowly won his third election in 1971.

Several anti-government protests occurred during this time period. There were dynamics in South Korea's political system where people increased their desire for democratic government and labor welfare, putting his regime in an insecure position. Park's government heavily emphasized anti-communism, while the opposition party promoted non-political exchanges with North Korea. Additionally, the changes in the United States' international relationship with Communist China influenced South Korea's policy toward North Korea. To maintain his position in this situation, Park's government attempted to weaken those activists through a measure of authoritarianism. In October 1972, the government imposed emergency martial law and replaced the existing constitution with a new one under a new political system dubbed "the Yushin system," which promoted anti-communism and security through an even more undemocratic system. Park was re-elected as a sole candidate in December 1972 by an electoral body called the National Conference for Unification (Lee, 2010).

South Korean society had descended into the darkness of popular liberty under the Yushin system. The National Assembly and Supreme Court were then completely under the president's control. While the resistance movement persisted, the announcement of several emergency decrees during this time period effectively silenced the populace. Television broadcasts, radio stations, and newspapers were prohibited from publishing freely. Criticizing the constitution or attempting to amend it was prohibited. To dissuade the opposition, the Park government used propaganda about North Korea's intervention. However, despite the government's severe

suppression of political freedom, popular opposition to the government did not disperse.

Increased repression of freedom resulted in an increase in yearning for freedom. When the Yushin system was established under martial law for the first time, the populace dispersed. However, in 1973, popular resistance centered on the university student movement resurfaced. Various movements occurred during this time period in an attempt to amend the current constitution. Emergency Decrees had been enacted to put an end to the protests. Numerous movements were apprehended unlawfully, several activists were imprisoned, but the protests were not subdued. In comparison, a more unified democratic movement and organization arose. Pro-democracy groups spread throughout the country and included academic, religious, and labor organizations.

Between 1973 and 1978, the pro-democracy movement persisted. Tensions between citizens and government reached a zenith in 1978, during the most undemocratic election period in history which demonstrated the government's unpopularity. The pro-democracy movement grew in strength in the aftermath of the election with various anti-government movement to fuel political tension. One of the movements that increased the pressure to the government was a sit-in demonstration led by the female employees of YH Corporation at the NDP's headquarters. As a result of this incident, the NDP was later divided into two camps: the Kim Dae-jung camp and the other government-patronized camp. Kim Dae-jung was adamant about overthrowing the government and revising the constitution.

The situation deteriorated further following nationwide student demonstrations calling on the government to lift Emergency Decree No. 9. The situation reached a zenith in October 1979. Busan and Masan demonstrations organized by students from Pusan National University and Kyungnam University devolved into a civil uprising. The government imposed martial law and deployed paratroopers to quell the protests. The government was under increasing pressure to prevent the uprising from spreading to another region. Surprisingly, on 26 October 1979, during Park Chung-hee's, Cha Ji-cheol's, and Kim Jae-gyu's dinner discussion

about how to deal with the uprising. Park insisted on using paratroopers to suppress the protest, while Kim Jae-gyu opposed the use of additional violations. The discord abruptly brought Park's Yushin system to an end at the hands of Kim Jae-gyu. That night, Kim, deciding that there was no longer any reason to secure the Yushin system, shot Park Chung-hee to death (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2010). Although the Yushin system came to an end, a new face dictator was about to emerge.

3.1.2 Death of Park Chung-hee and the rise of Chun Doo-hwan

Park Chung-hee's death brought an end to his era, but not to authoritarianism in South Korea. The death merely paved the way for the new dictator, Chun Doo-hwan, to continue the military regime under the auspices of the military power group known as "Hanahoe" (One Society), which Park Chung-hee had previously fostered. The death of Park Chung-hee was the root of the Gwangju Uprising which was the event that occurred to obstruct the transition of political power from Park to Chun.

Following Park's assassination, the heated political situation had been halted as the country was placed under martial law. Choe Gyu-ha, who was Prime Minister at the time of Park's death, was appointed acting president. The source of conflict came from two military authorities who envisioned the future military system differently: Chung Seung-Hwan, commander of the forces enforcing martial law, and Chun Doo-hwan, commander of the National Security Force. Two commanders have been assigned the task of investigating the Park's assignment to the Joint Search Headquarters. While Chung attempted to change the Yushin system and eliminated the military from political scene, Chun Doo-hwan with the support from Hanahoe group desired to continue the power of military in politics as it was during the Yushin system (Foundation, 2007).

As a result, Chun intended to seize complete military power for himself. During the investigation into Park's assassination, Chun Doo-hwan charged Chung with having a close relationship with Kim Jae-gyu and being suspicious of assisting Kim in the assassination for a variety of reasons. Chun intended to arrest Chung Seung-hwan

and seize complete military power for himself using this allegation. Certainly, this action was not the people's desire, thus the successful of the coup was the reason that increased the people's opposed of himself.

Arrests were scheduled for 12 December 1979 with assistance from Hanahoe's officer groups. On that day, Chun Doo-hwan directed two officers to meet Chung Seung-hwan at the Chief of General Staff's Official Resident. They invited Chung to accompany them to obtain a statement regarding Kim Jae-gyu's criminal activity, but Chung denied his guilt and requested his assistant. However, the officers coerced him out and temporarily imprisoned him at the Security Agency's detached office in Seobingo. On the other hand, a group of officers posing as commanders from Hanahoe gathered at the office of the Metropolitan Guard's 30th defense commandant in Kyungbok Palace, disregarding their job responsibilities in order to prepare for power consolidation. Simultaneously, Chun visited President Choi for approval of the arrest. Nonetheless, President Choi approved the plan. To counter his adversary, officers at the 30th defense commandant of the Metropolitan Guard ordered one of their officers to disarm the guarding force at the Prime Minister's Official Residence, which was intended to imprison the president.

Between the evening of the 12th and the morning of the 13th, the coup lasted approximately ten hours. Though officers at Army Headquarters and officers in close proximity to Chung agreed to counteract the rebel army's arrest of Chung, their circumstances rendered them incapable of doing so successfully. Chun Doo-hwan deployed the arm force and arrested several Army Headquarters commanding generals. Additionally, they mobilized the military in the metropolitan area and occupied key military structures.

They met President Choi again on 13 December 1979, after imprisoning the important commanding generals at the detached office of the Security Headquarters in Seobingo. The rebel army requested that President Choi sign an order authorizing the arrest of Chung Seung-hwan. Even though the military coup was later declared illegal, President Choi's signature on the approval document implied that Chun Doo-hwan held the highest military power at the time. Though President Choi remained in

power, this action gave Chun and his club, Hanahoe, a new and unique military power which signaled that he was waiting for the time to completely succeed the government position to himself (Lee, 2010).

Even though Chun succeeded in seizing complete military power for himself, the coup failed to seize government office. It took an additional eight months for President Choi to resign due to the coup's pressure, which included the continuation of martial law, strengthening military power, and delaying constitutional revision. Additionally, the coup included a special operation to suppress those who opposed the military coup. The Gwangju Uprising emerged during this longest coup, the remarkable uprising that demonstrated the new dictator's viciousness and.

3.1.3 The resistance to Chun Doo-hwan

Throughout the long period of military authoritarianism, the South Korean people harbored the hope for democracy. Democracy would not mature under the Yushin system. If martial law and military power are maintained, true political freedom will never exist. At the end of 1979, a new dictator emerged, and by the spring of 1980, the popular movement had re-emerged.

Following Chun Doo-hwan's coup, as the spring semester began, the university student movement began to resurge and developed into a focal point for the democratization movement. Initially, it was to protest the private university's nepotistic management and to oppose students receiving military training. The anti-government movement was resurrected through activities within universities, with Seoul National University leading the way and being followed by other universities. From the first of May, the student movement became more politicized, focusing on the demand for the abolition of martial law and the overthrow of the Yushin system. Additionally, they addressed issues concerning the suspension of constitutional amendments and labor rights (Lee, 2010). These political movements started from Seoul then spreading to other regions.

The movement heated up during the first ten days of May, the student movement intended to expand their campaign beyond the confines of the university to a full-fledged street protest. While rumors about the student organizing a demonstration spread, opposition politicians became involved by reiterating their demand for the lifting of martial law and suspension of the constitutional amendment. We could see that before 18 May 1980, the political activities were resurrected actively. Student street campaigns began on 13 May 1980 with a sit-in protest in Seoul's central Gwanghwamun Square which continued overnight. On 14 May, their campaign was taken to the streets, approximately 70,000 students from all of Seoul's universities joined the campaign march from Youngdeung-po to Gwanghwamun square. However, the student movement received only a small amount of support from citizens who had grown apathetic during the lengthy period of authoritarianism. Nonetheless, the street campaign continued on 15 May, with over 100,000 students congregating at Seoul Station alongside students from universities across the country who had begun their own street campaigns.

Students participating in street demonstrations outside of Seoul had clashed with police. The rumor that military forces had been deployed in the vicinity of Seoul reached the ear of the student representative. Thus, the general students' council's student representative abruptly decided to withdraw their campaign at Seoul Station in order to avoid clashing with them (Lee, 2010). The following day, the situation returned to normal. Universities in Seoul were unusually quiet following the recent chaos. In Seoul at the time, student protests were limited to a small group.

According to Chun Doo-hwan, the student demonstrations across the country created an unstable environment for the new military power to maintain their power. This circumstance compelled them to enact drastic measures. Around 12 p.m. on 17 May, the Martial Law Headquarters commanders convened a conference to extend the emergency martial law. President Choi and his cabinet were approached about extending the emergency martial law. At the same day's cabinet meeting, President Choi accepted the extension of emergency martial law under pressure from military officers. At 12 a.m., the entire country was declared under Martial Law Decree No. 10,

which prohibited all political activity. However, prior to the declaration of martial law, police stormed Ehwa Women's University, arresting dozens of student representatives as well as thousands of students and dissenters on the same day. Military forces, including paratroopers with specialized training, were prepared to deploy to areas where the populace continued to resist oppression (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2010). It was suspicious that the actively political movement in the beginning of May 1980 was suddenly shut down before the broke out of the Gwangju Uprising. The protests in other regions were also in a sudden halt as the Martial Law Decree No. 10 was promulgated and only the Gwangju insisted on their struggle.

3.1.4 Student movement at Gwangju Region

As the student movements in Seoul emerged, students from the Gwangju region, led by Chonnam and Chosun universities, had also begun a campaign for university democratization. While the student movements in Seoul were forced to disband, the Gwangju demonstration continued. When the Martial Law Decree No.10 took effect throughout the country, the forces used to suppress the movement elevated it to the level of the Gwangju people's tragedy and the most significant struggle for democratization in South Korean history.

Prior to the severe repressing, the democratization movement in Gwangju had already took place with student activists as the leader. Gwangju at that period was the region dubbed the least developed industrially and economically, the hope for better development was synonymous with democratization. Students in this region, like those in other parts of the country, became a focal point for the country's democratization movement. Since the beginning of May 1980, the Gwangju student movement has been organizing a campaign for democratization, led by student representatives from Chonnam and Chosun universities.

The Gwangju student movement's primary focus was not on politics or the New Military Power. Students at Chonnam University began a similar campaign with the Seoul student movement, the campaign against the Student Defense Corps.

However, as rumors of the New Military Power usurping political power spread, the student movement shifted its focus to a democratization campaign demanding the end of martial law and suspension of constitutional revision.

Following that, student representatives from Chonnam and Chosun universities established "the Emergency Assembly of the Students' General Council," a temporary organization for the democratization campaign against Chun Doo-hwan and his group. They demanded the lifting of martial law. They launched their first democratic campaign, dubbed "the sacred rally for national democratization," from 8 to 14 May 1980. The rally took place on the campus of Chonnam University. The students distributed leaflets expressing their determination to oppose the emergence of New Military Power. During this event, student representatives issued a statement demanding the end of Martial Law by 14 May and expressing their intention to completely resist any attempt by officers to close the university (Foundation, 2007).

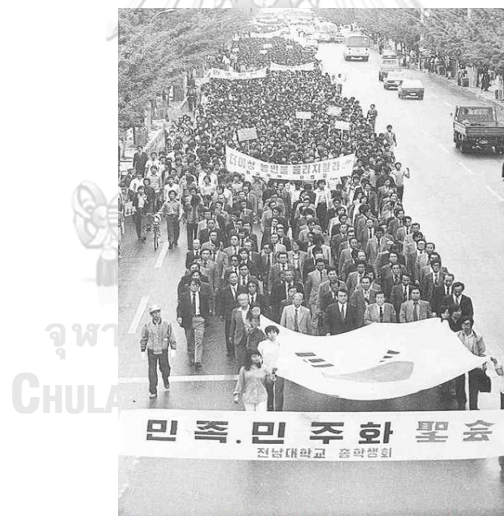


Figure 2: 15 May 1980, Chonnam University professors and students marching on the street Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

Following the students in Seoul's street campaign on 13 May, the Gwangju student movement decided to escalate their movement to a street protest at 1:00 p.m. on 14 May. The students clashed with riot police at Chonnam University's main gate and then marched downtown to Province Hall Square to continue their protest against the martial law. The demonstration continued overnight at the university and

resumed on the street the following morning, marching to Province Hall Square. The student demonstration in Gwangju was well organized, with local residents lending their support. On 15 May, the demonstration continued into the night.

The torchlight march was planned on May 16, the anniversary of Park Chung-hee's coup in 1961. They requested support from the community to "Blackout" or turn off their lights during the march to demonstrate the community's support for the movement. However, despite the fact that the Blackout was canceled due to unrest in other cities, the students insisted on marching to Province Hall Square. Unlike in other cities, the police in Gwangju appear to cooperate rather than suppress the students. On 16 May, students chanted slogans and burned symbols of Park's 1960 coup with the support of local residents on the sidewalk. They called a halt to the protest at night to assess the situation and planned to resume it on May 19 if the government did not lift martial law (Lee, 2017).



Figure 3: 16 May 1980, Torchlight March

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

Nonetheless, reality deviated from expectations. Apart from declaring Martial Law Decree No. 10, the government did not immediately lift it as demanded. Additionally, the report by one of the student unions that the leaders of the Seoul student movement had been arrested created fear among the Gwangju student movement. Numerous student leaders attempted to flee the city. As the 7th Paratroops Brigade arrived in Gwangju that evening, a large number of students and

activists were arrested in accordance with Martial Law. On 18 May, the remnants of the movement lacked a leader. Overnight, military forces deployed, and by the morning of the 18th, riot police and paratroopers had already seized control of provincial government offices and the city center (Foundation, 2007; (Lee, 2017).

As the situation rose intensely, nevertheless, in Gwangju, the mob didn't disperse at the beginning of the suppression in all part of the country. In contrast, the activists in Gwangju attempted on their resistance. This led to the most tragedy political event in South Korea. In the next part, I will give the detail about the ten-days struggle as the background of the study.

3.2 The Gwangju Uprising: The struggle of the people

The Gwangju Uprising, the ten-days democratization struggle, even in the present society, is still remained in the gray space of the history. Though during the past 40 years, there has been the attempt to bring out the truth of the incident, however, the days of the incident was a confuse scenery. Thus, the memory that passed from the past to the present can be interpreted in various way according to the perceiver. In this part, I will discuss on the event that occurred during the Gwangju Uprising from the information I had researched.

3.2.1 18 May 1980: Dawn of the Uprising

Following the proclamation of Martial Law Decree No.10, the country's democratization movement came to an abrupt halt. In contrast for Gwangju, the plan was devised during the previous demonstration: if the government closed the campus, students would congregate at Chonnam University's main gate to continue their resistance. Despite the arrests of the student leaders, the students gathered at Chonnam University's main gate at approximately 10:00 a.m. on 18 May in accordance with the agreement. Their desire to insist on their struggle marked the beginning of the most remarkable democratic movement in South Korea.

