Contentious Narratives on National Identity of South Korea: How to Understand the Self and the Significant Others, North Korea and the United States

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Abstract

At the time of writing, the expectation for a peace settlement on the Korean peninsula is greater than ever due to ongoing inter-Korean summits as well as the historic encounters between the two leaders of the US and North Korea. Although the second Hanoi DPRK-US summit in February, 2019 ended without reaching an agreement, it is still a positive sign that formerly hostile nations are willing to talk to find a way of coexistence. However, at the same time, the degree of inner conflict within the South has grown significantly since the impeachment of former President Park Geun-hye in 2017, and there exist deep discrepancies over how to approach and how to pursue cooperation with the North. The dissertation examines how and why a variety of reforms led by the progressive administrations of South Korea, ranging from foreign policies toward the North and the US to domestic policies, have intensified social conflicts and division, rather than contributing to the conflict transformation and reconciliation that they originally aimed at. In doing so, this research contributes to the field of identity politics and peacebuilding by offering novel insights into the role of narrative identity and history in contexts of protracted, identity-based conflict, and the peacebuilding process. Its particular focus is on the Korean peninsula, one of the areas where the legacy of the Cold War is still lingering and history is deeply contested and politicized.

This study primarily claims that the social and political polarization within South Korea stems from fundamental disagreements over two important concepts in the formation of national identity: 1) the self, how to define South Korea, which means whether the birth of a South Korean government should be celebrated as a lawful and legitimate process, or treated as failure to establish one united nation; and 2) the significant others, the question of how to identify North Korea and the US. The research highlights the fact that narratives on the national identity of South Korea were initially crafted in the context of intractable conflicts with the North. Narrative identities created during or after the war have been formed with a strong certainty of the good self and evil others, thus being resistant to change. In particular, the narrative of conservatives was formed with the firm certainty about the North as an evil enemy. Thus, those who see the reality of the nation through the lens of this narrative find it extremely difficult to adapt to the alternative that identifies the North as a normal neighboring state with which to coexist.

Secondly, this study argues that it is identity politics, in which the rhetoric of othering/exclusion is frequently applied, that has significantly affected the intensification of social and political polarization in South Korea through creating a dichotomy of good self and evil others. Both narratives have constructed antagonism toward their own hostile "others": North Korean sympathizers, whether called pro-North, the reds, commies, or anti-South forces, in the "state-centered nationalism narrative" of conservatives that identifies the North as an arch enemy; and

anti-nationalists, including pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators, and ruling elites, in the "ethnic nationalism narrative" of progressives that views the North as part of the self based on the ethnic notion of the Korean nation, and thus as a partner for coexistence and ultimately for unification. More importantly, both of these contradictory narratives have been politicized to delegitimize political opponents, consequently intensifying societal and political conflicts within South Korea.

Lastly, the study maintains that reforms led by progressive regimes failed to create an open and inclusive "dialogical space" where competing parties can reassess and redefine their narratives in the process of policy decision making and its enactment, thus deepening conflicts. Establishing a positive domestic context toward peace through creating consensus and cooperation with those who have different values and ideologies is a necessary condition for conflict transformation and peace settlement on the peninsula. Attempts to transform the master narrative on the national identity of South Korea led by progressive regimes without efforts to engage in cooperation with their political opponents have simply replaced an old narrative with a new one, rather than constructing a transcendent and integrative narrative on which conflicting parties can agree. Hence, conservatives' resistance to narrative transformation and related policy changes has grown intensified.

The present study can not only contribute to extending generality in the study of the narrative basis of conflict, but also offer theoretical grounds for rethinking inner conflicts in South Korea to lead to conflict transformation and an ultimate peace settlement on the Korean peninsula. We have seen in post-conflict societies like Germany or Northern Ireland that a political declaration or peace agreement does not necessarily lead to genuine peaceful relations and reconciliation between the former adversaries. This justifies the argument that the narrative of rightists in South Korea who construct a strong national identity that still views the North as an arch enemy should be taken into consideration in advancing peaceful relations with the North. It is a challenging task to transform narrative identity with firm certainty based on a dichotomy of good self and evil other crafted in the context of intractable conflicts. In the process of the engagement policy toward the North and peace initiatives on the peninsula, however, some degree of consensus and cooperation between conflicting groups in South Korea who have radically different conceptions of national identity is a prerequisite for ultimate peace settlement between the two Koreas.

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Romanization

Throughout the dissertation, I follow the McCune-Reischauer Romanization system for Korean names, words, and book titles, with several exceptions: 1) geographical names and 2) well-known historical figures and celebrities' names which are spelled differently in public, and Korean authors who published in English and Romanized their names differently from the McCune-Reischauer system.

I use the Romanization system of the official Korean government for geographical names and the official English titles for organizations, institutions and events in the case they are presented. Regarding personal names, I respect the usage which is publically circulated. For the names of presidents, well-known historical figures, and celebrities, I follow the way in which they are widely used, such as Rhee Syngman. In the case of Korean authors published in English, I use their own English spelling for names of authors and titles of publications.

My own English translation for names of institutions, groups, events, and book titles is used only in cases where they are not officially presented.

1. Introduction

1.1. Divided Nation and Divided Society: Inner Conflicts in South Korea

"Who are the Koreans?" had not been a difficult question to answer throughout Korean history before the national division. But since the partition right after the liberation from colonial rule in 1945, more questions concerning identity have been added, such as "Who are the South Koreans?" and "What does North Korea mean for South Korea?" Consequently, the question of national identity has become much more complicated and contested among South Koreans.

The Korean peninsula is widely known for being the only remaining part of the world where the legacy of the Cold War is still preventing peaceful coexistence. Since the partition of one nation into two states, both Koreas have presented themselves as being the only legitimate entity on the peninsula. Due to a strong, almost mythical faith in the ethnic homogeneity of the Korean nation, the division is generally regarded as a temporary disruption of Korean identity, and unification, as an ultimate goal of the nation. In contrast to this mythical homogeneity, the reality has been more than 70 years of political division, during which the two Koreas have developed their own identities that are not only distinct but also hostile to each other. The fundamental assumption for this research is that it is the tension between these two contradictory aspects of Korean politics, the strong myth of homogeneity and the actual reality of oppositional identity practices, that creates and intensifies the internal division in South Korean society.

