

# DISSERTATION DEFENSE

## SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NATIONALISM:

**Comfort Women Movement and Its Impact on Narratives of Korean Nation, 1988-2007**

BY

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This dissertation is a study on the political process of a post-nation- state nationalism in South Korea. It explores the changes of nationalist discourse on 'comfort women' for 20 years after 1987 democratization, focusing on discursive strategies of comfort women movement and media reports on them. Despite a surfeit studies on nationalism, scholars have paid less attention to how social movements reframe and appropriate the existing nationalist discourse and constitute not only a newly imagined narrative of a nation but also a moral community. By illuminating the changes of the monopolized state-centered nationalist discourse crafted during the 1970s into the diversified narratives of Korean nation emerged since the democratization movements in the 1980s, this dissertation highlights the role of social movements in providing moral ground for the nationalized people to challenge the official narrative of a nation. By examining the works of Park Chung-hee, it first analyzes the nature of the Korean nationalist discourse successfully indoctrinated people through the various state apparatus. The frame analysis on the statements released on the Wednesday Demonstration by comfort women movement illustrates the power of the frame that defines and challenges the identities of Korean. This dissertation analyzes and problematizes the impact that comfort women movement inflicted upon the narrative of a nation in a broader Korean society by exploring the reports on the comfort women issue in the Chosun Ilbo and the Hankyoreh. It concludes that while Korean conservatives, which prioritize the economic or material development of a community of Korea nation-state, fail to make the coherent and condensable nationalist discourse after the democratization, the process of the comfort women movement demonstrates the possibility of communitarian nationalism, a nationalism emerged from civil society which can constantly verify the shared values of the community rather than the welfare of the state.

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