At that time, apart from the student activists, normal Gwangju's citizens didn't attempt to participate in the protest. Until the situation heated up on that morning, where the student activists began a sit-in protest chanting anti-government slogans, the resistance held a peaceful sit-in protest as normal. However, in sudden the soldiers shouted "Attack!" and rushed to the student brandishing military-grade batons. They immediately began brutally assaulting student protesters. The battle lasted approximately 30 minutes, during which the students attempted to resist using only their bare hands. The soldiers, on the other hand, were not indulgent; they were already in a deplorable state, ready to murder everyone. The blood of the injured was smeared across the street (Lee, 2017). The brutality on that morning made the people realized how injustice these military were.

To avoid further confrontations, the students left Chonnam University and reconvened at Gwangju Train Station. They then marched to Province Hall Square, where they would continue their protest. The march informed the crowd that Kim Dae-jung's arrest and drew attention to Kim's role as a symbol of political change and Gwangju's development.



Figure 3: One protester was beaten by a group of soldiers in front of the Catholic Center

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

Though the crowd was dispersed from the university's front gate, around 11 a.m., the protest resumed in front of the Catholic Center. It was not long before the soldiers once again suppressed them with tear gas and chased the scattered

protesters violently down Keunnam Avenue. The scene of the soldiers violently beat the dispersed protesters and attempt to apprehend them wherever the crowd fled appeared to the eyes of Gwangju's citizens. The unexpected violation provoked the citizens to gradually joined the students in resisting the soldiers (Lee, 2017).

Nonetheless, the officers violently dispersed the morning demonstration didn't affect the student's attempt to overthrow the military power, they determined to continue their resistance. Around 3 p.m., the crowd gathered in larger numbers and more aggressive. They marched from Gwangju Park with public support and cheers, but their route was once again blocked by police. The clash between protesters and riot police raged on, but the police were unable to subdue the demonstrators. This situation provided an opportunity for the paratroopers to intervene due to the police's ineffective control. Subjugation of dissidents required escalation.



Figure 4: The 7th Paratroops Brigade holding batons at Keunnam Avenue

Sources: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

It was significance that the military aimed to violently suppress the protest. The paratroopers who were sent to Gwangju were the same specially trained soldiers from the Seventh Special Warfare Corps who had crushed uprisings in Busan and Masan in 1979. Their operation, codenamed "Fascinating Vacations," had the cruel objective of suppressing the protest. They were prepared to assassinate the protesters (Foundation, 2007). On that evening, following the police's failure to conquer, the paratroopers took control, murdering the student. The cruelty

suppression arose more intensely within one day. They picked them up carelessly, slammed their heads together, and kicked at their backs until they fell to the ground. The crowd was terrified. The soldiers rushed the crowd through the street and alley, photographing any passing figure that appeared to be a student. The onlooker wept in fear of this violation, and the war veteran stated that he had never witnessed anything quite like this in war (Lee, 2017).

The scene of violation not only increased people's anger but also aroused the insecure feeling. As mentioned in the previous study, the people's struggle during the Gwangju Uprising was not only for democratic resistance but self-defense was also the cause (Kim, 2011). The violation on that day didn't limit to the protester but spreading to the innocent people indiscriminately. Though there were no more students on the street, the rigor subjugation continued. The soldiers continued to search all locations, including residential areas, and dragged out anyone they suspected of being students. On the evening of 18 May, Gwangju cities fell silent. The curfew was increased from 12 p.m. to 9.00 p.m., local businesses were closed, and residents hid in their homes in fear and anguish. Additional paratroopers have been deployed to Gwangju (Lee, 2017).

18 May 1980 marked the beginning of the long ten-days struggle which had remained in the memory of the people. The scene of unexpected violent the people had witnessed on that day remained the traumatic for the people who participated in the incident and its story had been passed to the younger generation. Nevertheless, 18 May 1980 was only the prelude of the incident. As the people witnessed the reality of the dictate military power, on later days, the situation forced the people to guard themselves.

3.2.2 19-21 May 1980: Collective people struggle

Though the struggle for democracy had occurred in Gwangju long before 18 May 1980, for normal citizens, the eagerness to join the struggle were not risen. Until the obviously cruelty arose on 18 May, it was a dynamic in the Gwangju's struggle

for democracy. Nonetheless, 18 May was just the beginning of this tragedy. In following 19-21 May 1980, the situation intensified. This forced the natural formation of the collective community among the Gwangju people (Kim, 2003). This phrase of the struggle was merit in the following formation of the collective memory.

After the appalling incident, on 19 May, the city of Gwangju fell in a state of stress. Universities were closed, as was Keunnam Avenue traffic. Local businesses in the cities' central business districts were temporarily close. Simultaneously, soldiers and police officers patrolled the streets of Gwangju. The day before, the violent had shocked the populace. They were tense, and some were angry.

Nonetheless, the Last Day's incident did not dissuade the movement from disbanding following its encounter with the battle. In comparison, a greater number of people, aside from students, joined the resistance in anguish and sorrow. Around 2,000-4,000 people appeared on Keunnam Avenue at 10:00 a.m (Lee, 2017). The battle continued as their demands were not yet reached and the paratroopers still used violation toward the citizen. The paratroopers savagely beat the protesters and dragged them to the truck, where men and women were only permitted to wear undergarments. The paratroopers did not target protesters alone; they attacked all onlookers, including high school students inside the Test Prep Center. The heinous suppression persisted. While the paratroopers were having a good time on their "Fascinating Vacation," the civilians acknowledge their struggle with a massacre (Foundation, 2007). During these days, each side were struggling to pursue their goal, the protest fought to protect themselves and their ideal while the paratroops fought to end the protest.

May 19 marked a turning point in the movement; it was no longer centered on student activists; instead, ordinary citizens of Gwangju took up the cause. It was the time where the collective community founded unintentionally as the cause of the crisis. The violent of the suppression didn't disperse their intention, in contrast, the intense fighting arose on the side of the people who aimed to defend themselves. From, the barehand, stones and Molotov cocktails were introduced as their weapon on that afternoon.

At this point, the battle continued throughout the day with more severe. Numerous individuals were beaten to death. The demonstration spread to the city's outskirts. Citizens of all ages, genders, and occupations joined the resistance. The city of Gwangju was in chaos, with people confronted by soldiers at every turn. The level of inhumanity reached the point that even the taxis carrying injured passengers were blocked and the drivers were murdered (Lee, 2017; (Y.-h. Kim, 2020). The crisis of the truth about the Gwangju was occurred during these days as news coverage of the incident in Gwangju was blocked. In this period, the truth about the Gwangju Uprising had been distorted to the outside of the region. It was a source of the post-incident's injustice and the craving for the truth in later period. Nonetheless, throughout this weird situation, it grounded the foundation of the collective community as the only source of information available to them was the Fighters' Bulletin, a hand-made leaflet created by Yoon Sang-won of the Deulbul night school (Kim, 2003; Lee, 2017).



Figure 5: The soldier dragged a citizen full of blood

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

The heinous massacre on 19 May stoked people's rage but the attempt of the military to suppress the mob continued, the 3rd Paratroop Brigade was deployed to reinforce the troop on the following morning, 20 May. On that morning, the new strategy was introduced, the substitute paratroopers arrived with a polite demeanor and no bayonets attached to their M-16s.

The situation in this phrase was concentrated as the repeatedly protest and battle. A crowd gathered on Keunnam Avenue, then the battle between paratroopers and civilians erupted once more, but on this day, the paratroopers refrained from pursuing the protesters. Then, the strengthen people's collective struggle was obvious. The united people struggle against the soldiers' inability to suppress them. They successfully broke through the barricades and sat in the street chanting anti-government slogans.

On the other hand, another collective group, the taxi drivers' group was also formed. As the taxis drove around the city, the news of the uprising was easily to spread. The taxi drivers congregated at Gwangju Train Station to discuss the previous day's injustice. As news of taxi drivers being killed by soldiers reached them, their anger flared. As word spread, additional taxi drivers joined in and plotted their retaliation against the soldiers. The group of taxi drivers was an important power in the struggle. They utilized their cars to cross the soldier's line as the soldiers attempted to use tear gas to disperse the taxi drivers (Lee, 2017; Kim, 2020).



Figure 6: The battle at Keunnam Avenue, paratroopers used tear gas.

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

The struggle continued overnight until the dawn of 21 May. The scene of angry citizens stormed the M.B.C. and K.B.S. buildings and set them on fire reflected the dissatisfaction with the broadcast station's refusal to publish news of the Gwangju incident. The people acknowledged that the crisis of news might resulted as the truth of the incident would not reach to the outsider. People's angered flood

the city on that night, important government buildings have been raided. At the train station, there was a skirmish with the paratroopers. The battle's turning point occurred at Province Hall, the government officers' final stronghold. The civilians were surrounded by paratroopers and were shot and killed with their M-18 rifles (Lee, 2017). It was the first time in this uprising that ammunition was used.

That night, citizens successfully occupied significant locations in Gwangju, including the Province Hall. However, the city's telephone signal was cut. The government hardly censored Gwangju-related news. They could only communicate and unite collectively through the Fighter's Bulletin. On the same day, the official government cabinet resigned to demonstrate their accountability for the Gwangju incident (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2017).

The situation on the next day, 21 May was getting more intense. As the ammunition was used, the commander of the paratroops defended the last night gun shot was to protect themselves and the command of the Martial Law allowed them to use the real ammunition with the protesters regarding to defend themselves (Foundation, 2007). This order could imply that the government allowed the gunshot to suppress the protests. In this regard, in the first period, the ammunitions that soldiers used during the Uprising was implied only as the defend action.

Day 3 of the struggle started similar to the previous day. At 9.00 p.m., over 10,000 people had gathered on Keunnam avenue. To reaffirm that there were people died during the suppression, the cart containing two bodies shot to death last night was displayed (Lee, 2017). This action confirmed real death before the news of the uprising was published by the foreign press. However, at that day, the local news in South Korea still attempted to conceal the truth. The fact that the soldiers had really concealed their bodies was confirmed in 2018 by one of the former paratroopers, the secret burial occurred around the Gwangju Prison that night (Jung, 2018b).

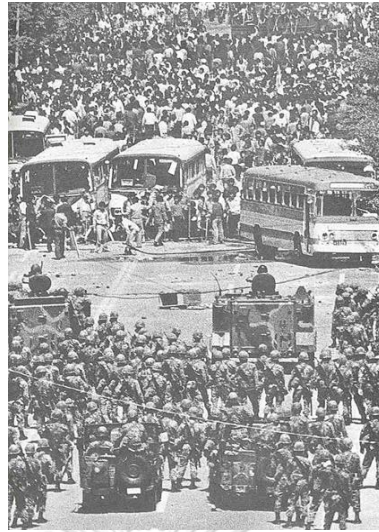


Figure 7: The confrontation between the people and the paratroopers before the bloodshed

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

On 21 May 1980, the battle was even more intense than the day before, with paratroopers shooting at every protester. The soldiers placed the M-60 machine gun on the roof of the Province Hall building and fired into the crowd from there. Every person who attempted to enter the building was shot to death. On Chungang Avenue, the individuals who organized the sit-in protest were shot. The paratroopers boarded a military helicopter at the M.B.C. building and fired on the protesters from above. The hospital was then overflowing with injured patients (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2017).

When the situation reached it peaked on the afternoon, the populace resolved to arm themselves. They form the Citizen Army, the organization to defend themselves against the heinous soldiers with the willingly citizens to join as militia. This organization aimed on used the weapons they raided from the police station to defend themselves and to extrude the soldiers. The first meeting was at the Gwangju Park to set about organizing the combat cells. The first objective was to remove all paratroopers from the city by that evening.

With the new people's organization, around 5.00 p.m., the militia went to the roof of Chonnam University Hospital and installed L.M.G machine guns aimed at

Province Hall, the martial-law forces' stronghold. As the machine guns began to fire, the paratroopers struggled to maintain control of the situation. Around 5.30 p.m., the military decided to withdraw from Gwangju. A gun battle between the soldiers and the militia raged down the street as they retreated. During that night, the people successfully drove out the paratroops.

The citizens of Gwangju were overjoyed that they had finally driven out the paratroopers. On the other hand, the government had anticipated the next step. Operation Sungmu-Choongjang was launched with the objective of liberating Gwangju, utilizing critical action, and then reclaiming the city. That evening, all trains to Gwangju came to a halt at Changsong station. The road to Gwangju was closed due to the closure of the tunnel. The news coverage of the Gwangju incident was skewed. After that, the Gwangju region was liberated (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2017).

During 19-21 May 1980, it was the period where the violation increased at the farthest. The violation didn't limit at the group of protesters, but it was indiscriminately spread on the normal citizens. The days were remembered through the photographs and video footages in later period showed how the miserable it was in Gwangju. Thus, the formation of collective community was also established through this force situation, and it would be strengthened in the later period of the struggle. The collective community that was formed in the struggle had left the memory of the Gwangju Uprising collectively.

3.2.3 22-25 May 1980: Liberated Gwangju

The previous period increased the tension in the city as the sense of self-protecting had increased. After the paratroops left the city, the atmosphere remained with pressure. Gwangju was abandoned by the government after being liberated from other parts of the country. It was a new strategy in the aftermath of the previous night's battle as the military was incapable to seize the protest. It left one choice to prevent the uprising from spreading, the entire road to Gwangju was closed. The Honam Expressway, the main route to Gwangju, was under paratrooper control to

block the region from the outside world. During this phrase, the collective community was naturally formed and strengthen through the citizen's self-organization.

Aftermath of the battle on the last 3 days, the following morning, 22 May, Gwangju received a brief sense of relief and security as no soldiers remained in the city. This was the time for them to clean up the mass left by the latest battle. Local businesses resumed normal operations. Individuals spontaneously formed their own collective group to organize the situation. The women's group supplied food for the protesters. The crime rate was significantly lower than in the natural (Lee, 2017). At Gwangju Park, the Citizen Army reorganized after returning from the battle on the outskirts. They established a centralized strategy for managing the ongoing operation. Every day during the liberation period, the people gathered at Province Hall in an attempt to reach an agreement with the government (Foundation, 2007).



Figure 8: Women in Gwangju prepared food for the protesters

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

For the management of the struggle, two settlement committees have been established to organize and resolve this abnormal situation. The first was the Citizen Settlement Committee, which was comprised of clergy, Catholic priests, attorneys, government officials, and businessmen. The Citizen Settlement Committee is primarily responsible for negotiations with the government. The Student Settlement Committee, on the other hand, was focused on organization and mutual aid. The initial body attempted to reach an agreement with the local martial-law command.

They submitted seven demands to the government, which were denied. Instead, protesters were ordered to surrender their weapons by the martial-law command.

Followingly, as the order from the martial-law command, it broke the discord among the citizens. The debate over whether or not the people should surrender their weapons prior to negotiations became a source of contention within the Settlement Committee. While the Citizen Settlement Committee decided to collect firearms, the populace insisted on arming themselves in case the army used more violent methods to suppress the uprising (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2017). The different opinions from each side was the result of the previous days' brutality which left the people with fear and distrust. This issue later became a source of contention between the settlement committee and citizens.