While the antagonistic forms of identity, based on an anti-communist stance, which identifies the North as the hostile enemy to its own existence, have been deeply entrenched in the social consciousness of South Korea throughout the past years, an alternative narrative which attempts to view South Korean contemporary history and North Korean identity from a different point of view has emerged in the context of political democratization in South Korea. With two progressive presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun who were in office from 1998 to the 2008, this alternative narrative came to be dominant and institutionalized in different areas from foreign policies to domestic ones, such as a policy of "clearing up the past wrongs" and history textbook revision. It is, however, a challenging task to transform the identity of the North from the former enemy toward a partner state for peaceful coexistence, as well as changing the perspectives on the United States (US) from the closest ally, or even the savior of South Korea, toward being one of the imperial powers that has pursued its own interests on the peninsula. It is even more difficult to transform the narrative about the violent past of the war and the self-identity as a victim of suffering from evil communists' invasion. By analyzing the outcomes of the survey research on South Korean national identity

conducted jointly by three organizations of the East Asian Institute (EAI), Asiatic Research Institute (ARI) and *Joongang Ilbo* every five years from 2005 to 2015, Lee Nae-young (2016) argues that many South Koreans show ambivalent attitudes toward the North. That is, there coexist two ambivalent perspectives toward North Korea: as an arch enemy that has developed nuclear weapons and consistently caused armed conflicts; and as part of the "self", brethren of one Korean nation. Thus, many South Koreans have feelings of both love and hatred toward North Korea. According to the survey in 2015, people who have such favorable views on North Koreans as "part of self", "brothers" or "neighbors" still outnumber those with a negative notion of the North, such as "an enemy" or "the other" (Lee Nae-young 2016, p. 212). However, what should be noted is that if we focus on changes of perspectives toward the North from 2005 to 2015, negative responses that identify the North as "an enemy" or "the other" have sharply increased from 18% in 2005 to 29.6% in 2015. Lee points out that the most interesting observation is that the negative perception of the North among the younger generation in their 20s and 30s has shown a dramatic rise, from 18.9% to 37.3% for those in their 20s, and from 17.6% to 36.2% for those in their 30s, in 2005 and in 2015 respectively, which signifies a growing conservatization of young generations in their view of the North (ibid., p. 214).

Furthermore, according to the survey research mentioned above, South Koreans increasingly acknowledge the seriousness of social conflicts, in particular between political parties, classes, and ideologies. Those who regarded conflicts between political parties as "serious" have remained very high, at 86% in 2005, 82.5% in 2010 and 85.3% in 2015. What should be noted is that those who regarded the conflicts between political parties as "very serious" accounts for 45.1% in 2015, showing considerable increase compared to about 37.9 % in 2005, 29.7% in 2010 (Kang Won-taek 2016, p. 186). Along with this, the number of respondents who identified ideological conflicts as serious, including responses of both "serious" and "very serious", marks a sharp increase to 74.8% in 2015 from 62.8% in 2005 (ibid.). This clearly displays that people generally acknowledge the seriousness of political division in South Korea. What is interesting is that in the 2015 survey, the preference for specific former presidents shows a meaningful difference according to the ideological line, compared to outcomes in the past surveys in 2005 and 2010. In 2015 the assessment over three former presidents, Park Chung-hee, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, shows a stark difference according to the ideological identity. In the case of Park Chung-hee, the former authoritarian president and the father of conservative president Park Geun-hye, positive assessment among those who identify themselves as conservatives increased to 82.7% (2015) from 75.3% (2005), while positive assessment among progressives dropped to 63.6% (2015) from 69.3% (2005) (ibid., p. 191). This indicates that the support for President Park intensified among conservatives, while the positive view among progressives weakened. In contrast, positive assessment of two former progressive

presidents of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun shows a dramatic rise among respondents who are self-identified as progressives. 78.7% of progressives assessed President Kim positively in 2015, while 55.1% did so in 2005. The preference for President Roh among progressives also shows a similar rising pattern to that of President Kim, growing from 72.9 % in 2010 to 79.1% in 2015 (ibid.). These outcomes indicate that conservatives have increasingly intensified their positive perspective on President Park, while positive assessment of Kim and Roh, progressive presidents, has been intensified among progressives. This is of great significance given that the collective identity within each group concerning political tendency has been intensified and thus difference in perspectives among different political groups has been sharpened, which is related to the solidification of division and polarization of the society according to political or ideological preference.

This research aims to identify two dominant, and at the same time, contentious narratives within South Korean discourses on national identity, and to sketch out the way in which they influence contemporary political agendas represented by two key political strains: conservative (rightists) and progressive (leftists). The dissertation seeks to demonstrate how different conceptions of the Korean nation (or the South Korean state) have competed for dominance within contemporary South Korean discourses, and how certain historic events have strengthened the credibility of one set of narratives at the expense of others. Its main focus is hence on the changing "content" of the national category within the South. The main area of contestation has been the meanings of the self-identity: one that puts the two Koreas into one category of the Korean nation; and the other that categorizes only those who are loyal to South Korea, and who agree with the political and economic ideology of South Korea into a category of self.

Internal divisions of societies and separatism within a single political unit have been more frequently observed than international wars between nation states since the mid-1960s (Psaltis et al. 2017, p.1). As Kelman (2004; 2008) argued, this changing nature of wars ignited the research interest in the notion of "reconciliation." In the process of reconciliation, the primary challenge is for former enemies to find the way to not only live together peacefully, but also at times to cooperate and share power. In this regard, the past progressive regimes' efforts to transform the identity of the North from a hostile state to a partner for coexistence can be understood as a stepping stone toward reconciliation, which was a challenging task for South Korea to achieve. Although President Kim Dae-jung's engagement policy toward North Korea, called the Sunshine Policy, was a turning point that caused bitter contentions between conservatives and progressives to come to the surface, inner conflicts in South Korea have been inherent since its establishment (Son Ho-chŏl 2006). Clashes between South Korean conservatives (rightists) and progressives (leftists) are now found in almost all areas from the policy toward North Korea and the US to the interpretation of history, creating the phenomenon of deep domestic conflicts, called "a house divided" (Hahn Chaibong 2005), or more commonly

known as "South-South conflict" to South Koreans. The fissure was especially evident under President Roh Moo-hyun, who took every opportunity to challenge the conservatives. For instance, the Roh government passed a law on March 22, 2004, to identify and punish those who collaborated with the Japanese during the colonial period, such as former president Park Chung-hee, who served as officer in the Japanese Imperial army before liberation. It is believed that in the view of progressives, many of the pro-Japanese collaborators became ruling elites of the South and have enjoyed benefits as a privileged class, largely due to the lack of judicial action after liberation and strong support from the US. In addition, the progressives tried to abolish the National Security Law that the staunchly anti-communist conservatives believe to be necessary to fight against North Korea. However, the most contentious and ideologically conflicting issue, which more importantly reaches far beyond the South Korea's domestic political arena, was the effort of the progressive governments to redefine the country's relationship with North Korea on the one hand, and with the US on the other. While the US is traditionally the closest ally and the most important security partner for anti-communism, a growing number of the population has been turning anti-American and pro-North Korean. If the South Korean governments before democratization consistently took a hard line when dealing with the North while the US played a restraining role, under the two successive progressive regimes the US tried to pressure, sanction, and punish the North for its behavior, such as nuclear developments, while South Korea kept its engagement with the North even during the crisis of its nuclear-weapons program.