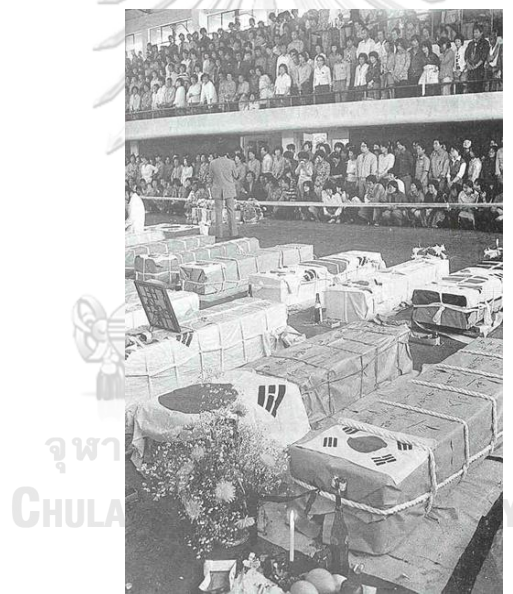


Figure 9: The people at Sungmuguan Gym commemorated to the deceased

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

On 23 May, the coffins of those killed during the previous day's struggle were set up at Sungmuguan Gym for the public to pay their respects. The exhibition was not only for commemoration but to reaffirm the viciousness of military suppression. While on the side of military, soldiers stationed on the outskirts continued to fire at the fugitive. The debate over whether or not they should surrender their weapons continued. Finally, five members of the Citizen Settlement Committee resigned,

resulting in the merger of the two settlement committees (Lee, 2017). However, no agreement could be reached on whether they should exchange weapons with the arrested individuals.

On the other hand, the fighter's Bulletin evolved into a vehicle for collective struggle for the common good. They propagated and induced population movement (Kim, 2003). They organized a mass rally for democracy in collaboration with student activists. The rally's banner was hung on the wall, and commemorative black ribbons were distributed. The first citywide rally began with a moment of silence in remembrance of those who had given their lives, followed by the national anthem. The rally reaffirmed the people's determination to fight for democracy through democratic means. Any individual, regardless of their status, has the ability to become a speaker and lead the demonstration. It encompassed not only political speeches, but also singing, short plays, and poetry. Every day, the mass rally continued, it was a collective activity that strengthened the soul of democracy to Gwangju citizen. Nevertheless, the rally was occasionally interrupted by the military, which dropped flyers proclaiming the protesters to be North Korean spies, but this only added to the public's rage (Lee, 2017). The military's action could be implied as the intention to impute the movement as infiltrate terrorist.

The plan to negotiate with the government continued over this phrase. Concerning the issue of surrendering their weapons, on the morning of 24 May, the eight-point follow-up to the negotiation with the government earned the Settlement Committee the people's disfavor. They recognized that by surrendering their weapons, they increased their chances of unconditional surrender to the army. Their concern was for the army's retaliation.

Though the Settlement Committee was naturally formed to manage with the situation, there was the public's suspicion of the Settlement Committee that they were conspiring with the military for unconditional surrender. Disagreement between the people led by activists and the Settlement Committee grew as the people became dissatisfied with the requirement to disarm and surrender. As a result,

several committee members resigned at 12 a.m. on 24 May, but the discord persisted (Foundation, 2007; Lee, 2017).

During the liberated Gwangju's early days, the most significant source of contention was the issue of weapons. The conflicting perspectives of the Settlement Committee's leaders sparked an intense debate between them and the activists outside Province Hall. Until the night of 25 May, when the new leader emerged as the Committee to Fight for Democracy, following a lengthy discussion. This was the group of hardliners who insisted on arming themselves and fighting until the bitter end. Their strategy consisted in resisting and negotiating. The group's leaders included student activists, workers, and teachers. They intended to mobilize the reserve army and form an anti-terrorist unit. Their primary objective was to restore normalcy to Gwangju while the struggle continued.

Nonetheless, the Committee to Fight for Democracy's strategy was well thought out as a long-term struggle, and on the side of the Martial Law troop, this operation must not drag on indefinitely. The military's negative impact would increase if the uprising continued for an extended period. The D-day for the Sungmu-Choongjang Operation's final state operation to reclaim the Province Hall was set on the same day the committee was formed. The operation was scheduled for the morning of 27 May in order to purge the remaining dissidents.

3.2.4 Before the dawn

The Gwangju Uprising had continued for a period which left the city of Gwangju in crisis situation. Nonetheless, for the people, surrender was not their desire. For them, it was not only the soldiers to retreat from the city, but the more important goal was the justice for the people who had sacrificed themselves during the early days of the struggle. However, no matter how the people decided to negotiation with the government, the result was still the unconditionally surrender which would turn the movement into the terrorist. With the oppressive situation, the people decided to resist until the end.

As dawn broke on 26 May, the pressure increasing as rumors about the army had surrounded Gwangju prepared for the final operation. Several members of the Settlement Committee took the initiative and knelt on the street. They attempted to obstruct the deployment of military tanks by self-sacrifice, but military officers only asked dissidents to surrender and repatriate their weapons before midnight on 26 May.

On behalf of the new leader group, the Committee to Fight for Democracy, they organized another mass rally that day and attempted to garner public support through a local radio station and newspaper. The negotiation with the provincial administration continued, with seven-point demands that the administration primarily focus on restoring normalcy to the situation and organizing a province-wide funeral. The situation went on as normal. The administration even granted the request and set the funeral date for 29 May. However, Vice-governor Chong Si-chaе requested that protesters surrender their weapons in exchange. The committee denied and adopted a seven-point people's resolution, which included a call for the government to resign and the martial law to be immediately lifted (Lee, 2017).

Another mass rally was held in the afternoon, but as the rally concluded, the leaders announced that the military might invade that night. The crowd fell silent for a brief moment. With their current circumstances, it was impossible to repel the military. Numerous weapons were abandoned during the Settlement Committee's previous discord. After learning of the possibility of the troops returning, some protesters left Province Hall Square. The remaining crowd, on the other hand, continued marching toward the military cordons and chanted the slogans. When night fell, the leader warned those gathered in the Square to flee immediately or risk being killed. That night, 150 militiamen departed from Province Hall. This figure includes volunteers who are still students. They refused to surrender and were prepared to fight to the death.

Indeed, regardless of the state of affairs and the ongoing negotiations between the administrator and protesters, the Sangmu-Choongjang operation, which was a five-state operation, had designated the dawn of 27 May as its final state

(Foundation, 2007). The army intended to use force to subdue the populace's resistance, including the use of live ammunition. Since the afternoon, the paratroopers have been deploying and infiltrating Gwangju's key locations, including the Province Hall, the YWCA, the Council Building, and the Tourist Hotel.



Figure 10: Bullet Mark at the YWCA Building after the battle on 27 May

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

As of 1.00 a.m. on 27 May, the special attack corps had deployed to Gwangju and seized control of the mountains behind Chosun University. The paratroopers then began infiltrating key points in preparation for an attack on the city center at 3.30 a.m. The telephone line was severed, indicating an invasion. Park Yong-sun, the publicity bureau, drove through the city to announce the invasion of the city by government troops. She pleaded with the populace to fight alongside them and not to forget them. It was a difficult night for Gwangju residents to sleep (Lee, 2017).

The military forces' strategic objective was to invade via five different routes in order to attack the Province Hall from five different directions. The final battle began at 3.30 a.m., after the troops reached Gwangju's central business district. The first engagement occurred at Province Hall, which was manned by the Third Special Warfare Brigade. The Seventh Special Warfare Brigade was then stationed at Gwangju Park, followed by the Eleventh Special Warfare Brigade at the Tourist Hotel and Chon-il Building. Armed with their M-16 rifles and hand grenades, the soldiers attacked the dissidents. They fired indiscriminately at the militia. The resistance used

every bullet remaining in their arsenal to counterattack, but due to a shortage of ammunition, the battle lasted less than two hours. The few survivors who remained surrendered. The military pursued them and shot at anyone who attempted to flee.

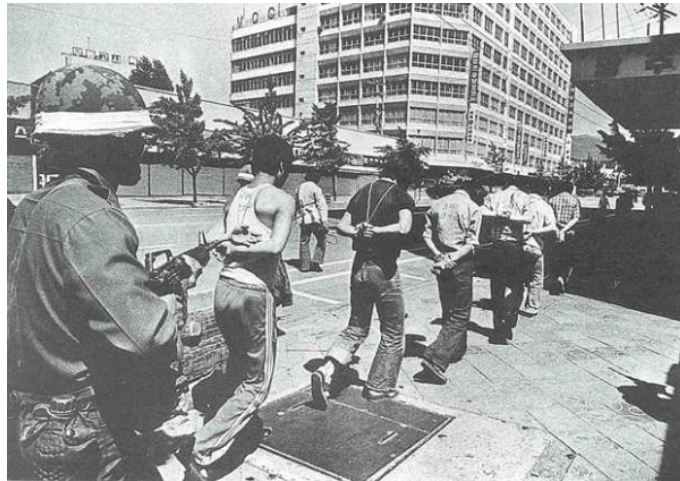


Figure 11: After the battle, the survivors were all arrested

Source: The May 18 Institute Chonnam National University website

Several bodies fell as the sun rose. The survivors were apprehended while crawling on the ground covered in blood and pain. They were all bundled into military vehicles and imprisoned in military facilities. It was the conclusion of a ten-day struggle for democracy, but it was not the end of the South Korean democracy movement. Though the scene ended tragically, the survivors' minds were still haunted by the tragedy of their deceased comrades. The scene of the Gwangju Uprising was not forgotten by the populace; it remains etched in the collective and national memory. The unforgivable tragedy (Lee, 2017).

3.3 The Gwangju Uprising and the People's Struggle

The defeat of popular resistance during the Gwangju Uprising left a semblance of democracy in South Korea's history. The incident's aftermath paved the way for the New Military Power to seize political power. Nonetheless, the new authoritarian's attempt to remain in power unconditionally was unlikely to succeed.

The defeat left a mark on the people's hearts, and that mark was instrumental in turning the tide of South Korea's democratization movement in the 1980s.

After the end of the Gwangju Uprising, Chun Doo-hwan and the New Military Power continued to seize power from the government following the suppression of the Gwangju Uprising. On 26 May 1980, a Special Committee for National Security Measures was established. This organization attempted to discredit and prohibit several political activities of opposition politicians by implicating them as collaborators with the rebel. The truth about the Gwangju incident was masked by media manipulation. There was little news coverage of the events in Gwangju, except for a photograph of a rioting mob (Seo, 2020). It was the time where the truth about the incident was distorted to legitimate the new authority. The memory of the Gwangju Uprising in this period was concealed while the victim received only injustice. Chun Doo-hwan's repression of political freedom included media censorship. Nine journalists have been detained for attempting to expose the Gwangju scandal. Numerous media outlets were compelled to remove the journalists. Several tens of thousands of people were deemed suspects and detained in military camps. According to the new university system, professors and students were expelled. Following the Gwangju Uprising, human rights were grossly violated (Foundation, 2007). The government put all their attempt to cover the truth about the violation for their own propose.

Finally, on 16 August 1980, the current president, Choi Gyu-ha, resigned. The following October, Chun Doo-hwan was elected by the National Congress for Reunification, followed by the constitution's division. The new constitution granted him legitimacy and allowed him to continue his regime for seven years in a single presidential term. Chun Doo-hwan was the military and political leader at the time (Lee, 2010).

Though the military dictator suppressed the truth about the Gwangju incident, the people's attempt to resist and justify the Gwangju Uprising persisted. The arrested individuals continued their resistance in the military prison by staging hunger strikes and refusing to obey orders. On the other hand, as news of the uprising's

violations reached Seoul, activists in Seoul resorted to more radical tactics. Only a few days after the defeat did the first attempt at disclosing the truth about the Gwangju Uprising occur. Kim Eu-gi, a Sugang University student, was the first to commit suicide by jumping from the building on 30 May while chanting an anti-government slogan. Then, on 9 June, a laborer, Kim Jong-tae, set himself on fire after distributing leaflets to console the Gwangju people's spirit. Between 1980 and 1987, this radical resistance persisted. Several people committed suicide in protest of the Gwangju Uprising's secrecy, which continued alongside the democratization movement (Na, 2001). It was obvious that the memory of the Gwangju Uprising during Chun's regime was full of the memory politics as both sides tried to contend over the incident's narrative.

Moreover, the incident also increased the anti-Americanism sentiment in South Korea according to the allowance of the troops deployed from the DMZ during the uprising period. South Koreans' attitude toward the United States changed following the uprising, as they realized the US did not truly support democratization, as they expected the US to assist them during the suppression, but instead supported the suppression. This created the perception that the US used South Korea solely for its own strategic purposes (Shin, 2006).

Apart from the radical movement, the spirit of the Gwangju Uprising may endure through the May Movement's democratization movement. It represented how the public desired to remembrance the event. The commemoration continued to exist each year following the incident, despite the government's suppression of the truth about the Gwangju incident. All pro-democracy groups demonstrated their resistance by commemorating the Gwangju Uprising, which empowered the resisting movement every May following the uprising. Individuals who were harmed or involved in the incident formed associations to continue their fight for the victims' justice. These associations included the "5.18 Bereaved Family Association" for those who had lost loved ones during the uprising, "the Moodeungsan Social Meeting of Those Wounded During the 5.18 Incident" (Foundation, 2007), "the Gwangju Democratization Movement Youth Association," and "the Gwangju Uprising

Association of Drivers for Democracy" for those who had participated in a demonstration (Y.-h. Kim, 2020).

That was the period following the uprising, which bolstered the spirit of South Korea's democratization movement. The Gwangju Uprising during the Chun Doo-hwan government did not fade into obscurity as a defeated movement; rather, it heightened desire for democracy, resulting in the expansion of the democratization movement, as evident in every May struggle since 1980. Though the Gwangju Uprising manifested itself in the latter movement as a demand for truth and compensation, it was difficult to deny that the movement's growing spirit was a relic of the Gwangju Uprising. Thus, we could see how memory politics worked during this period as there were two sides of narrative being published, the first one was from the government authority who attempted to cover the truth of suppression and distorted the meaning of the uprising, the latter was the attempted from the public to reveal the truth about the suppression.

To summarize, following a lengthy period of struggle for democracy in South Korea, the rising of all country struggle resulted in the June Uprising's success for the people in 1987, which can be attributed to the lessons learned from the Gwangju Uprising. The June 29 Declaration resulted in the adoption of a new constitution and the organization of a democratic election. South Korea's new era had begun, and the time had come to justify the truth about the Gwangju Uprising and its victims.

3.4 Memory of the Gwangju Uprising

The first period's memory of the Gwangju Uprising was ambiguous. As previously stated, the government attempted to portray the uprising as a riot mob and propagandized the movement as a North Korean intervention. Chun's government portrayed the movement as a threat to the country's security. However, on the side of the people, there was a battle to restore the movement's faith. The conflict of memory manifested itself during this phrase, when two opposition political parties attempted to usurp the movement's meaning. One side was tasked

with securing political power, while the other was tasked with bringing the movement's truth to light.

Nonetheless, the advent of a new era in which democracy developed into a significant social ideology altered the meaning of the Gwangju Uprising significantly. The once-reluctant memory had reshaped itself into a pivotal moment in South Korea's democratization history. Following the establishment of the Roh Tae-woo administration, the effort to ascertain the truth about the incident became an official priority. To cement his position and establish legitimacy for Roh, who had previously maintained a close relationship with Chun Doo-hwan during this period of transition, the first investigation was launched. The National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) was established in 1988 to conduct an investigation into the massacre's perpetrators and to punish those responsible. While the organization's stated objective was to investigate the perpetrator, the end result was solely compensation for the victims. The fact that the full investigation was halted during the suppression due to the relationship between Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo was one reason for the investigation's failure. However, the NRC's proposed Incident Resolution Policy aided in redefining the Gwangju Uprising. The Gwangju Uprising was no longer viewed as a riot mob, but rather as a democratization movement. Additionally, the fact that the violation occurred during those days was revealed through military suppression, and the victims should be compensated.

The unresolved issue of the Gwangju Uprising persisted throughout the administration of Kim Young-sam, which was recognized as the country's first civil government. His era began with the hope that a new Korea society would prioritize human rights and freedom. In the early 1990s, organizations responding to the truth about the Gwangju Uprising became more active. Nonetheless, Kim Young-sam's initial response to the Gwangju issue was disappointing, as he maintained the compensation program but refrained from investigation and punishment. When questioned about the truth and legality, Kim only stated that "history will judge," implying that there will be no further investigation. One fact that hampered the

investigation was the fact that Kim Young-sam's political party was formed by combining the parties of the previous two presidents.

The investigation intensified in mid-1995, when news of Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo accepting bribes from major business stoked public outrage. Not only were the negative remarks directed at the two previous presidents, but Kim himself was suspected of their relationship. It became clear that Kim needed to distance himself from Chun and Roh, and this was the ideal time to revive the Gwangju Uprising investigation as a political tool. Additionally, this year marked the first time that the government supported the annual commemoration of the Gwangju Uprising. Nonetheless, the primary objective of the people and the Gwangju Democratic Uprising Memorial Foundation, which was in charge of the commemoration, was to bring justice and restore the movement's honor through the legal process (Lee, 2012).

Initially, the prosecution of Chun and Roh was barred by the statute of limitations, making it difficult to prosecute these two former presidents in connection with the Gwangju Uprising legally. Disaffection for this issue prompted another rally in Seoul on the occasion of the Gwangju Democratic Movement's 15th anniversary. The rally called for the passage of Special Laws to address this issue. Finally, the National Assembly passed the Special Act Concerning the May 18 Democratization Movement, which established the right to retry the perpetrators of this suppression. Chun and Roh's trial began in 1996, and has been dubbed the Trial of the Century. Chun's final conviction resulted in a life sentence, Roh received a 17-year sentence, and 23 subordinates received sentences. However, all of those prisoners were released in 1997 as a result of presidential pardons (Hanley, 2014; Lee, 2012).

Apart from the Special Act, which directly punished the Gwangju Uprising's responsible individuals, a few laws relating to the democratization movement were passed between 2000 and 2005. The Act for Restoring the Honor of the Democratization Movement and Compensation for Its Victims (2000), dubbed the "Democracy Act," was enacted to honor those who made sacrifices during the movement. Then came the commission to investigate suspicious deaths that

occurred during the democratization movement, dubbed the "Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths" (2001). The Basic Act for Coping with Past History for Truth and Reconciliation was enacted in 2005 to serve as a truth-finding mechanism within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Hanley, 2014).

Following the Trial of the Century, the Gwangju Uprising's honor was restored. Following the trial in 1996, the government declared 18 May a national holiday in 1997, and the Gwangju Democratic Uprising Cemetery was opened the following year. It was the first time the Prime Minister attended the annual commemoration of the Gwangju Uprising in 1997. The Gwangju Uprising, which occurred during the Kim Young-sam administration, cemented the period between old and new South Korea's legitimacy and significance in South Korean society.

If the Gwangju Uprising was manipulated during the Roh Tae-woo and Kim Young-sam eras to validate their positions as democratic nation leaders, the Gwangju Uprising retained a stronger memory during the Kim Dae-jung era. As Kim had an intimate relationship with the Gwangju region due to his birth as a son of Gwangju, his efforts to memorialize the Gwangju Uprising elevated it to national prominence. The distinction between Kim Dae-jung's actions on the Gwangju Uprising and those of the other two previous presidents was his attempt to create a heroic narrative about the Gwangju Uprising, whereas the other two focused exclusively on the tragic story and compensation. In 2002, he enacted the Act on the Honorable Treatment of Persons Who Have Contributed Significantly to the May 18 Democratization Movement. This elevated the victims of repression to the status of national heroes. Then, several signs honoring the democratic movement were placed in Gwangju memorial locations, including the Mangwon Cemetery, where the cemetery's front gate was dubbed "The Gate of Democracy." (Lee, 2012)

Since the political transition from military authoritarianism to civil government, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising has shifted from riot mob to heroic movement. The shifting paradigm reflected the politics of memory, in which the same story can be told in a variety of ways. Nonetheless, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising had not reached a static state in contemporary South Korean

society. The annual commemoration of the uprising continues, as do the truth-finding and justice processes. Though the trial to imprison Chun and Roh concluded in 1996, several cases of torture and sexual assault were left unresolved by the legal process. It took 38 years until the report of the May 18's stories revealed information about the uprising's sex crimes. Thus, President Moon Jae-in promised to conduct an investigation into this matter only in 2018 ((Jung, 2018a; Seong, 2018).

Even 40 years later, efforts to ascertain the truth about the Gwangju Uprising continued. In 2020, President Moon Jae-in, who identified himself as one of the activists arrested prior to 18 May 1980 in Seoul, stated during an interview commemorating the uprising's 40th anniversary that he needed the investigation to ascertain who was responsible for the uprising's open fire (S. Kim, 2020). Even though time has passed, it appears as though the memory of the Gwangju Uprising has not. Not only for the commemoration, but also because they believe that justice and the truth about the uprising have not yet been established.

CHAPTER IV

NARRATIVES AND MEMORY IN FILMS

Since 1987, after the abolishment of the military regime, the Gwangju Uprising then had become the nation's shared memory. In the first phrase, the Gwangju Uprising's story remained in misty that aimed to clarify the truth. But as the time passed, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising had accreted significant in history of South Korea's democracy as a remarkable struggle. Even in the present, the topic of the Gwangju Uprising didn't fade from the society. Its memory remained a fragment in several media which aimed to inherit its narrative from generation to generation. In this chapter, I would like to analyze the narratives of the Gwangju Uprising that recreated through the films, *May 18* (2007), *26 Years* (2012), and *A Taxi Driver* (2017) to understand how narratives of the incident as a part of politics of memory had been integrated in the films.

4.1 Gwangju Uprising Films

The films that I selected to analysis in this study directly involved the Gwangju Uprising as the main plots in the story setting. However, to understand how memory politics worked toward them, each film selected are differentiate on how the story had been perceived from which perspective. The different perspective and narrative communicated with the audiences in differently. *May 18* (2007) told the forthright story of the incident to the eyes of the involvements in the incident. While *A Taxi Driver* (2017) was focused on two persons in honorable manner. The first two films had their settings at the Gwangju Uprising, but the other one *26 Years* had its setting on the following 26 years with the focus on the injustice for the victims. To begin, I would like to start from the basic information and plots of the films in this part.

4.1.1 May 18 (2007)



Figure 12: May 18 (2007)

Source: IMDb

“May 18” is a film directed by Kim Ji-hoon and produced by CJ Entertainment. It first released in South Korea on 25 July 2007 and received gross worldwide profit of 49,282,156 U.S. dollars. The film received the rating on IMDb at 6.9 and on Cine21, a Korean site at 7.71. Its Korean name is “화려한 휴가” (Hwaryeohan Hyuga) which directly mean as “Fascinating Vacation” imitated the name of paratroop operation during the Gwangju Uprising (IMDb; Cine 21, accessed on 17 September 2021).

May 18 told the story of the 10 days struggle in the Gwangju Uprising through the local eyes. The film started from a scene depicted a normal life of Kang Min-woo, a taxi driver in Gwangju who lived with a younger brother, Kang Jin-woo, a bright future student who attempted to go to Law school at Seoul National University. Min-woo also met and established a relationship with Park Shin-a, a nurse at the church Jin-woo had participated. The first part contained background of Min-woo’s life with a little slide of romance. While on the other hands, the paratroop was deploying to Gwangju.

Min-woo and other local Gwangju citizens didn’t notice that on May 18, their life would unbelievably change. On that day, Min-woo arranged a date with Shin-a and Jin-woo, however during their date at the cinema, there was a sudden attacked from the soldiers who chased the protesters into the theater. A smoke that filled the

theater made the audiences in excitement. As they stormed out of the cinema, the street was in chaos. People was in confuse of the violent in front of their eyes where the soldiers indiscriminately beat the passing by but he managed to escape. On the next day, Min-woo was accidentally caught by the soldier as he tried to assist the wounded to the hospital. On the side of Jin-woo, he received the news that his friend was beat to death by the soldier. The anger fueled the classroom, they want to join the resistance. On that evening, two brothers had discord over the current situation as Min-woo desired to avoid the chaos but Jin-woo attempted to join the protest. Min-woo was worried about safety but Jin-woo insisted that more people would overcome the paratroop.

The violent accelerated on the next day as the trolley carried two corpses appeared on Keunnam-ro. The protest on 21 May was a nightmare for Min-woo. The crowd facing with the soldiers who promised to retreat from Gwangju but as the national anthem was playing, the soldiers started to strafe to the crowd. People dispersed in sudden, nonetheless, among the chaos mob, Jin-woo was shot in his stomach. It was a turning point for Min-woo whose first desire was not to take part with the protest. The suffer of his death brother forced him to join the group of volunteer citizens to loot the police station to counteract with military. With the assistance from Park Heung-soo, Shin-a's father who was a former commander of special force, the crowd successfully chased away the paratroop. Followingly, the Citizen Army was formed by Heung-soo. Min-woo and his companion joined the Citizen Army with the cooperation with the Father from the church. While the Citizen Army prepared for the fight with the paratroop, the relationship between Min-woo and Shin-a became profound.

Nevertheless, the victory was temporary. Heung-soo received the new from his former comrade about the plan to retrieve Gwangju. Though he tried to persuade the commander to compromise with the citizen, the commander insisted to use force violently. The Citizen Army noticed that the paratroops had deployed and killed the people on the bus at the city's outskirt. When the news arrived on the evening of 26 May, Heung-soo made a speech for the group to prepare for the sacrifice and if any didn't desire to sacrifice, they should leave. It was a depressive as

the comrades' families begged them to leave the scene, but it was a burden for them to leave their companion to the unknown faith.

As the tension arose, Heung-soo, Min-woo, and Shin-a all knew that to stay at the building might result as death. Heung-soo who was just realized the relationship between Min-woo and Shin-a asked Min-woo to escort his daughter out of the scene while he guarded the building. However, Min-woo didn't want to leave. After he escorted Shin-a out, he decided to go back to the building. The Citizen Army prepared for their last fight. On that night, the city of Gwangju filled with the voice of a women, Shin-a, who asked for their assist on their fight. However, it was difficult for the unprofessional militia to overcome the well-trained soldier. The building painted with blood. While the voice of Shin-a echoed in the city asking the people to remember the people who sacrificed.

At the end of the film, there is an imitating imagination of the married ceremony of Min-woo and Shin-a, but while everybody on that photo wearing lustily smiles, only Shin-a expressed a deep depressing face.

4.1.2 26 Years (2012)



Figure 13: 26 Years (2012)

Source: IMDb

If “May 18” is a film that depicted the incident directly, “26 Years” is a different to interpret the incident through the film by brought up an issue of the

victims in later years. The film directed by Cho Geun-hyun was first aired on 29 November 2012, 5 years after “May 18” was released. It received worldwide gross profit at 17,003,684 U.S. dollar with 6.3 rating on IMDb, a little lower than “May 18”. While on the Korean’s site, Cine21, Korean netizens gave the score of 7.89 rating, slightly higher than “May 18” (IMDb; Cine 21, accessed on 17 September 2021).

26 Years is a fictional film based on true story. The film contained some dramatic scene with a slight of action part. Its story proceeded around three main characters, Shim Mi-jin, Kwon Jung-hyuk, and Kwak Jin-bae who connected through their past background. Shim Mi-jin was a girl who seek to become a sharpshooter athlete, but her path was blocked by her drunken father. In fact, how her father became lunatic was due to his past loss during May 1980. Mi-jin’s mother was shot death by the unknown bullet while they were staying inside their home. This loss made him become insane and, in the end, he burned himself to death in front of Chun Doo-hwan’s residential.

Similar to the other twos, Kwon Jung-hyuk, a traffic police who response for the traffic light control. His desired to be a policeman was due to his promise with his sister. However, at the time he succeeded his dream occupation, his sister didn’t there to congratulate him. His sister had passed away during the massacre on Geunnam-ro during the Gwangju Uprising in front of his eyes. While on the side of Kwak Jin-Bae, a Gwangju gangster, he lost his father during the battle which left his mother a psychotic symptom. The way he grew up observing his mother being insane as wrath toward Chun Doo-hwan covered in her mind, this was a mind breaking for him.

They were strangers to each other until a man, Kim Gap-se appeared. Kim Gap-se’s foreground was a businessman but actually he was one of the paratroopers who participated in the operation at the Gwangju Uprising. Kim Gap-se was sent to the operation in Gwangju during May 1980 without acknowledge the actual purpose of this operation but to follow the order, he had to assault his compatriots. This left him trauma. Gap-se appeared before Mi-jin, Jin-bae, and Jung-hyuk to persuade them to join his revenge plan to execute Chun Doo-hwan as he needed apologize from

him. At first, all of them had different opinion and reluctant to join the plan but as they were suffered for a lengthy of time, they finally agreed with his plan.

On the side of Chun Doo-hwan, the film depicted how ignorance he was throughout these past years, he never showed his regret toward his action. He lived in a comfy house with several bodyguards surrounded and paid no attention to the people's opinion toward him. For the victim, they never reached the justice as the man had never regretted his action.

Gap-se's group planned to intrude to his residential. Jin-bae perturbed the officers who guarded the house. Mi-jin was in charge of sniper. The discord among them occurred as Jin-bae realized that Gap-se was the soldier who murdered his father. The group went in trouble. Mi-jin insanely attempted to shoot Chun while he was on the road but Jung-hyuk was hesitated to assist Mi-jin's plan which resulted as her plan fell. The situation getting worse as Jung-hyuk decided to leave because he need to hold his position as a policeman.

Nevertheless, the situation provoked Chun's secretary, Ma Sang-yeol. He desired to increase his security but it gave the opportunity for Gap-se to infiltrate. His secretary, Kim Joo-an who was actually his adopted child utilized the greed of another secretary, Tak Sil-jang, to graft him. Finally, on 18 May 2006, 26 years after the incident, Kim Gap-se's plan came to its finale. He met Chun himself at Chun's residential while Mi-jin waited at nearby building planned to snipe to Chun. Jin-bae undertook of drawing attention from the guards.

Gap-se met Chun and asked him if he could remember his order 26 years ago. He revealed to him that he was a soldier who suffered from his order. However, Chun didn't show any condolence. His ignorance infuriated Gap-se, he was in anger and ready to kill Chun. However, his plan was aware to the police because Jung-hyuk. Jin-bae who was on the outside had to face with the police group. He tried to break to the inside. While on the side of Gap-se, the attempt to shot Chun was unsuccessful. The situation went worse as he was shot by Ma Sang-yeol, his old comrade who had become Chun's secretary.

At the peak of the scene, Jung-hyuk decided to help Jin-bae broke through the police line. He opportunely reached to Chun while he was trying to escape. It was a judgement time for Chun as Jin-bae dragged him to the broken window, the spot where Mi-jin could shoot him. However, on Mi-jin’s side, the police had reached to her spot and tried to arrest her. Then there was a bullet sound rang out, the film screen went black, and left the open-ended for the viewer whether who was shot at the last scene.