1.2 Traditional Approach

Some observers try to explain that the policy change toward the North and the US, which caused severe inner conflicts in South Korean society in the 2000s, occurred as a result of inherent conflicts along ideological lines. Hahm Chaibong (2005) sees that change toward anti-American and pro-North Korean views is the logical extension of the progressives' "leftist-nationalist" ideology, which lies at the root of South Korea's deep division between conservatives and progressives (p. 58). On the other hand, Kang Won-taek (2005) in his analysis on characteristics of the political division focusing on the generational gap points out that there is a clear distinction between generations in terms of whether anti-communism as a dominant ideology of South Korea should be embraced or not. Kim Geun-sik (2013) finds the fundamental cause of inner conflicts of South Korea in dualistic aspects of Korea's nationalism. That is, considering the historical context, the Koreas have two unfinished tasks: the completion of the establishment of a modern nation-state; and overcoming the national division. Some see this in a positive way, saying that the changes in views toward the North

and the US are a reflection of the country's democratization, of increasing pluralism and diversity of opinions (Choi Yong Seob 2011). Others point out that the inner conflicts in the South cannot be explained by one causal factor because the conflict regarding policies toward North Korea and the US has become complicated and multilayered, mixed with other aspects ranging from region and ideology to generation (Son Ho-chŏl 2006; Kang Won-taek 2004; Kwon Sook-do 2012; Kim Chang-Hee 2010; Kim Kap-sik 2007; Kim Jong Gab 2003; Byun Chang-Ku 2011). While emphasizing the multilayered characteristic of the societal conflict, Son Ho-chŏl (2006) points out that the conflicts are intrinsically connected to the question of South Korea's self-identity (p. 230), that is to say, how to interpret the birth and development process of South Korea.

From the early 1960s to the late 1980s, the military and the conservative coalition put emphasis on the "industrialization first" policy that prioritized the country's economic and military developments, delaying democracy. Also, in the name of national security, which refers to the prevention of another North Korean invasion, strong anti-communism was promoted. This coalition regarded the US as South Korea's most important ally and even savior, supporting the continued presence of US troops on its territory. However, Roh's election in 2002 marked the rise of the progressives in South Korean politics. The progressives in South Korea consisted of politicians, intellectuals, and students who formed a coalition against the military dictatorship during the 1980s. While the ideals of liberal democracy greatly affected the earlier generation of pro-democracy fighters, it was the structural injustice of capitalism resulting from South Korea's fast industrialization during the 1960s and 1970s that inspired the world-view of progressives and mobilized them into action (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p.59). As they witnessed laborers struggling under inhuman conditions during the country's development process, they came to view capitalism as a dehumanizing system. Thus, they began searching for a deeper structural factor, which led to a conclusion that the US had supported dictators in South Korea for its own imperial interests on the peninsula and in the region. Furthermore, they came to argue that the Japanese colonial period was a source of current social inequality and injustice continuously afflicting South Korea. According to them, it was colonial industrialization that not only distorted the industrial structure of Korea as a dependent economy of the Japanese empire, but also created a Korean bourgeois class that prospered by collaborating with the imperial powers. What should be noted here is that in this narrative the crucial link between leftism and nationalism is constructed (ibid., p. 61). Given the capitalist nature of the Japanese empire, to be a true nationalist meant being not only anti-Japanese, but also anti-capitalist. For the leftists, who believed they were the only true nationalists, the legacies of the Japanese and the capitalist system were the fundamental problems of South Korean society.

In the view of the progressives, then, leftist nationalism should have been Korea's guiding ideology after liberation in 1945. It, however, failed to emerge largely due to the US that imposed

direct military rule in South Korea during the period 1945-1948, recruited the collaborators to high official positions in its military government and backed the establishment of a capitalist regime in 1948. As a result, Cold War anti-communism began to overwhelm nationalism in South Korea (Choi Jang Jip 1993). Until the mid-1990s, such views were limited to the radical strain of South Korea's intellectual and political spectrum. However, the political democratization in the late 1980s provided golden opportunities for progressive intellectuals and politicians to actively promote their ideology and view. The financial crisis in 1997, furthermore, offered an opening through which the progressives and their ideology could enter South Korea's mainstream politics. Hahm (2005) argues that one of the most direct political consequences of the financial crisis was the election of Kim Dae-jung, a dissident and opposition leader under the authoritarian regime, to the presidency in 1997 (p. 63). The Kim Dae-jung administration, along with former leaders of the radical student movement, began introducing South Korea to many ideas and policies once considered too leftist, and thus prohibited, one of which was the Sunshine policy. The engagement policy to the North fits perfectly with the leftist-nationalist ideology of the progressives that sees the two Koreas as one nation divided into two states cooperating to decide the common fate of the peninsula without the interference of foreign powers, the US in particular. For them, national reconciliation can be, thus, made possible only through overcoming imperialist ploys that had brought about national division in the first place.

Another way in which the progressives have managed to dominate the political agenda and discourses is by igniting national controversies on history through a policy of "clearing up the past." With a strict nationalistic standard that was often criticized as a troubling or simplistic interpretation of the complex legacy of the Japanese colonial period by political opponents, the progressives have managed to categorize anyone who had worked under Japanese rule as a collaborator. These include not only those Koreans who worked in colonial bureaucracy, the police, and the military, but also industrialists, intellectuals, artists, and composers. By opening the debate on colonial history, conservatives argue that the progressives are trying to undermine the legitimacy of past authoritarian regimes as well as the opposition. The issue of pro-Japanese collaborators [*ch'inilp'a*] is an emotional issue for Koreans. Human rights violations during the authoritarian years, about which progressives are most critical, is also a painful issue. By taking the emotional high ground through this nationalistic and pro-democracy rhetoric while elevating history as the main topic of domestic politics, progressives have succeeded in dominating and leading the political agenda and discourses after democratization. The debate on collaboration thus has a risk of turning into a witch hunt, in which opposing sides discover past wrongs of their political opponents' parents and grandparents, while the accused attempt to defend the honor of themselves as well as their family members. Likewise, South Korea's deep division is deeply connected to radically different interpretations of the modern nation's birth and development. As much of the rest of the world does, conservatives

celebrate South Korea's industrialization and democratization despite the many shortcomings, such as human rights violations. The progressives, in contrast, are relentlessly critical of the nation's history despite these achievements. This is because progressives believe that South Korea achieved the current results through too many compromises and much injustice, including dictatorship, human rights violations, and dependence on foreign powers.

In traditional approaches to inner conflict within South Korea, the most common analysis is that it is conflicting perspectives over its political system, ideology, economy, and history, and foreign relations that essentially divided the society of South Korea. In addition, with other factors such as class, generation, region, and gender, the country is now further polarized.

1.3 Alternative Approach

This dissertation suggests that to have better understanding of the inner conflicts in South Korea, the issue of national identity should be taken into consideration. This paper conceptualizes national identity from a discourse-analytic perspective, which means that national identity is socially constructed and its social and political meanings are contextually bound. Thus, the nation is not seen as a "given" primordial entity but as an "imagined community" (Anderson 1983) which is constructed through "narration" (Bhabha 1990). The members of the national community, who tend to understand their ties to the nation as primordial and given, normally do not recognize the constructed nature of the nation (Anderson 1991, p. 143). According to Hall (1980), this naturalization is a central mechanism of the discursive construction of identity, concealing the discursive practices which produce meanings around national identity.

Nations are modern entities emerging as a result of particular historical conditions in Europe, although various scholars explain it from different perspectives. For instance, Anderson (1991) emphasizes the important role of print capitalism for the development of the modern nation-state, whereas Giddens (1985) highlights the importance of capitalism, industrialism, surveillance and military power. In Anderson's view, the constitution of national identity is deeply bound up with modernity. However, within the modern nation, pre-modern ethnic features frequently remain important (Smith 1986). In reality, modern nations are rooted in pre-modern ethnic identities, and in cultural properties such as language, religion or institutions (Smith 1995, p. 69). This emphasis on the existence of pre-modern cultural factors within modern national identity is significant. However, it is also vital to note that ethnic characteristics are in turn not simply given but articulated and politically mobilized within discourses of identity. In the South Korean case, ideology is discursively constructed as a crucial element of national identity discourses in order to draw the line between the

self and others. Under the authoritarian regimes especially, and currently among conservatives, Korean communists are excluded from the category of self, that is, South Korea, the "true" Korean nation, because of their political ideology.

In this research, adopting a discursive approach to identity construction does mean that not only symbolic constructions but also institutional practices are regarded as significant. Identities, whether ethnic, national or other, are created, recreated and transformed through institutional practices including state policies and everyday interactions. The term, "discourse" will, therefore, be used not in the narrow sense of "texts" but rather in broader terms, as "systems of meaning, including all types of social and political practice, as well as institutions and organizations (Howarth 1995)". Identity is not only constructed in the context of relations of meaning but also within institutionalized relations of power. Discourses around national identity operate in the context of institutional supports and practices that they rely upon. Foucault's discourse analysis seeks to explore how specific discourses reproduce or transform relations of power as well as relations of meaning. Consequently, the term, discourse, in this paper refers to the macro-level of structural orders of discourse (Foucault 1971), that is, broad historical systems of meaning, which are relatively stable over considerably long periods of time.

It is specific individual and collective narratives that reproduce and transform discourses. Although there are various definitions of "narratives", like "a story with a beginning, middle and end that reveals someone's experiences" (Manning & Cullum-Swan 1998) or "an original state of affairs, an action, or an event, and the consequent state of events" (Czarniawska 1998), narratives in this research are considered in the more limited sense of "stories" or "storytelling." As such, narratives are possible forms of discourse. Therefore, discourses include narratives but are not reducible to narratives. Specific narratives of the nation are construed as important component parts of broader discourses of national identity. Different narrative forms such as historical accounts, myths and metaphors contribute to discourses of national identity. Relying on Plummer (1995), this research is more concerned with the social and political role of narratives (p. 19).

Conceptualizing identity as narratives highlights the importance of stories and storytelling for processes of identity construction. Giddens (1991), for example, argues that identity is constituted through the continuous formulation and re-formulation of narratives of "the self," which means that self-identity is reflexively understood through "stories" by the individual concerned as well as by others. This applies to collective identities that are continuously reconstituted in both individual and collective narratives. Relying on Austin's (1962) speech act theory and Goffman's (1959) theatrical model of identity, the "performative" nature of collective identity narratives has particular significance in this study. Narratives do not simply express a pre-given national identity but function as performative, that is, speech acts that bring narratives into being and that both enact and perform

the nation through reiteration (Butler 1993). Policy texts, historical accounts or myths, regardless of whether they are based on historical facts, are all examples of narrative enactment and performance of national identity.

Individual and collective identities are specific forms of narrative which constitute commonalities and differences between self and others. As Plummer (1995) explains, "stories mark out identities; identities mark out differences; differences define 'the other'; and 'the other' helps structure the moral life of culture, group, and individual" (p. 19). National identities are thus narratives which are concerned with the drawing of boundaries between us and them, that is, between members of the nation and non-members. Such boundaries are crucially bound up with political processes. Mechanisms of othering, in which specific groups of people are constructed as fundamentally different others, are politically important aspects of identity narratives. In times of war, mechanisms of othering of the enemy become particularly intense, often taking the form of presenting the other as non-human or evil being. In political discourses, the enemy is frequently represented through evil imagery.

With experience of protracted conflicts with North Korea, many South Koreans have drawn the line between the self and the other according to the ideological line and thus, the North was identified as the hostile other or the evil enemy. However, with democratization, those who have constructed a different national identity came to power and tried to transform the master narrative on national identity. These attempts meant an identity crisis for those who held the pre-existing narrative and they, thus, opposed the new alternative narrative. These fundamental disagreements on the identification of significant others, in particular, the North and the US, initially came to the surface with the policy change toward those others under the progressive administrations in the early 2000s. The main argument of the dissertation that inner conflicts within South Korea are deeply connected to the issue of narrative national identity is well supported by the fact that inner conflicts in South Korea, which initially arose around the identification of significant others, is now centering around how to interpret the birth and development processes of South Korea. That is to say, the levels of identity conflicts in South Korea were high regarding how to view significant others of the North and the US, and now conflicts have further intensified on the issue of how to identify the self, South Korea.

1.4 Conceptual Framework and Key Concepts

The discrepancy over national identity that has been a source of inner conflicts in South Korea and a major challenge for national reconciliation between conflicting groups in the post-

conflict era has resulted in two competing and contentious narratives, which in this dissertation are named as the "state-centered nationalism" narrative of conservatives and the "ethnic nationalism" narrative of progressives. The former stems from the state-sanctioned narrative of authoritarian regimes, which blames uncivilized communists and the North Korean regime for Koreans' sufferings. On the contrary, in the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, which prioritizes one ethnic Korean nation over the South Korean state, it is emphasized that the masses [*minjung*] from the two Koreas suffered at the hands of ruling elites who pursued the division, cooperated with the imperial powers, formerly Japan and later the US, and thus betrayed the nation for the sake of their own interests.