4.1.3 A Taxi Driver (2017)

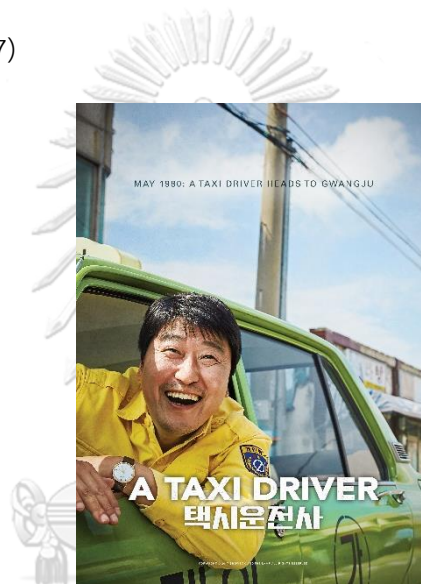


Figure 14: A Taxi Driver (2017)

Source: IMDb

The last film I selected in this study is “A Taxi Driver”, a film that based on the story of Jürgen Hinzpeter, a German reporter who reported the news of the Gwangju Uprising to the world. The film directed by Jang Hun was released on 2 August 2017 in South Korea and 11 August 2017 worldwide and it made 86,252,940 U.S dollar for worldwide gross profit, the highest among three films selected in this study. It also received the highest rating on IMDb among the other two films as the rate of 7.9 but for Korean netizens, the film got the lowest rating among the films selected at 6.52 on Cine21 (IMDb; Cine 21, accessed on 19 September 2021).

A Taxi Driver, though it was based on a person's real story, the film also contained a fictional part especially on the part of Kim Man-seob (Kim Sa-bok), the taxi driver which I will be discussing on this topic in later part (Min and Lee, 2018). The film focused on the story of Kim Man-seob, a Seoul taxi driver who lived with a daughter. He was quite a man who ignored to political situation and focused only on his job as he had an unpaid rental burden. One day, he perchance heard about a foreigner who would pay 100,000 won for a roundtrip from Seoul to Gwangju. He took this chance to pick up that passenger instead of the taxi driver who was assigned to this job.

The passenger who willing to pay 100,000 won for a roundtrip was Jurgen Hinzpeter, a German reporter who was informed about the violate suppression in Gwangju. After he received the news, he hastily flew to South Korea and arrived there on 20 May 1980. Kim Man-seop came to pick him up and it was a roughly beginning of their journey to Gwangju.

Man-seop didn't realized the situation at Gwangju, as he arrived at outskirts of the city, he was blocked by the soldier barricades. Man-seop decided to turn back to Seoul but Jurgen insisted he had to reach to Gwangju or else Man-seop would not be paid for the carfare. Finally, by impersonate Jurgen as a businessman, they could pass through the blockade and reached to Gwangju. But as they arrived in the city, the atmosphere was deserted. There was only an empty street filled with leaflets on the street. The buildings were decorated with anti-government slogans.

Fortunately, there was a truck filled with student protesters passed by. Then, they met Jae-sik, a fluent English-speaking student. Man-seop and Jurgen were greeted with pleasant as the protesters knew that they were coming for a purpose of news about Gwangju's situation. Jurgen decided to go with the protesters so he could film them but Man-seop who had already gotten a half-price carfare as deposit tried to escape from the city. Nevertheless, he couldn't do as he expected. Along the road, Man-seop met the old woman and helped her find her son, he came back to the hospital in the city. There, Jurgen was finding Man-seop as he escaped with his camera bag on his car. The twos began to fight and Jurgen demanded Man-seop to

leave. However, Gwangju taxi drivers who realized about the carfare that incredibly higher than normal price opposed. Finally, Man-seop reluctantly had to stay in Gwangju with Jurgen.

They went to Keunnam-ro where the rally took place, this was the place where Man-seop had witnessed the reality of the protest by his own eyes. Through the lens of Jurgen's camera, there were no violent by the protesters, in contrast, the people were gentle, women provided a rice ball for free, the atmosphere was enjoyable until the officers began to suppress the mob. Both Man-seob and Jurgen appalled by the reality through their own eyes. While on the other side, the undercover officers noticed them.

It was unbelievable for Man-seop as he had always believed that military would not unreasonably violate normal people, but he had witnessed it by then. After Jurgen got a footage of the uprising, they decided to go back to Seoul, but the taxi accidentally broke down. Actually, the reason Man-seop needed to return to Seoul as soon as possible was because his daughter. However, it impossible to go back at this time, Man-seop and Jurgen had to stay overnight at one of the Gwangju taxi driver's house, Hwang Tae-sool. It was a rest time after a long chaotic day. The atmosphere went more relax with Jae-sik's joke.

The situation became tense again as they received the news that the M.B.C building had been burning as the people was discontented to the insufficiency published of the news. Though a few journalists attempted to publish the news directly, it was blocked by authorities. Jurgen with Man-seop, and Jae-sik went to scene for the footage but unfortunately, they faced with the undercover officers. They demanded for Jurgen's footage. Jae-sik was arrested while they were trying to escape but he asked Jurgen and Man-seop to run away. Two of them could difficulty escape the scene.

That night had gone downhearted for them. As the dawn came, Man-seop decided to leave Gwangju, he worried about his daughter. Nonetheless, as he reached out of the city, he realized that the people outside Gwangju were lack the

news of the situation. It was important that the footage by Jurgen should be published so the world could know the situation in Gwangju. Though it was an uneasy decision because he promised to go for a picnic with his daughter, he decided to break the promise and went back to Gwangju.

When he arrived in Gwangju, the atmosphere was even worse than the day before. Jae-sik was killed by the officers. The hospital was filled with the injured. Jurgen was in desperate but Man-seop encouraged him to do his duty. They went to Keunnam-ro, where the suppression was going on. The film showed how Man-seop had changed, he was no longer ignored to the situation but forfeited himself to rescue the people while Jurgen filmed the footage. Their main goal was to publish the footage to the world so the people could acknowledge the situation on Gwangju.

After they got enough footage, Gwangju taxi drivers asked them to hurry went back to Seoul so they could spread the situation in Gwangju. However, their route back to Seoul wasn't smooth. The soldiers blocked all the path out of Gwangju. The undercover officers were chasing them. With the assist from Gwangju taxi drivers who sacrificed themselves, they successfully escaped from Gwangju. When Jurgen went back to Japan, he published the news about Gwangju. It drew the attention to foreign press who later went to Gwangju.

"A Taxi Driver" ended with the scene from later years. Man-seop still worked as taxi drivers but he was more generous. On the side of Jurgen, he came back to South Korea again for the prize ceremony and wished he could meet with Man-seop again.

4.2 Narratives in Films

From observing the films, we can see that each film adopted the story of the Gwangju Uprising as the background. Nonetheless, each of them has different perspective in telling the story of the Gwangju Uprising to the viewers. The narrative that the viewers perceived through the films was according to the process of story

setting. Through the story line, main characters, and tones of the films. It would generate how viewers can interact and create they prosthetic memory via film's perceiving differently. In this part, to analyze how each films worked, I will start from analyze concept and perspective of the film. Then I will analyze on how each film developed the characters which the story of the film will follow those characters. Finally, as story setting in films also responsible for arousing the viewer's emotion, I will analyze on how each film differentiate in their story settings.

4.2.1 Concepts, Plots, and Perspectives of the Story

To understand how narratives of film had been integrated, it is important to understand what film's concept is. As concept of films is an important part in generate how an idea of the creator will communicate to the viewers. If the film's concept center with the incident, the narrative told by film will also create around them. Plot also planned around the concept of film, and it led to how the story of film will proceed. Through the concept, it will generate how viewer can perceive the story of the film through the perspective provided. Though the films I chose in this study are all adopted the concept of the Gwangju Uprising as main concept, second concepts and perspective of telling story were created differently. I will first analyze this part as concepts and perspectives are significant in creating the narrative in films.

- *May 18 (2007)*

From the plot of the film, I had mention previously, *May 18* is the film that told the story of the Gwangju Uprising most subtly. The concept of this film is simply focused on the ten days struggle with the detail of the Gwangju Uprising. The film allowed viewers to easily understand the incident through the intenseness the story had gradually processed through the eyes of local citizens. It had established emotional involvement through the intense dramatic story. The film had also hidden a based on true story detail along with the story progress with fictional characters.

May 18's concept focused on the local Gwangju people who directly involved with the incident themselves. Nevertheless, the film didn't process around

the student activist, who acknowledged as the leader of the movement. In contrast, the film attempted to tell a story of ordinary Gwangju people who firstly didn't intend to participate in the resistance but had to unconditionally force to participate. The story proceeded around Kang Min-woo, a local citizen as a main protagonist and conduct around the people who had relation with him. The perspective of the film also proceeded around the perception of Kang Min-woo as if the viewer was involved with the incident through his eyes.

It can be explained that the film's concept didn't only focus on telling the story precisely in detail but also depicted how the uprising affected normal people. It didn't attempt to show the heroic of Gwangju people but evinced the depressing situation the people had to face by gradually increasing the intenseness of the characters' story. The film started by presenting an ordinary life of Kang Min-woo, a Gwangju taxi who didn't even pay attention to the protest. The first part of the film intended to connect the viewer's perception with the eyes of the victim through the main characters. Then it gradually increased the intenseness of the story while aimed to attract the viewer's perception with the main characters' perception.

In the following part, the film tended to introduce how normal people life was affected by the brutal soldiers. The death of main character, Kang Jin-woo was used as a turning point of the story and stimulated the viewers' emotional to understand how the situation forced the people to fight during those days through the shift of the protagonists' lives according to the situation. The focus of the film was with Kang Min-woo's perception, from intended to avoid the protest to become a part of the struggle. This "Kang Jin-woo's death" scene was an important scene that had to be discussed in later part as it was a powerful emotional stimulation from editing process. This scene intended to draw a grievously emotion to the viewer in order to connect with the next part, where all of the main characters decided to join the uprising. The turning point of the film also paralleled with the real incident at the end of the first phrase and continue to the liberated Gwangju phrase.

The second part of the story focused on the story of the main protagonists during the liberated Gwangju's days. This part didn't involve a strong emotional

scene but mostly presented historic detail of the uprising. It tended to represent some little detail about the event that occurred during the liberated Gwangju's day, but also omitted some conflict details as it only represented the part of the citizen army through the protagonists' perception. The film also added a fond relationship between Kang Min-woo and Park Shin-a.

This film's concept though based on true story, the film intended to establish the empathy toward the victims by recreating the memory through visual media. The final part of the film tended to create a strong emotional by presented how hopelessly the militia was during the night of 26 May through the eyes of the main characters. It represented how they were strongly insisting on resistance though it mean they had to leave their lovers behind. It strongly communicated with the viewer how the incident created an enormous loss to the innocent people through the last scene of the film. The loss was depicted through a photograph, an imaginary picture of the people who had passed away to affirm a huge effect of the military suppression to remind the viewer about the past incident.

May 18's concept is simply focused on the detail of the incident itself along with an intense emotional stimulation. As I had discussed in this part, the film told the story by adopted the real event's timeline with some based on true story's detail but adding some fictional parts and fictional characters to stimulate viewer's emotion. The film created a fictional protagonist Kang Min-woo and proceeded and proceeded the story through his perception. From 3 films I had selected to study, May 18 is a film that created the most miserable feeling as the perspective of this film was proceeded through the people who directly affected by the incident.

- *26 Years (2012)*

In contrast to May 18 which directly depicted real detail of the Gwangju Uprising, 26 Years is rather a fictional film which adopted the Gwangju Uprising only as a background story of the protagonists. 26 Years concept didn't aim to narrate the story of Gwangju Uprising directly but tend to tell the story of the victims in the later period. The story focused on the remaining mark that struck within the protagonists'

memory which were aggravated by the injustice they received. The strong feeling of injustice was enhanced in this film as it depicted how the former authority had never received an equal penalty.

In *26 Years*, the Gwangju Uprising was the part that connected each protagonist together which led to the revenge plan presenting in the film. The film started from introducing the background of each character which related to the Gwangju Uprising, Kim Gap-se, a soldier who took part in the operation in Gwangju, Kwon Jung-hyuk, a boy who lost his sister during the suppression, Shin Mi-jin, a girl whose mother was shot dead in her house, and Kwak Jin-bae, a boy who lost his father during the fight. Followingly, the film showed how the Uprising affected the people who left behind, all of the characters were growing up absorbing how their close relations had become insane from the grievance.

In the first part, this film tended to show how people who had suffered from the Gwangju Uprising remained in pain until the present time. In contrast to the perpetrator, referred to as “that man” in the film, who still lived his life peacefully without regretting his past action. Nonetheless, apart from the first part which introduced the tragic memory of the protagonists, the film introduced some action part into the film to stimulate the viewer. Then, the film focused on how the protagonists connected through their collective past, the protagonists who had long endured the pain agreed to join Gap-se’s revenge plan.

From the first part that emphasized on each characters’ background, the film changed its subject followingly to focus on the revenge plan. It tended to represent the difficulty the group went through during the preparation for their plan as each character holds different ideal toward their lives. The discord between protagonists occurred to bring about the film’s contradiction point. One point that *26 Years* raised as its issue was Kwon Jung-hyuk’s problem while running their plan. Jung-hyuk is a police officer who is in charge of traffic light control, he had a problem whether to continue with the group or he should choose to follow his responsibility though it means to protect “that man”. While the other two recklessly continued their revenge, Jung-hyuk decided to leave created the tension to the group. Another issue

added to fuel the group was the reality Kwak Jin-bae found out about Kim Gap-se. The truth that Gap-se was the soldier who murdered his father fueled his anger. 26 Years brought this issue to depict Jin-bae's mind conflict on whether he should continue the plan with a murderer who killed his father for the purpose of revenge to "that man".

Following the contradiction issue, the last part showed that Jin-bae and Mi-jin decided to follow Gap-se's plan but Jung-hyuk chose his career. In the final part of the film, it showed that each character desired for their revenge differently. Gap-se who was a former soldier required an apologize from the authority who commanded that brutal operation. The other twos demanded "that man" death, and Jung-hyuk was in reluctant for his action.

The film depicted different perspective of each protagonist in the final part according to their background. As it was emphasized since the beginning of the film, Gap-se insisted on Chun's death after he denied apologizing. On the side of Jung-hyuk, film showed his uncertainty whether he continued his job responsibility or assisted the revenge. This part also revealed further details about Ma Sang-ryul, Chun Doo-hwan's secretary who was Gap-se's old comrade. It depicted the different path between the twos, one who chose not to follow that perpetrator while the other one became his close assistance. Nevertheless, both had to endure that painful memory. The film showed how Sang-ryul was hesitancy after Gap-se's word convinced him that he shouldn't follow the perpetrator's demand which Sang-ryul getting insane in the last scene and died because of Chun. This part also represented that Chun was completely ignored to his past action and there were a bunch of people who willing to protect him as it was their jobs.

The film ended with the open-end which opened for the viewer's own analysis. The film went black after the last fighting scene with no conclusion for their action. It ended with another scene where the car convoy drove pass the Gwanghwamun square. The end scene can imply various way whether the revenge group succeeded or not. It left the viewer questionable on their result.

26 Years concept didn't actually focus on the detail of the Gwangju Uprising but mostly utilized it as the background. The film mainly focused on the injustice in the society where the authority acquired more power to defend himself. It showed that though the victims had to suffer from painful memory but as they had less power, there was almost nothing they could do for their justice. The legal process didn't successfully convict "that man" in this film and though they desired to revenge him themselves, it was impossible. As the man held sufficient power, even the victim himself had to protect him as that victim had no power which was represented through Kwon Jung-hyuk. It also depicted how deadly some people could work for him for their career advancement.