Unlike the time under authoritarian regimes when the hegemonic state-sanctioned narrative was propagated and allowed by the government at the cost of alternatives, an alternative narrative of progressives has gained dominance since the democratization in the late 1990s, but has not been able to be instilled into those who still have strong faith in the state-sanctioned narrative. The self-understanding of a nation is primarily formed in relation to its own history. We learn who "we" are by gaining an awareness of how we got where we are now, that is by gaining an understanding of our own history. Thus, history becomes a highly contested and debated matter, with contradictory accounts openly competing in the public realm to this day, often reflecting political tendencies in South Korea. The dilemma, that is, the discrepancy between a single ethnic identity and the reality of political divisions, lies at the core of North and South Korean people. Therefore, national identity for a contemporary Korean is ambivalent, between being a member of the Korean nation and a citizen of either of the divided states.

Because the Korean nation was divided along the ideological line of communists and capitalists, ideology among all other factors that influence the formation of national identity is the most important component. Thus, traditional approaches focused on ideology as a major cause of societal conflicts in South Korea. However, a multitude of factors from war to economic development can have a significant impact on national identity. National identity is crafted around two important concepts of "the self" and "the significant others" because national identity exists not only to define who we are, but also to separate us from others (Triandafyllidou 1998, pp.596-99). Thus, the concept of the other is inextricably linked to the notion of national identity. A significant other "refers to another nation or ethnic group that is territorially close to, or indeed within, the national community and threatens, or rather is perceived to threaten, its ethnic and/or cultural purity and/or its independence" (ibid., p. 600). Significant others could be neighboring countries which share a set of cultural traditions or historical experiences, a country which plays an important role while the nation is in trouble, or one which threatens the existence or the sense of distinctiveness of the self. In this light, North Korea and the US are the most significant others to the South. The fact that the "South-

South conflict" phenomenon has initially occurred around the issue of policies toward those two significant others, and recently the issue of how to interpret modern and contemporary South Korean history, well illustrates that the polarization of South Korean society and politics intrinsically pertains to the conflicting narratives of national identity.

As explained, this research assumes that the social conflicts and security dilemma South Korea currently faces should be seen emerging not only from conventional ideological and geopolitical contexts, but also from a fundamental but largely ignored tension between two conflicting master narratives regarding South Korean identity. It necessarily tries to find the roots of conflicts in history. That is, the contending interpretations of historical events such as colonization, division of the nation, and the birth of the two Koreas have left a legacy of embedded conflicts that continue to inform domestic political discourses. This dissertation examines two competing master narratives of national identity by taking historical case studies. In the following section(s), key concepts which are of significance in forming the theoretical framework of the dissertation will be introduced.

1.4.1 Colonization and Nationalism

In Korea, ethnicity has undoubtedly been a key marker of nation and national identity, which is well displayed in the poll (BBC World Service 2016) on the most important factors in the conception of self-identity. In the poll, South Korea has the highest rate, given for "race and culture", at 25%, which is remarkably high compared to the global average of 8%. Unlike other countries, South Korea has long maintained a coherent political community within a stable territorial boundary. Also, Korea has had fairly homogeneous ethnic or historical experiences, in contrast to Western Europe, where the current geographical and political boundaries were not formed until the modern era and nationalism primarily functioned as a political ideology to integrate diverse ethnic groups into a coherent political entity, called the "nation." However, Korea has been divided since 1945, violating Gellner's (1983) nationalist principle, according to which state and nation are congruent. The Korean case, one ethnic nation and two states, is the opposite of most other cases where multiple ethnic groups are integrated into one political entity contending for state power. Not only do North and South Korea share a common identity as a nation, but also the Korean nation is so thoroughly naturalized that Koreans take the homogeneity of the Korean nation for granted as an objective truth. For Koreans, the Korean nation is, therefore, a concrete object that has existed for over five thousand years on the Korean peninsula and that shares a common language, culture, and history.

Korean nationalism arose in the context of Japanese aggression and was, consequently, constructed as a strong anti-imperial ideology (Shin Gi-wook 2005, p. 22). As the first modern East

Asian nation, Japan increased its influence and power on the peninsula in the late nineteenth century, provoking a strong nationalist reaction from Korean society. While nationalism was developed as an ideology to integrate diverse ethnic groups into a unified political community in western Europe, for Korea, which had its long period of political, linguistic and geographic continuity, the threat of imperialism rather than unification was a more urgent problem to solve. Nationalism was naturally called into service as an anti-imperialist ideology, opposing Japanese aggression or assimilation, and at the same time as an agent of modernization. Under colonial rule, nationalists tried to redefine Korean identity as distinct from China and Japan, and promoted this identity through various means such as the reinterpretation of history and the use of Korean script, in opposition to the colonial policy that forced Koreans to use Japanese. For them, it was nation, not region or race, which should be the basis of a collective identity to which Koreans had to belong. Japanese colonial policy of assimilation intensified Korean nationalist sentiment, consequently leading to further radicalizing of the Korean notion of nation. While early Korean nationalists pursued diverse versions of political nationalism from liberal to Marxist, they all uniformly agreed on the homogeneity of the Korean nation.

However, territorial division after liberation from Japan in 1945 created a problem of national representation, although the notion of ethnic nation as social identification remained firm. Koreans still strongly identify with the Korean ethnic community, but territorial partition created an additional factor that strongly influenced the conception of national identity. Each regime claimed their legitimacy for sole representation of the whole Korean ethnic nation. Korean nationalism developed as an anti-colonial ideology now became a highly valuable political tool in both North and South, making the issue of representation all the more salient and contentious. With liberation from colonial rule and the subsequent partition, the battle lines shifted from confrontation with the Japanese and an effort to prove the distinctiveness of the Korean nation toward conflicts between the two Koreas and an effort to justify the legitimacy of the respective political regimes in ethnic nationalist terms. The "politics of representation" or "identity politics" produced competition between the two Koreas over which side should represent the entire Korean nation, with the other being portrayed as having betrayed the nation and lost its "true" national identity (Shin et al. 1999, p. 472). More importantly, this intra-ethnic contention between the two states has significantly affected domestic conflicts within South Korea. Under the authoritarian regimes, the legitimacy of South Korea as a true representation of the Korean nation was never doubted and North Korea was uniformly described as an arch enemy or the evil to be destroyed, while people in the North were depicted as fellow countrymen to be liberated. With the democratization, however, this hegemonic narrative has been challenged by dissidents, student activists, intellectuals and liberal and progressive politicians.