- *A Taxi Drivers (2017)*

From 3 films I had selected to study, "A Taxi Drivers" is a film that featured a person biography. The film didn't only aim to represent the hopeless days in Gwangju but included the role of a foreigner journalist, a keyman who exposed the truth of the Gwangju Uprising to the world. Identical with the film's name, "A Taxi Drivers" concept focused on a taxi driver's journey with a foreigner journalist, Jürgen Hinzpeter to Gwangju during the uprising day. It adopted a real story of a German journalist who went to Gwangju for the footage of the uprising which he was accompanied by a Seoul taxi driver. Though the film adopted a part of real story, some details of a taxi driver were altered.

The film focused on a made-up character, Kim Man-seob, a Seoul taxi driver who was struck with a financial problem. This character was created based on a real person, Kim Sa-bok, a taxi driver who escorted Jürgen to Gwangju in real life. Nevertheless, Sa-bok in real life, as referred from his son, Kim Seung-pil, Sa-bok had met Jürgen several years before the uprising and willingly took him to Gwangju as he also interested in Democratization movement (Choi, 2018). In "A Taxi Driver", the film made this character diverge to his real character. Though most of the story was conducted based on Jürgen's experience, the film in contrast provided from Kim Man-seob, a taxi driver's perception.

Kim Sa-bok in this film was a fake name Man-seob told to Jurgen. The film's plot represented him as a mercenary taxi driver who unintentionally got a job to Gwangju by impersonating another driver's job. It first depicted Man-seob as a selfish man by showing his ignorance to other's affliction. He decided to escort Jurgen to Gwangju only for a good payment but didn't realize the situation in the city. While Jurgen's intention was to expose the truth about the situation in Gwangju as he realized that the news about it was undercover by censorship.

In the first part, the film depicted Man-seob as an ignorant man who didn't want to involve with this chaos but inevitable had to involve. Man-seob represented how normal people still believed that the military would not unreasonably use violence and blamed the student protests to go back to their school. While the film also presented a generosity of Man-seob.

Following the first part which introduced Man-seob's characteristic, the film showed the turning point of Man-seob who gradually learned from the crisis situation. The brutality the soldiers did to the protesters changed his attitude and began to realize the source of the chaos. In the second part, the film still showed his hesitancy about how he should manage the situation. His priority was still to go back to Seoul as he had his daughter waiting for him at home. Nevertheless, he had to stay overnight at Gwangju which brought him to a night that changed his perception.

Another point, this film intended to represent was the crisis of lacking news about Gwangju during the uprising days. The film showed that the people outside Gwangju only received a distorted news about the Gwangju. It was the time that the Gwangju people desired the journalist who could deliver the truth about the suppression to the outside world. In the later part, the film attempted to show the importance of Man-seob's job to safely escort Jurgen back to Seoul so he could publish the footage of the uprising. As the film had plotted since the beginning, it showed that Man-seob's priority was his daughter and he had to go back to Seoul at dawn.

The next part of the film depicted Man-seob's mind conflict whether he should go back to Seoul or he should continue his job to safely escort Jurgen back to Seoul.

His turning point was as he realized that the people outside Gwangju were mistaken about the situation. The last part tended to show the heroic of both Jurgen and Man-seob as it represented the important of the news during the crisis. As Jurgen went back to Japan, the film depicted that the footage he brought to the world made the people realized about the situation in Gwangju and several journalists decided to go to Gwangju for the news.

“A Taxi Driver” concept centered mostly on the persons, Jurgen Hinzpeter and Kim Man-seob (Kim Sa-bok). It included the detail of the Gwangju Uprising mostly on the part about the crisis of the truth about the uprising to celebrate the heroic of the journalist who exposed the truth about the Gwangju Uprising. As it acclaimed that the film was based on a real people story, the film included some fictional part to stimulate the viewer’s emotion along with the heroic celebration for the journalist, Jurgen Hinzpeter. The film presented the important of the visual media in the movement as it is evidence that the violent had really occurred during those days.

Each films narrated the different perspective which resulted in differed in storytelling but still shared a similar main narrative of the Gwangju Uprising. The different between each films’ concepts can be observed through the table below.

Films	May 18 (2007)	26 Years (2012)	A Taxi Driver (2017)
Concepts, and Plots	Story of ordinary Gwangju people who didn’t intend to participate in the resistance but unconditionally force to participate	Story of victims’ families and a related officers in the incident who had suffered the painful memory in several years after.	Story of a taxi driver and a German journalist who traveled to Gwangju during the incident for the news about the incident
Perspectives	Film proceeded through the eyes of	Film proceeded through various	Film proceeded through Kim Man-

	Kang Min-woo, a local citizen who didn't attempted to join the resistance but was forced to join due to his loss of family.	protagonists' perspectives to with the different background to generate different contextual for the film.	seob, a taxi driver to follow along his decision during his journey and his relation with the journalist.
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Table 1 Concepts, Plots, and Perspectives of the Story

4.2.2 Characters

Following films' narratives, another important feature that created prosthetic memory to the viewer is "characters". Characters in this part referred to the main characters or the protagonists who the story of the film would center around those characters. The significant of how they were created was that the characters could become a wheel to connect the viewer with the narrative through the characters' perceptions. Characters were a mechanism which allow the viewer to identify themselves and created the prosthetic memory from the narrative of film through this process. In this part, I will analyze on how each character were created and developed through the story.

- *May 18 (2007)*

As I had mentioned before, for May 18, most of the story was proceeded around Kang Min-woo as a main protagonist. It obvious through the emotional scene which the viewer was stimulated through Kang Min-woo's loss. That scene also marked a turning point of the film. Thus, in this part, I will focus mostly on Kang Min-woo's character with additional of the character who were built around him.



Figure 15: Kang Min-woo, who was represented as a generous man in the beginning

Source: May 18 (2007) film

To parallel with the concept of the film, Kang Min-woo, this main character was created as a normal Gwangju citizen who rarely involved with political activity. During the opening scene, the film depicted him as a young adult who was in love with a girl. It also focused on his family background where his only family left was his younger brother. This character was depicted as a generous and humble man who willingly assisted other people as it was mentioned in the film that he escorted an old woman to the hospital without receiving any payment. Film told his background story to make him related to any viewer as this character was an ordinary people. He didn't hold any particular position but simply a normal people who was unavoidable including with the uprising.

The film developed the turning point of the film along with the turning point of this character. From the first part, the film showed that Min-woo tried to avoid the involvement with the protesters but as he lost his only family, Kang Jin-woo, the situation forced him to become a part of the militia. From this part, it carried a message of the film along with the character's story to present the people struggle as a self-defense. The people in Gwangju didn't involve with the uprising in the first phrase but forced to involve as defending themselves from the injustice and violent they received during those days. This message was represented through the eyes of this protagonist.

Kang Min-woo was also utilized as a character who connected the relation between each character. The film's narrative was represented through various character around him to represent stories of normal people lives in Gwangju through

each character around Kang Min-woo while using him as the main protagonist. Nevertheless, each character represented different story.



Figure 16: Kang Jin-woo, and Kang Min-woo

Source: May 18 (2007) film

The one that needed to be mentioned was Kang Jin-woo. This character was important character that influenced a huge emotional stimulation to the viewer as he was a close relationship with the main protagonist. The detail added to this character also included the detail about the high school student during the uprising. The death of the students was represented through this character which could be interpreted in various ways. The high school students who died in the film were not only Jin-woo but included his friend. Another detail about this character was he was created as a bright future student who pursued his future as a law student, his lost could be interpreted as a loss of another future.



Figure 17: Yong-dae, and In-bong

Source: May 18 (2007) film

Another remarkable supporting character were Yong-dae, Min-woo companion, and In-bong, a Gwangju gangster. These two characters represented a story about an establishing friendship during the crisis. Their first scene was a quarrel between a taxi driver, In-bong, and a passenger, Yong-dae. Then the film projected

them again during the protest scene where those two became a comrade in a fight. The film developed these two characters from the person who didn't seem to get along in normal situation to a comrade who fought together. One of the scenes that showed the depressing emotion they hold together was the scene before the last battle, the scene where those two characters gave their last bow to the direction of their hometown. These two supporting characters though hold a little part of the film but carried the message that the film tended to communicate with the viewer.



Figure 18: Park Heung-soo, and Park Shin-a

Source: May 18 (2007) film

Other characters that needed to be mentioned were Park Shin-a, and Park Heung-soo, Shin-a's father. For Shin-a, she acted as a main female character who had romantic relationship with the protagonist. This character in the first part didn't hold any significant in providing the narrative about the Gwangju Uprising but mostly be a mechanism for a romantic part. However, this character carried the remarkable ending scene which contained both emotional ending along with the message the film aimed to communicate with the viewer. The last scene of the film showed her depressing moment where she was left outside the battle asking the people to remember this day and the people who sacrificed themselves. While, on the other hand, Heung-soo was a character created to represent the perspective of the authority and the former soldier who didn't agree with them. This character also utilized to connecting the emotional scene between the main protagonists, Kang Min-woo, Park Shin-a, and himself in the scene that depicted the family relationship.

May 18, as a film which attempted to depict the story of Gwangju citizen during the uprising, the film contained various characters to represent different story. The main character who was the center of the film was Kang Min-woo, which the

viewer will mostly perceive the narrative through his perception. Nonetheless, the film also added the detail story through other supporting character to compose other message the film tended to communicate with the viewer.

- *26 Years (2012)*

For the film “26 Years”, this film is different from the first film, “May 18” which contained a lot of characters but most of the story proceeded through a main protagonist, “26 Years” consisted of various stories that proceeded through various characters. The film didn’t proceed through only one character’s perception but connected each character stories and background together with one main story. Each character held the common point about their background which related with the Gwangju Uprising while responsible in telling their own stories through this common point in the film. In this part, I will go through each main character to analyze which narratives each character held.

The main characters which appeared significance in the beginning of the film were 4 characters. One was a former soldier, Kim Gap-se, and the other three characters were the victim of the Gwangju Uprising, Kwong Jung-hyuk, Shin Mi-jin, and Kwak Jin-bae. For the three characters which most of the story proceeded around them, the film depicted them as an adult who grew up with a painful memory, each character had lost their family during the suppression, and some grew up observing their remaining family became insane. Their background fueled them with resentment especially as they realized about the justice they had never received. However, the difference between them were depicted through their current status which resulted in their action in the film.



Figure 19: Shin Mi-jin, and Kwak Jin-bae, victims who lost their parent due to the suppression

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

The first two I want to mention were Shin Mi-jin, and Kwak Jin-bae. The two characters who have a good relationship during the last part of the film shared a similar background. Both lost their parent because of the suppression. Mi-jin was growing up observed her father became insane with a desire to revenge that authoritarian and finally burned himself to death in front of Chun's residential. Kwak Jin-bae, similar to Mi-jin, after his father died, his mother got crazy. He had frequently observed his mother became insane when she heard about Chun Doo-hwan. In the film, we could see these two characters always fueled with anger and depress. These two characters showed how strongly the painful memory had affected their lives without any justice received throughout this past 26 years. They were fueled with the resentment and the more intense the situation was, the more they desired their plan to be succeeded.



Figure 20: Kwon Jung-hyuk, a police officer who lost his sister during the suppression

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

In contrary, another protagonist, Kwon Jung-hyuk lost his only family, his sister, during the massacre at the Keunnam-ro. Though we could see this character was still in the sorrow from losing his sister, his anger was not as intense as those two characters. He mostly focused on his occupation, police officer, more than anything as it was a promise he had with his sister. The film depicted him as an indecisive person because on one hand he desired to continue his occupation which required him to reveal their plan. But on the other hand, he still sensed the injustice that occurred with the victims. In the film, this character always depicted as a hesitancy and unenterprising to continue the plan.



Figure 21: Kim Gap-se, a former soldier who took part in the suppression

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

The three characters above acted as the victims who agreed to join Gap-se's revenge plan. The plan connected them together while the film showed how the suppression directly affected them throughout their lives. On the side of Kim Gap-se, this character was the one who plotted the revenge plan. The film told story of this character in contrast to those three characters. The man was a part of the brutal soldier but his resentment toward Chun seemed to be larger than the victims of the suppression. It was the depiction that not only the victims were leaving with the pain but the actor himself also had to endure that memory as he didn't acknowledge the reason of the operation in the first phase. The truth that he had assaulted the innocent people because of the demand from the authority always remained a mark in his heart. The film showed this character's strong intention was to receive an apology from the authority who demanded that violent operation.

The film carried the message through different characters with different context. The main narrative that this film tended to communicate was the injustice

the victims had received. Nonetheless, through each characters' perspective, the viewer could perceive different conditions that made their action resulted differently. Though they connected with their common resentment, their current contexts resulted in alternative practice. The other perspective that was depicted through these characters was the power hierarchy, the film depicted these characters as a common people, an officer, and the businessmen. These various positions also resulted in different action. The film showed how impossible it was for the common people to fight with the authority. While the officer, in contrast, was not only unable to fight but had to defense the authority as he was completely under his power. Through the last scene, the film showed how desperately they want their plan to be successful, nonetheless, the little power they hold was unable to fight with the man who hold a strong power.

In "26 Years", each protagonists represented various contexts through their own perceptions. This film didn't attempt to tell the story through a single character but utilized each character to represent different narratives. However, the film still represented its main narrative, the injustice and the power hierarchy, through the common point these main characters hold together.

- *A Taxi Drivers (2017)*

"A Taxi Driver", as it was named, the film main protagonist was a taxi driver, Kim Man-seob. This film directly focused on this main character in proceeding the film story along with another character, Jurgen Hinzpeter. As mentioned in the concept, the film purpose was to remembrance this journalist real identity who published the footage of the suppression in Gwangju to the world during the censorship period in South Korea. In this film, though its first attempt was to tell the story of Jurgen Hinzpeter, most of the story in this film was proceeded through the perception of Kim Man-seob, a fictional character who was created based on the taxi driver who was a friend of Jurgen.

In this film, though we can see that there were not only Kim Man-seob as a significant character in the story, nonetheless, if compared to other two films in this

study, the narrative of this film was mostly communicated through Man-seob's eyes. This film carried the message on how important the visual evidence on the suppression was. It communicated through this character's decision and action to escort Jurgen back to Seoul so he could publish his footage. From the beginning to the end of the film, it gradually showed the development of this character from a political ignorance to a hero who was a part of Jurgen's heroic action.



Figure 22: Kim Man-seob, and Jurgen Hinzpeter

Source: A Taxi Driver (2017) IMDb

The film firstly introduced this character as a selfish man with a burden in taking care his only daughter. It showed that Man-seob's interest was only about money because he had to pay a rental fee and take care his daughter. He was a political ignorance with a little inconvenient with the protests. After this character was introduced in this way, the film started to develop the situation to allow this character to learn about the unusual situation through his eyes. Through his perception, the viewer would perceive the reality of the depressing situation not only about the violation of the military but also including the crisis of news censorship in South Korea at that time.

The film represented the hesitancy of his decision through his perception as his first attempt was to keep his promise with his daughter, so he had to go back to Seoul. However, the kindness and generous of Gwangju people that Man-seob had met along his journey, and an unreasonable brutality from the military made him hesitancy to left the city. The film presented the confusing moment when he had to decide what the priority he should hold in this situation. The film didn't pursue to involve the viewer's emotion or identity with Man-seob himself in this scene. It more likely to represent this scene where there was a contradiction in his mind as a heroic

decision as it showed that he had to leave another important thing, his daughter, to assist the people in Gwangju.

The film strengthened the important of this character's action in the uprising by depicted how he helped the journalist to continue his job. The focus on the last part which included some action part was on how Jurgen and Man-seob would go back to Japan to publish the footage. This film tended to communicate to the people on how the news was important and how brave these characters were.

As following the concept of the film, "A Taxi Driver" is not a film that involved much emotional scene through the characters' perception when compared to other films, instead it tended to represent the person heroic action along with telling the story on how the news about the Gwangju Uprising was blocked during that time. The prominent characters in this film were not acted as a mechanist in connecting the viewer perceiving with their perception. Instead, the viewer will be more likely to perceive their action in term of the third person's perception.

The characters in films are significant tools that efficiently dragged the viewers' emotional and identification to the films' narratives. The films selected in this study had their own ways in utilize the characters according to the table below.

Films	May 18 (2007)	26 Years (2012)	A Taxi Driver (2017)
Main Characters	One main character: Kang Min-woo to proceed the story	Several main character: Kim Gap-se, Kwon Jung-hyuk, Shin Mi-jin, and Kwak Jin-bae to proceed the story from various perspective	Two main characters: Kim Man-seob, and Jurgen Hinzpeter
Supporting	Supportive characters were the people who	Only few supportive characters who	Mostly focused on main characters. The

Characters	had relations with main characters and important in telling the side story.	related to main characters' background and influenced their decisions.	supportive characters were only Gwangju citizens who they had interacted during their journey but influenced their decisions.
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Table 2 Characters

4.2.3 Story Setting

The last part which significant in create emotional involvement to the viewer is story setting of the film. Story setting include of the scene where the story takes place, mood and tone that the film provided to arouse the viewer's emotion with the story of the film. In the film, different setting in each scene could arouse the viewer differently according to the director's editing to generate various in the film. Each film also provided different setting to serve different narrative provided through them. In this part, I will analyze how three films selected in this study created their story setting and how the setting changed throughout the film to increase emotional arouse through the increase intensity in the story.

- *May 18 (2007)*

For "May 18", story setting of this film was based on the real incident in Gwangju. Several scenes in this film dubbed the actual scene which could be referred from the memorandum of the incident. It conducted each scene based on the real information about what occurring during those days while added the characters' stories to those scenes. The film also conducted the mood and tone of the film variously from the first part to the last part. While the first part was covered with the romantic drama tone, the last part had accelerated to a full tragedy dramatic tone.



Figure 23: The Opening scene depicted a peaceful scenery of Gwangju

Source: May 18 (2007) film

The film started with the scene depicting Gwangju in normal situation. Opening with the scene Kang Min-woo driving the car along the peaceful countryside street of Gwangju, the people's life was calmful. In the first part, the setting of the film focused on Kang Min-woo life with his only brother and how he attempted to build a romantic relationship with a girl he fell for. The scene included a comedy mood while introducing each character's relationship. The setting and mood in the first part tended to create an emotional involvement and allowed the viewer to identify themselves with the character in the story as the film introduced their personality and background.

The film then began to establish an intense emotional scene to the viewer to arouse their emotion. In the following part, the film's scene represented how the Gwangju people was under the unconditional situation that forced them to involve with the struggle as a self-defense. The film started to shift the mood and tone from the peacefully scene to an incredibly brutality scene where the military suppression suddenly occurred without the notice to the main character. In this scene, the film intense the mood by bringing up the historic detail on the suppression began at the Keunnam-ro near the cinema to make the film more realistic. It also added the real detail about the cart carrying two bodies to confirm the death of the people but adding intense emotional as a corpse in this film was a crackpot. Then the film reached its first peak with the death of Kang Jin-woo, Min-woo's brother. This scene was a turning point to the second part which the setting became more intense with the tragedy scene.



Figure 24: A cart with two bodies imitated a real event

Source: May 18 (2007) film

In the second part to the last part, the film setting changed from the first part which contained mostly on each character background with romantic tone. The setting in the second part was covered with the scene of the struggle with depressive tone. Most of the mood in the second part film, though there were a little scene that showed the casual lives of the people with some comedy scene, the background of each scene entirely depicted the unusual situation. The film including the scene that imitated the real event such as a scene of the formation of the citizen army which in the film was represented through the main characters, Park Heung-soo, In-bong, and Yong-dae. The commemoration scene at Sungmuguan Gym also represented through Kang Min-woo's grievance over his lost brother. Each comedy and romantic scenes in this part contained the stressful and depressive mood as the background story in this part was the unfinished struggle.

The film took a short break during the second part which represented the unusual situation during the uprising days before it took to the intensive emotional scene in the last part. The last scene setting took place in the night of the last day dubbed the real timeline of the incident. It added the militia's last farewell to their beloves to create a huge emotional tone to the film. The film concluded with the scene that could speculate that all the main characters excepted Park Shin-a were killed in their last fight. From the farewell scene to the ending scene, the mood of the film was intensely tragedy. The scene included with the scene of the farewell and the surrender of the people to the scene where only one protagonist was left behind tended to create an extreme emotional to the viewer. The battle scene showed the militia's last conversation on radio, asked them to remember their

names. It was parallel with the scene where Park Shin-a on the truck asking the people to remember the citizen army's sacrifice at the Province Hall which can refer to the real event where Park Young-sun did the similar reported along the road of Gwangju at that night (Lee, 2017). Then in the ending scene, it only depicted an imaginary marriage ceremony which showed the death people in the photograph.



Figure 25: The last scene of the film

Source: May 18 (2007) film

“May 18” story setting was based on the background of the real event with an additional of the character's story to create an emotional scene. It went from the first part with a romantic comedy tone to the last part with an extremely tragedy tone. This setting gradually raised the viewer's emotion with how the story shifted its mood and tone from the peaceful to the depressive scene.

- *26 Years (2012)*

“26 Years”, as mentioned before, this film was mostly a fictional story which took some detail from the Gwangju Uprising as the background of characters. Story setting in this film was the consequence event in 26 years after the uprising. In the first part, the film setting was to reveal the characters' background which related to the present situation, then in the second to last part, the film setting mostly focused on each characters' action during the process of the revenge plan. The film though holds the concept of injustice, mood and tone of this film was represented through action-drama tone which contained a lot of action scene.



Figure 26: The first part telling each characters' background story through animation

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

The film opening with the scene that showed the attempt of the protagonists in revenge the man “Chun Doo-hwan” then it followed with each characters' background stories. Begin with the part which referred to the uprising was represented through animation instead of using the real actors. Then, to pave the understanding of each character's background to make it reasonable with their following action, the scenes in the following parts were differentiated to tell each characters' stories after the uprising to the present circumstance. The setting in this part was covered with the depressive tone as each character had thoroughly lived with their painful memory. It included the scenes that depicted the grievance of Shin Mi-jin's and Kwak Jin-bae's parents which growing their inner minds' wrath. It also depicted the side of Kwon Jung-hyuk who finally achieved his dream job as a police officer but without the celebration from his sister as she had passed away.

Following the first part which the setting tended to represent the protagonists' background in depressive tone, the following part was dragged to the beginning of their revenge plan. This part was set with their present condition while the tone of this part covered with the distrustfulness of each character who shared their common purpose to revenge the authority. The new character, Kim Gap-se, was officially introduced in this part with the obscure background on why he desired this plan to be succeed. The story setting in this film didn't tend to arouse the viewer's strong emotional but instead it mostly alternated each characters' background and decision to allow the viewer to judge their action. Instead of strongly arousing, the

setting and tone in this part was to connect the viewer's understanding on each character's decision.

The turning point of this film was set with the protagonists' discord on whether they continued their plan or not. It was the consequence of the second part which show each character's distrustfulness. After the turning point, the film turned to the last part which contained more excited action scene along with the tone that depicted the injustice these victims felt.



Figure 27: Chun had brought to broken window for Mi-jin to shot him

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

The last part set on the date 18 May 2006, 26 years after the Gwangju Uprising to show the connection of the story with the incident. The film presented this part with the action scene where the revenge group attempted to kill "that man". Nonetheless, along with the excitement scene of fighting, mood and tone in this part still contained the hopeless feeling the characters received. This scene depicted how a bunch of officers willing to protect "that man" while the protagonists as victims were in hopeless situation. The last scene in this part was full of hopelessly emotional where Chun had botched to Jin-bae who brought him to the broken window, waiting for Mi-jin's sniper. Nevertheless, on Mi-jin's side, police officer had reached to her, and she had to decide whether to make a shot. The ending of this film was set in the open-end scene. The early morning scene with two officers in white uniform while paying the respect to the passing by convoy allowed the viewer to interpret their own ending whether the revenge plan succeed or not.



Figure 28: The last scene was questionable about fates of the protagonists

Source: 26 Years (2012) film

The film “26 Years” setting was based on the fictional situation 26 years after the real incident. It contained various mood and tone from the depressive to the action-dramatic to drag the viewer’s emotion with the story in the film. It also attempted to depict the injustice the victims of the incident received through various scene that showed how the characters were in hopeless and reluctant state.

- *A Taxi Drivers (2017)*

The last film in this study was “A Taxi Driver”, a film that based on real bibliography of Jurgen Hinzpeter. As I had mentioned before, this film though based on the real person, several details in this film were made up as fictional story. The story setting in this film dubbed the fact that Jurgen had travelled to Gwangju during the uprising on 20-21 May 1980 but for dramatization, a lot of action scene had been added to the film to stimulate the viewer’s emotion. Though the film tended to tell Jurgen Hinzpeter’s story, the film was proceeded through Kim Man-seob’s perspective, so the setting of this film also followed this main character’s story.

The film opened with the scene of Kim Man-seob driving and singing along the road of Seoul city showing the peaceful state or on the other perspective, the political ignorance Man-seob was. The first part of this film contained a fragment of comedy-drama with how Kim Man-seob character was depicted. From the first part that introduced this character’s background to the part which two main character, Man-seob and Jurgen met, the film was set with a little comedic sense with Kim Man-seob’s action and speech. The first part showed how they interact with different ideal, both showed some contradiction along their journey in a comedic way. The film firstly focused on the roughly journey between those twos as they hold different

objective. Man-seob only desired to finish this job and go back to Seoul so when he realized the situation in Gwangju, he wasn't willing to continue to the city.

After the protagonists entered Gwangju, the setting changed to be more serious with the protest scene as background. As from the background story which plotted Kim Man-seob as a political ignorance, the scene in Gwangju was to drag his attention to the violation scene in front of his eyes which the viewer could also involve with his emotion through these scenes. The scene in this part was covered with the scene of the protests while the film attempted to depict Jurgen's enthusiastic for the footage while Man-seob only focused on getting back to Seoul. This part was depicted as a chaos scene which allowed the protagonists to understand how badly the situation in Gwangju was.



Figure 29: The protest scene mostly depicted through Jurgen's lens

Source: A Taxi Driver (2017) IMDb

Following the scene that the protagonists encountered with the incident the next part was focused with the scene that gradually led the protagonists to friendly interact with the local people. The following scene tended to explain how generous Gwangju people was as well as to depict the hopefully youth of Gwangju. Then, it turned to one of the most tension scene in the film. The scene where the journalist and the taxi driver were chasing by the government officer to block them from publishing the footage of the suppression in Gwangju. The film tended to drag the viewer's emotional involvement with this tension scene by using the background sound which switch back and forth between silence and thrilling sound along with the color graded the picture in red tone.

Following this part, the film turned into desperate tone. The mood of film had completely changed from the first part as both protagonists were in panic and despair from the violent, they had encountered during that night. Through the last part, the film focused on Man-seob's perception and decision on his upfront situation. The film connected this desperate scene with his decision to leave Gwangju incident behind and went back to his normal life in Seoul while holding this intense feeling. Then, the tone of film shifted again after Man-seob decided to go back to Gwangju and escort Jurgen back to Seoul. This shifting scene used the background music which imparted the celerity of Man-seob in his decision. As he went back to Gwangju, the film stressed the protagonists' goal in this film as they had to publish the footage of the Gwangju Uprising to the world. The film covered this last part with the excited scene where these two characters had to escape from the officers.



Figure 30: Man-seob was hesitancy as he realized that people received a misunderstanding news about the uprising

Source: Source: A Taxi Driver (2017) IMDb

The film ended with the scene that showed these two characters had successfully escaped from Gwangju and the world had observed Jurgen's footage. Then, the film added the real detail about Jurgen who, during the time the film had published, wished to reunion with his comrade again. Nonetheless, the detail added in film was represented as Man-seob gave Jurgen his fake name and after Jurgen went back to South Korea again, he mentioned that he wished to meet this friend.

"A Taxi Driver" is a film that acknowledged as it based on the real person story. The film setting focused only on the event that the protagonists had

encountered with during their journey while mostly focused on their action and decision. The film also contained of several mood and tone from the comedy to the excitement tone to entertain and arouse the viewer's emotion.

Story setting and tone of the films can arouse viewers' emotion differently. The film that contained deeply depressive scene may drag viewers' sympathy while the film that included action scene may arouse the viewers' emotion in different way. The table below the different of story setting in each film.

Films	May 18 (2007)	26 Years (2012)	A Taxi Driver (2017)
Settings	Based on 10 days struggle in Gwangju with real details of the incident.	Story took place during 26 years after the incident.	Follow along the protagonists' journey to Gwangju with based on real person's story.
Mood and Tone	Story began with romantic drama tone to tragedy dramatic tone with strong emotional intensesness.	Focus on each characters' action in action-drama tone than intense emotional scene.	Follow along Kim Man-seob's perspective and emotion along with action scene.

Table 3 Story Setting

4.3 Gwangju Uprising's Memories in Films

The power of film in generate memory is its function to reproduce the memory through visual technology which allows the viewer to perceive them as realistic. Along with the editing process, it made films became a powerful tool in narrating the memory and made those memory alive. In 3 films that I had selected

to analyze in this study, we can observe that each film contains similar narrative about the Gwangju Uprising. Nonetheless, through the process of editing and storytelling, each film had different prominent memory they aimed to represent. Prior to the conclusion on how memory politics worked in these films, in this part, I will recap the memory that were represented in them.

In the first film, *May 18* (2007), both the concept and storyline was focused on telling the whole detail of the uprising from the first day to the last day. As the film was perceived through the perception of the local eyes, the memory contained in this film is mostly focused on the memory of the local residents during the incident. The film selected an important event in the suppression such as the brutal suppression scene, the corpse cart scene, the last battle scene, to represent in film with deeper emotional to stimulate the viewer and dragged them to perceive those memories as authentic. It also added with the last scene that emphasized the viewer to remember this event through the character's speech.

From how the film narrated through concept, characters, and story setting, the film obviously tended to recreate the memory of the local people while it also had the process of remembering and forgetting. In this film, the memory that selected to remember was only the memory of the local people who joined the citizen army. The story in the beginning part showed the normal life of the people while the second part focused only on the militia to show the unity of the people. In this regard, the conflict detail of how the organize sector during the uprising was managed. Thus, the film tended to emphasize the memory of the hardship, and the depression, the people suffered during the Gwangju Uprising. The collective memory contained in this film was to emphasize the heroic of the Gwangju people who insisted on their fight while on the same time showing how violent the military was during those days.

On the other side, the film "*26 Years*" (2012), as I had mentioned before, this film doesn't directly tell the story of the Gwangju Uprising in detail when compared to other films. It focused mostly on the part of the victims which was recreated as fictional characters. There was quite a little part of the Gwangju Uprising's memory in

this film which represented through the animation. On the other part, the film only focused on the later traumatic of the characters. Instead of frankly recaptured the memory of the event, this film rather depicted how individual had endured the pain that contained in those memories individually. The collective memory that contained in this film was difficult to observe it as authentically. It particularly captured an individual's memory instead and represented it to the viewer as a painful they had to endure while managed with the remaining fragment of the incident.