The Korean case resembles divided Germany in the sense that both nations maintain a strong sense of ethnic homogeneity and were split into two parts in the context of WWII. Still, Korea differs from Germany, where a similarly strong ethnic nationalism was dismissed after 1945 due to its close link with Nazism. In contrast, nationalism as a strong political instrument, has been extensively used and promoted in the postcolonial Koreas. A South Korean case can shed light on the study of conflict resolution as an interesting empirical case to show how national identity is formed when there exists strong competition between definitions of nation and nationalism. With prolonged conflicts, the two Koreas' competition for the sole representation of the Korean nation has resulted in contradictory definitions of nation and nationalism reflected in two dominant but contentious narratives on national identity, which hinders conflict transformation as well as a/any settlement of peace on the peninsula. National identity is relational and transformation of relations with enemy states necessarily involves changes in national identity and security conceptions, which is a challenging task in itself. Furthermore, the fact that national identities of the two Koreas were constructed in the context of protracted conflicts makes it even more difficult to change, which will be elaborated in the following section.

1.4.2 Intractable Conflicts and National Identity

One of the important points to be taken into consideration is that the national identity of South Korea was constructed in the context of the war, and even after the truce was agreed in 1953 the two Koreas have been in a protracted conflictual situation, each publicly declaring the integration of the other into its own political system and arguing that each is representing the true Korean nation. While war has played a central role in the making of the modern nation (Tilly 1975; Giddens 1985; Smith 1991), it has been particularly important in the construction of national identity in both Koreas. Although there are many different types of conflicts which are classified in different ways, such as according to their severity or longevity, intractable conflicts are a very particular type of conflict that are prolonged because the parties engaged in them can neither win nor are willing to compromise (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 924), involving great animosity and vicious cycles of violence. They are exhausting, demanding, stressful and costly in human as well as material terms. Intractable conflicts require, therefore, that society members adapt to the conflictual situations both in their individual and social lives. Without such adaptation, a society might have difficulty in withstanding the opponent. The socio-political-psychological perspective on intractable conflicts focuses on the study of the beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavior of the individuals and groups involved in conflicts (ibid., p. 925). These beliefs and emotions have significance in that they play a crucial role as a lens through which the involved society members understand the reality of conflict and take

action on the basis of this view. Intractable conflicts are, further, made salient through the construction of stories that motivate inter-group antagonism (Hammack 2008; Liu & Hiton 2005). Those narratives contain core societal beliefs, which are typically characterized by claims of exclusive legitimacy, victimization, and the justness of one group's goal. Narratives provide social representations of collective history that contributed to the positive distinctiveness of a group (Liu & Hiton 2005). These social representations are themselves utilized, referenced, and exploited by those in power to serve larger political interests, often specifically to the nation-state. Thus, stories are inherently political and provide a motivational force for collective (in) action or (im)mobilization (Hammack 2010, p. 179).

The notion of the Korean nation was initially founded on the struggle against foreign domination, as explained in the earlier section. Consequently, liberation from the Japanese oppressor is central in both South and North Korea's historical narratives. The combination of the centrality of war to the making of the two Korean states and strong faith in the Korean nation's homogeneity results in contentious narratives on national identity that have been constructed based on external threats from each other, whether they are real or perceived, while ironically accepting the common culture of the Korean nation. The discursive mechanisms of "othering" in South Korea thus focus in particular on whether North Korea can be counted as the self or not. These discourses and consequent conception of national identity are of great importance given that they condition foreign, security, and unification policy as well as domestic discourses on norms and ethics, such as the issue of North Korea's human rights violations. South Korean national identity has been described as negative, emerging through "difference" and in particular through the demarcation of enemies. However, as discourse theory teaches us, identity is always constituted relationally, through demarcations of others who do not belong to it (de Saussure 1972). In other words, any identity is negative. Thus, negative identity is not exclusively Korean. What is distinctive in the Korean case is not negativity but rather the specific mechanisms of othering and the attendant political processes of inclusion and exclusion, which are exclusively strong. This is largely because they were constructed in the specific context of intractable conflicts, which characterize South Korean national identity.

All human beings cherish the value of peace and wish to live in a peaceful environment. But achievement of peace is not that simple. Human beings are not usually willing to harm other humans. Killing or even hurting other human beings is considered the most serious violation of the moral code. In intractable conflict groups, however, hurt each other most violently, even committing mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. It is the socio-psychological infrastructure formed in the context of intractable conflict that makes this extreme violence possible. It justifies and legitimizes the most immoral acts and allows the attribution of one's own immoral behavior to the hostile other's violence and external situational factors (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 945). In the context of

intractable conflict, collective identities are shaped with strong beliefs about us and them and, more importantly, with a degree of "non-reflective certainty" about them (Chhabra 2016, p. 253). That is, in normal situations, people have an ability to tolerate some uncertainty about their own beliefs and accept the fact that their beliefs about the self and others might be wrong. However, in contexts of conflict, psychological mechanisms come into play to shut down new information contradicting existing beliefs, and as a result of firm certainty about their assessment of the self and other people, they become resistant to any change (ibid.). In the light of this, two contending narratives on national identity in South Korea that were initially formed in the context of the war, and consequent protracted conflicts between the two Koreas, were shaped with rigid certainty about their assessment of self and others and with intolerance over any doubts about their beliefs, thus being resistant to change.

In addition, during the course of a conflict, each party intensifies their belief that the ultimate intention of the other is to destroy itself. This belief is called the "zero-sum view of national identity" (Kelman 1999, p. 589) and refers to the fact that "fulfillment of the other's national identity is experienced as equivalent to destruction of one's own identity" (Kelman 1987, p.355). An example of this zero-sum view of national identity is found in the case of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. Israel has identified the Palestinian movement's goal of liberating Palestine with the intention of eliminating Israel. Palestinians have also seen the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 and the occupation of the territory as stepping stones to realize Israeli's ultimate goal of removing the Palestinians from the territory. This zero-sum view of national identity is also discovered in the case of the two Koreas. For both Koreas, which have strong ethnic homogeneity, unification is essentially the ultimate goal but they hope to achieve it through integrating the other into one's own political and economic system either by force or peaceful means. Therefore, the goal of unification ironically becomes an existential threat to each other. At the time of writing, summits between the North and the US as well as the two Koreas are in progress to deal with the denuclearization of the North, yet each party is not fully convinced that the counterparty of the summit has really abandoned the project of destroying them nor is genuinely committed to their claims of the peaceful coexistence of two independent states on the peninsula.

In existential conflicts between identity groups, each group is to a considerable degree defined and shaped by the conflict. Its relationship to the conflict is a central part of the group's self-definition and worldview. This in itself often creates a psychological mechanism that becomes a barrier to conflict resolution. A change in the conflict relationship may be resisted because it would require major revisions in the way people think about significant parts of their national and personal lives (Kelman 1997, p. 222). Reconciling with an enemy state is particularly challenging in a protracted conflictual relationship. Its success is uncertain, and requires a dramatic policy shift from a policy of containment to one of reconciliation. Furthermore, reconciliation with an enemy often

faces harsh criticism and opposition within the domestic politics of the reconciling state, which was exactly what happened in South Korea when President Kim Dae-jung first applied the policy of engagement toward the North. A new idea is politically fragile, lacking solid domestic support, while the old idea of containment may enjoy habitual but firm support. South Korea's comprehensive engagement policy with the North for the ten years of the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations (1998-2007) not only created fierce opposition from the conservative section of Korean society, but also faced tension in the traditionally strong alliance with the US under George W. Bush. Since, for critics of the Sunshine policy, the goal of unification with the North essentially constituted their identity, particularly in the form of anti-communism, the notion of peaceful coexistence through reconciliation came as an existential challenge to what they saw as the core of South Korea's national identity. The opponents of the Sunshine policy perceived inter-Korean relations as inherently conflictual and resisted the engagement policy. South Korean national identity cannot be separated from the identity of the North and, more importantly, its security. Underlining identity does not mean denying that security/foreign policies and social conflicts within South Korea have been dominated by strategic and ideological motives. The point, rather, is to acknowledge that the dilemma South Korea has experienced was, and still is, part of a much deeper entrenched practice of defining security through a stark opposition between self and the most significant other, North Korea. This mind-set, which defines security as a protection of the inside from the threat of a hostile outside, turns into a collective mind-set that greatly affects the conception of a nation's when it faces the risk of instability and violence (Bleiker 2001, p. 123). Thus, the issue of national identity inherently pertains to that of security.

While intractable conflicts are often rooted in a competition between material resources and political or territorial control (Kriesberg 1993), they are made salient through the construction of stories that motivate intergroup antagonism (Hammack 2008; Liu & Hilton 2005). Narratives provide social representations of collective history, which help to define the national identity, especially how it relates to other states and to current issues of international politics and internal diversity. History textbooks in narrative construction of identity have their importance as a key pedagogic vehicle for transmitting official knowledge and narratives of national identity. History textbook revision poses challenges, in particular for post-conflict societies, and often serves as a battlefield for opposing narratives and interests, which will be introduced in the following section.

1.4.3 History and National Identity

The controversies about the modern and contemporary history of South Korea, which are often called "history wars," are closely related to one of the important concepts in national identity

formation, the self, how to view South Korea itself. This research argues that historiography and history textbook revisions in South Korea have been the battlefields of the self-identity formation reflecting two contentious narratives: (1) the "state-centered nationalism narrative" generally supported by conservatives based on anti-communism, which emphasizes the legitimacy of South Korea as the only lawful government on the Korean peninsula, and its liberal democracy and free economic system as the core values to be protected, and as a result, still considers North Korea the hostile other and the US the most important ally for its security; and (2) the "ethnic nationalism narrative" supported by progressives that prioritizes one ethnic nation [*minjok*] and thus views the North Korean regime as a partner for peaceful coexistence or even part of the self. This narrative, based on strong ethnic nationalism and anti-imperialism, negatively describes the US as one of the imperial powers who only pursue their own interests on the Korean peninsula and conservative ruling elites as collaborators with the imperial powers of Japan and the US.

The self-understanding of a nation is primarily formed in relation to its own history. We learn who we are by achieving a consciousness over how we became what we are now, that is, through gaining a better understanding of our own history. The history of South Korea has become a highly contested and debated matter, with contradictory accounts openly competing in the public realm to this day, often with a political tendency. The discrepancy between a single ethnic identity and the reality of political divides lies at the core of North and South Korean people. Therefore, national identity for a contemporary Korean is very complicated and ambivalent, between being a member of the Korean nation and as a citizen of either of the divided states. Competing memories and narratives of the country's past in two political strains, conservative and progressive, have manifested themselves in exclusive commemorations such as the March First Independence Movement Day. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea (TRCK), institutionalized by the second progressive government of Roh Moo-hyun, aimed to clear up past wrongdoings and injustice so that the "correct" history could be established by discovering hidden and silenced historical events. However, efforts to clear up the past through the enactment of related laws and the establishment of institutions like TCRK ignited strong resistance from conservatives and controversies over what is the "correct" history and what should be taught to the younger generation, intensifying conflicts rather than contributing to the conflict transformation and reconciliation that they initially aimed at.

In societies emerging from recent violent conflicts, the past is of critical importance in presenting events and policies. Furthermore, the past impacts how the society perceives notions of justice and equality, constitutes relations and perceptions between groups in society, and determines how people envision the future of their nation (Korostelina 2016, p. 289). The past is revealed in different forms, like personal memories of those who lived through violence, stories passed onto younger generations, representations in the mass media and official narratives, one of which is

history education. Although it is not the only mechanism that deals with the past, history education provides the official and most systematic account of a nation's past and established beliefs about relations between groups within a given society. Schools, key instruments of socialization, are inherently affected by societal dynamics and tensions in post-conflict context (Bentrovato 2016, p. 221). Accordingly, history education that is innately political, serving as an instrument to form the notion of citizenship and loyalty to the nation in the process of nation-building, is greatly influenced by the complex processes and changing nature of politics, and in turn impacts on the (re)definition of national identity in post-conflict societies. History education depends on the views of ruling elites regarding how to define the nation itself. Thus, history education in post-conflict societies is dependent upon both the meaning derived from the past, and the power structures of the society and connotations of identity promoted by existing political regimes (Korostelina 2016, p. 289). In addition, history education as the object of great political and societal contention in societies emerging from violent conflict has been frequently functioned a battlefield. However, it is important to note that school history education can also play a key role in peacebuilding and reconciliation processes, as shown in recent empirical research in history education and peace studies (Bentrovato 2016, p. 221).

One of the dilemmas post-conflict societies face is making a choice between either monumental or critical history, which refers to the most important functions of history in society (Korostelina 2016, p. 290). Monumental history serves to legitimize the ruling regime and develop loyalty to a nation among the younger generation. The intention of monumental history is not to provide an understanding of what actually happened in reality, but to promote selective remembering of particular narratives and events, based on explicit judgments about the importance of specific events in the history, as well as promoting selective forgetting of events that are contradictory of intended narratives. The judgments as to what to remember or to forget are made based on the ideology of a ruling regime that favors some events over others because they are regarded as a significant and essential foundation for the regime's ideas and goals (ibid.). In this light, the state-sanctioned narrative of South Korea that had been constructed by the authoritarian regimes and remained dominant until the democratization in the late 1980s was clearly monumental. It served the function of justifying legitimacy of the governments and raising patriotism towards the new state of South Korea.