For the last film, *A Taxi Driver* (2017), parallel with the title, this film focused on a taxi driver and his passenger, a journalist who were considered as outsiders. The memory of the Gwangju Uprising in this film was represented through the outsiders' eyes and their lens. Nonetheless, similar to other films, it also recaptured the violation during those days. This film differed from other two films from the point the story was represented, both two films was represented through the people who directly involved with the incident, the local people. While "*A Taxi Driver*", the main characters, instead of being the one who endured the violation, they were both the communicant of the incident. Thus, this film didn't give the viewer a perspective of the protesters but the view of someone who observed them which would result differently in the process of how the viewer would perceive the memory of this incident.

A Taxi Driver, instead of directly recaptured the incident, it mostly aimed to depict the crisis of truth that happened during those days. As I had mentioned in previous part, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising in the first period was distorted and imputed as a chaos incident. This film not only retelling the story but it emphasized the unusual situation that led to the misunderstanding about the incident. It also recapped the authority's attempt to distort the truth of the incident and showed the important of the photographing that took part in revealing the truth of the suppression.

The memory that was recreated in these films I had selected, though it had different perspective and details on how the story proceed, mostly the narrative of

them were focusing on the violation from the military during those days. All of the films were contained the scenes that showed how the people were severely suppressed. However, with how the stories were created and represented, these films had selected a part of the incident they want to emphasized and neglected the part that they want to forget. The process of how the fragment of the memory is involved with how memory politics functioned in shaping the society's collective memory especially for the South Korean society. These films also functioned not only to recap the memory of the old days but emphasized how important of the incident and the heroic of the Gwangju people as an important part of the democratic society.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The Gwangju Uprising, a watershed moment in contemporary Korean society, is not solely due to their courageous actions. Rather than that, this occurrence preserved a memory that was critical in sustaining the current political paradigm, since it was significant for the democracy movement. In a nation that had endured a lengthy period of authoritative suppression, despite the passage of more than 40 years, the memory of pain and sacrifice was retained to stress the value of the current political ideology. Memory reproduction was also a means of preserving memory and disseminating its story to future generations. This study argues that films serve as a medium for communicating and changing memory. It had devolved into a form of memory politics, with each film attempting to create its own version of the story. Films evolved into a device for reproducing and transmitting memory, and therefore became an integral part of the visual society's memory integration.

5.1 The Gwangju Uprising's Memory Politics

In this section, I will briefly discuss how memory politics and the memory of the Gwangju Uprising were connected before concluding on how memory politics worked through the process of films. Because the incident involved the political sphere and was significant in the development of democracy in South Korea. I will discuss about how the military government defined the memory of the Gwangju Uprising by controlling the broadcasting media, and how the conflict memory was formed based on how the people wanted to remember it, which was at odds with the government's created memory. To understand how the Gwangju Uprising narrative in the films was created in light of the current context, I would like to first explain how the Gwangju Uprising memory was integrated.

The Gwangju Uprising arose from the government's resistance movement, which was dispersed by the government's brutal intervention. During the early years after the incident, people remembered it in various ways. It was a tragic memory for the local Gwangju residents who witnessed the incident firsthand. Several lives of their close relationship were lost as a result of the suppression, and they were forced to live in fear for ten days. It was only the government's brutality and injustice that they remembered at the time. The government, on the other hand, attempted to inject a distorted rumor about the uprising into the minds of outsiders. The government portrayed the Gwangju Uprising as chaos infiltrated by North Korea. At the time, the meaning of the uprising as a democratic movement against the military government was unclear.

Despite the government's attempts to distort the truth about the uprising during Chun's reign, there were still movements to expose the true nature of the uprising. The May Movement, which existed at the time, created a conflict memory with the government's story, while also preserving the Gwangju Uprising's victim memory within the society during the military government's reign.

After South Korea's democratization, the memory of the Gwangju Uprising began to shift. During this time, memory politics arose in tandem with a shift in political ideology. As the country transitioned to a democratic regime, an attempt to reveal the truth about Gwangju arose. The Gwangju Uprising was no longer remembered as a chaotic movement, but as a memorial to the democratic struggle against the military regime. The story of the Gwangju Uprising was linked to the rise of democratic sentiment, and the incident was used to demonstrate the government's legitimacy. The public had been made aware of the movement's injustices and misunderstandings. The government attempted to take the case to court to protect their image, as the movement was then remembered as a state-sanctioned act of violence that resulted in the deaths of several people. Nonetheless, despite the use of the legal system in this case, the victims were not receiving true justice.

Though the legal process' outcome did not satisfy the people, the process of resurrecting justice for the victims retold the story of the Gwangju Uprising. The Gwangju Uprising became a defining moment in the democratization movement. The Gwangju Uprising became a remarkable memory about the people who insisted on resisting injustice and sacrificing themselves for democracy, rather than just the injustice and brutality that were remembered. The commemoration of the Gwangju Uprising at the time was not only about the injustice, but also about the heroic actions taken by the people of Gwangju at the time.

The Gwangju Uprising was a watershed moment in South Korean politics. Both political authority and the people demanding democracy were served by the politics of memory that lingered along with its memory. During the first year after the incident, the incident's narrative was usurped. Since the uprising began, it was clear that the authorities wanted to remember the incident as a political riot. The event's news was censored, and the government's account only focused on its negative aspects. While it was a strong attempt to usurp the meaning of the movement for people in later periods, it was a strong attempt to usurp the meaning of the movement that was distorted.

As a result, as the political system shifted to democracy, the Gwangju Uprising was preserved as a priceless memory in the democratic realm. The memory itself bolstered democratic sentiment by depicting how difficult it was to achieve democracy in South Korea at the time. The politics of memory of the Gwangju Uprising had strayed from the conflict memory that each political power usurps to secure their power from time to time. Instead, the democratic movement narrative was used to secure the current political ideology by preserving the memory of the democratic movement. This phenomenon is evident in the film's memory, which was primarily created to tell the story of people's appreciation while the authority was portrayed as the villain. In the next section, I will discuss how the films were responsible for memory preservation and how the politics of memory were expressed through the films.

5.2 Integrating the Gwangju Uprising's Memory through Films

Films had developed into a medium for visual memory in the present as a result of the memory politics associated with the Gwangju Uprising. With their inherent ability to imitate, films were tasked with the responsibility of repeatedly telling the Gwangju Uprising's story to the public. The visual media enabled individuals to witness a recreation event with their own eyes and to perceive the incident as if it were their own. Nonetheless, it is necessary to remember that film memory cannot be considered authentic because it is merely a narrative that has been edited through a process of selection and omission in which only certain aspects of memory were chosen to represent. Among the films I chose to study, each had its own unique approach to narrative integration, which I will discuss in this section.

When discussing memory, one aspect that must be considered is narrative. Narrative plays a critical role in integrating memory, particularly collective memory, which may have lost some of its components over time. A narrative is a story that binds the core memory together but may differ from the actual events of the past. A narrative is a story that was chosen to be remembered and reshaped to fit the social circumstances of the time. In this sense, it can be viewed as a form of memory politics. I concentrated on how each film's narrative was constructed and integrated in this study because it is critical to understand the films' memory politics.

As I previously stated, the three films chosen for this study differed in detail but shared a common narrative. The narrative portraying the event as one of brutality and injustice runs parallel to the dominant narrative about the Gwangju Uprising in popular culture. The narrative variations in films varied according to the film's central concept, or which story was prominent in that film. Thus, the film's perspective was perceived differently by each viewer. "May 18" was seen through the eyes of local contributors, "A Taxi Driver" through the eyes of an outsider, and "26 Years" through the eyes of the victim's relatives. Each film's narrative followed those characters' stories, which resulted in a slightly different story, but one that was clearly connected to the larger narrative about contemporary Korean society.

All three films told their stories through the protagonists' eyes. In this regard, the films did not simply tell the story; they tended to incorporate the viewer's experience, allowing the story to be perceived as authentic. In "May 18," the viewer witnessed the hardships endured by the local people during the suppression. Additionally, with a strong emotional component that drew the viewer into the depressive state of the people. While in "26 Year," the story told in this film is purely one of injustice. The film depicted victims' experiences following the incident, but the legal process was unable to punish the perpetrator. This film depicted their agony, but unlike "May 18," this film focused on the people left behind. Additionally, it highlighted an aspect of the former officer's involvement in the operation that is rarely discussed. "A Taxi Driver" was unique among films in that it did not recreate the story of the victims but instead focused on the journalist's bravery and the ensuing crisis of truth. The narrative integration process is exemplified by the story told in the film. The films depicted the story that the producers desired the viewer to remember through the protagonists' perspective.

The process of narrating the memory through film is connected to the establishment of the prosthetic memory. Perceived realism is used in this process, as mentioned previously, to create a prosthetic memory through those narratives. The more emotionally invested viewers were in the story, the more those stories were perceived as realistic. From the films chosen, it is clear that "May 18" is a film that uses its story to arouse the viewer's emotions. The film combined real-world details with fictional characters to transport viewers back to the time of the uprising. Due to the viewer's perception of the story as realistic in this film, they will develop a prosthetic memory of the Gwangju Uprising. While "A Taxi Driver" did not tell the entire story of the uprising, it did convey the brutality of the suppression. Through an action scene in which the protagonists were pursued illogically in order to prevent the spread of news about the Gwangju Uprising, the film acted to emphasize the prosthetic memory on military insanity.

While in "26 Years," the film enticed viewers to view the story through the eyes of a third person observing the characters. Rather than directly processing the

prosthetic memory of the Gwangju Uprising, this film elicited empathy in the viewer, eliciting an emotional response. Unlike "May 18," this film's prosthetic memory does not focus exclusively on the details of the Gwangju Uprising; rather, it reminds the viewer of the ongoing injustices suffered by the victims.

Integrating the memory of the Gwangju Uprising through film was a component of memory politics. As each film featured a unique story setting and perspective, the story varied according to the director's preference for which aspect of memory to emphasize. Memory integration occurred as a result of the viewer's perception of the narrative in films as realistic and the creation of their prosthetic memory. It is a vital medium for preserving and transmitting memory to the general public. Nonetheless, the variety of the story, in addition to the dominant social narrative, had become a component of memory politics. In the following section, I will discuss how the films chosen for this study contributed to the Gwangju Uprising's memory politics.

5.3 Gwangju Uprising's Memory Politics in Films

As discussed previously, the Gwangju Uprising's memory has been entangled in memory politics due to its pervasive presence in contemporary South Korean society. Thus, memory remained intact in order to serve social ideology. In this regard, films relating to the incident were repeatedly reproduced in order to narrate the story of this significant incident to the public. Each film took a unique approach to telling the story, which shaped the memory's narrative. In this section, I will discuss the role of films in narrating the story and their relationship to the memory politics of the Gwangju Uprising.

To begin, all of the films included in this study were produced between 2007 and 2017, roughly 20 years after South Korea achieved democracy. Nonetheless, despite numerous attempts to bring justice to the victims of the Gwangju Uprising, the legal process provided insufficient justice. Though the truth about the Gwangju Uprising was brought up in court, resulting in Chun's life imprisonment, he was later released in 1997. The lack of a penalty roused public outrage to the point where,

even after his death in November 2021, current President Moon Jae-in desired not to offer him a proper condolence or confer on him the status of national hero (Fifield, 2021). This phenomenon is related to memory politics, which I will discuss later, because it demonstrated how people remembered the authority involved in the incident despite the passage of time.

Memory politics is concerned with the persistence of the Gwangju Uprising's memory in society. As previously stated, this incident engendered a strong memory politics during the political shift. A compelling narrative about the injustice and heroism of the uprising had developed into the primary narrative that shaped collective memory in accordance with the political ideology prevalent in the contemporary society. As a result, the Gwangju Uprising never seemed to vanish from contemporary society. To preserve memory within a society, it is critical to repeat the story repeatedly. Generally, the process of conserving memory was followed by the process of commemoration, but in contemporary society, visual media also played a role in this process.

As a result, films that resurrect the Gwangju Uprising are reproduced with a consistent narrative. Although the films chosen for this study were produced over a five-year period, there were also films that were not chosen that emphasized the incident's memory. As I discussed in the previous section, each film contained a similar narrative told from a unique perspective. They emphasized the brutality of the suppression, the injustice suffered by the victims, and elicited strong emotions in the viewers. Only "26 Years" (2012) portrayed the former officer as a victim, whereas other films portrayed them as villains. In this regard, through the process of perceived realism and the establishment of prosthetic memory, films created visual memory of the violation committed during the suppression and the injustice endured by the victims. The process of films repeatedly recreating this incident is also a form of memory politics aimed at preserving democracy by demonstrating the dictatorship's brutality.

Though I discussed the specifics of each film, it was clear that they all attempted to recreate a consistent narrative. This is consistent with South Korea's

current political situation, which can be described as a newly democratic country. To illustrate the integration of the narrative that satisfies social desires, the repetition of the consistent story should be shown. In this regard, if there was discord between the stories in the films, it could be argued that memory was in the process of acquiring meaning, and each political side sought to exploit that memory to their advantage. However, for the Gwangju Uprising films, a single primary narrative was consistently represented. Thus, the films were instrumental in integrating the central narrative into Korean society.

The films' involvement with the Gwangju Uprising's memory politics demonstrates how they were used to preserve the central narrative, the memory that society desired to remember. As one side of a two-sided interaction, films are accountable for depicting what society desired to emphasize about that memory. On the other hand, films are also responsible for the selection process, as they chose which parts of the story they wanted to remember while ignoring the parts they needed to forget. Films played a significant role in establishing the memory by providing a prosthetic memory to ordinary people who did not witness the incident but retained it as the nation's collective memory.

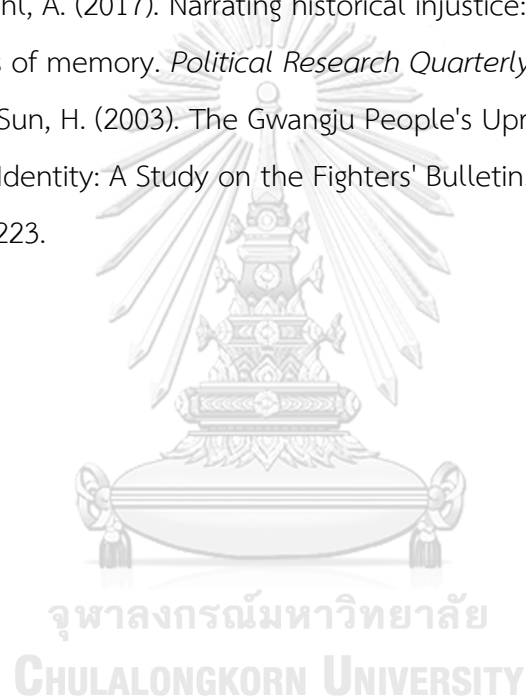
In conclusion, the repeated reproduction of films related to the Gwangju Uprising is a form of memory politics for the incident. The films' most significant mechanism is their capacity for selection and neglect. While each of the films in this study took a unique approach to telling their story, they all share a common narrative that contributes to memory integration. The central narrative that binds these three films together is the brutality and injustice experienced both during and after the incident. Consistency in film production, combined with a consistent narrative, contributes to the memory politics of remembering and forgetting. The component that remembers the most becomes the primary narrative that serves social demand, while the remainder is neglected because it may have a fragile memory or is in opposition to the social majority.

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