Monumental history can be constrained by critical history that holds all perpetrators accountable and shows the complex roots of violence without promoting loyalty to one particular side. History is no longer restricted by a regime or powerful group but rather becomes open to constant reinterpretations. In critical history, the process of confronting and considering alternative narratives contributes to reconstruction of narratives (ibid., p. 293). Through this process, stories that

combined different groups and communities within the nation allow multiple interpretations and analyses of the roots and causations of violence, as well as reconfiguration of dominant narratives. Progressive intellectuals and politicians in South Korea have sought to see the past events through different perspectives to bring multiple narratives into the representation of history. These attempts, however, have been undermined by several factors. Among those, the most crucial is the politicization of history, in which narratives of two competing political strains have not been put together, but have only been constantly competing. In addition, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, in itself, still shows some features of monumental history. For instance, it fails to provide complex roots of violent history and creates another dichotomy between nationalists and anti-nationalists, thus intensifying conflict rather than resolving it.

Narratives about historical events and processes are not created by individuals but are rather the collection of memories of social groups, transmitted from one generation to the next one through the scientific production of historians, school teaching, the mass media, and symbolic resources constructed by societies. This everyday knowledge about the common past is not only the result of transforming scientific knowledge into common-sense knowledge, but also a result of educational and school teaching interventions. Any narrative of the past has a political dimension in that it can be used to either negate or legitimize the historical foundations claimed by social groups, in particular, political elites, which provide them with temporal continuity (Sibley et al. 2008). It is, therefore, natural to have a constitutive tension between hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives. Multiple versions of narratives naturally coexist, and systems of knowledge are heterogeneous and unstable. Hence, possibilities for critique, argumentation, and discussion are always open. In this regard, hegemonic and counter-narratives not only coexist side by side but penetrate each other, informing, arguing, and questioning. The conflicts between different, in fact, contradictory versions of the same historical process can coexist in everyday life in the same social group, resulting in a state called "cognitive polyphasia" (Barreiro et al. 2017, p. 127). Changes in collective narrative discourses are unlikely to happen merely because new facts or evidence are found. Rather, it is the representation and interpretation of facts, the meanings made of facts, that are of significance yet are frequently in dispute. The notion of a state of cognitive polyphasia suggests that people develop their own strategies to deal with conflicting information without changing their beliefs and interpretations. Thus, when it comes to the collective memories of past violence, it is the state of polyphasia, not mere information, that must be addressed (ibid., p. 140).

One example of cognitive polyphasia can be found in the case of Korea. When the progressive regimes initiated a policy of "clearing up the past wrong-doings", policy opponents, mostly conservatives, developed their own strategies and narratives to deal with conflicting memories, such as mass killings of civilians by the state forces, without changing their beliefs and

interpretations over history. In the alternative narrative of ethnic nationalism, the act of mass killings is attributed to the authoritarian regimes who were blinded by the anti-communistic ideology and exerted extreme violence on its own people. The same historical event is, however, interpreted from a different angle for those conservatives, saying it is a tragedy that many civilians were sacrificed but it was a necessary measure to protect the country from communist rebellion at the time. Thus, the alternative narrative was not able to change their beliefs and interpretations of the event. In the South Korean case, the conflict between contradictory narratives has greater significance given that some South Koreans, mostly conservatives and rightists, believe that they are still at war with the North, so for them the challenge from another narrative that views the North as a normal state to coexist on the peninsula is, in fact, regarded as an existential threat. As a result, conflicts between contradictory narratives are further intensified in South Korea than in other countries. Each government of South Korea since the 2000s has attempted to invest prominence in interpretations of the past and narratives on national identity by arguing their version of narrative as "true" and "right" for the nation.

1.4.4 Knowledge Production and Identity Politics

To analyze conflicting discourses over various issues from history to policies in contemporary South Korean politics and society from the point of view of the struggles for "true" and "correct" narratives, this study relies on a critical school of thought such as Foucault's, that assumes that there are always political motives behind the creation and promotion of particular narratives. Foucault (2000) argues, in line with Nietzsche, that knowledge is the outcome of a battle and functions as a strategic relation between humans. In this regard, truth and power are interlinked. They are generating and maintaining each other, resulting in a specific "regime of truth" which is differently constructed from society to society (Foucault 2002, p. 132). This regime defines which discourses are allowed and accepted as "true", and provides the mechanisms to distinguish between "right" and "wrong" (ibid.). The political battle is fought by using the discursive weapons of knowledge and power which determine the formation of a context-specific truth (Foucault 2004, p. 190). This battle is more about the status of being accepted as truth with all its economic and political implications, rather than about the truth itself. Dynamics of power and knowledge create conflicting versions of truth and rightness which function as tactical weapons in politics (Foucault 2000, p. 61). As in Foucault's assertion (2004) that "politics is the continuation of war by other means" (p. 13), war is not only constantly dividing societies, but it is also the foundation of all institutions of power, just as military institutions are at the heart of all political institutions. The expression that "politics is the continuation of war by other means" well describes the post-war South Korea. After the truce

agreement in 1953, many of the government's policies worked like a military strategy to fight against an arch enemy, that is, the North and its communist ideology. Much effort was put into keeping the image of the very enemy alive through such measures as the re-production of history, creation of fear, propaganda and censorship, selective commemoration and victimization.

With the legal establishment of the South Korean state in 1948, the first government of Rhee Syngman highlighted anti-communistic ideology in the face of the North Korean threat. The military government that followed continued to promote anti-communism and nationalism to legitimize its power and mobilize the public. It largely focused on the formation of an anti-communistic consciousness. Thus, the North was undoubtedly an important element in South Korea's national identity formation (Shin & Burke 2008). The Korean case is one of the most typical examples, with national identity being strengthened due to the presence of a significant contending identity, hence reflecting the important role of significant others in identity construction, as Triandafyllidou (1998) argues. In South Korea, state-designed legislations and institutions were also put in place in order to consolidate a national identity by excluding the possibility of any sympathy toward North Korea. While less antagonistic policies toward the North have been imposed during the past decades after the democratization, South Korea still employs National Security Law principles that restrict freedom to politically support the North.

While the national identity of South Korea was created and propagated by state power under the authoritarian regimes, democratization in the late 1980s not only changed this pattern but also fostered a new feature of identity. Identity is a more influential element in South Korea's foreign policy and due to the innately ambivalent nature of national identity in South Korea, inter-Korean relations are much more complicated. It was Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine policy toward the North that intensified identity politics in the South with attempts at the reformation of national identity. This has resulted in a polarized and divided South Korean society between Sunshine's proponents, mostly progressives and leftists, and opponents, conservatives and rightists, on how to engage one of the most significant others, North Korea. Furthermore, the development of a civil society in South Korea has contributed to the redefinition of both South Korean politics and South Korean national identity, which has significant meaning given that knowledge about what is right for the nation is now not determined solely by the state, but by many other actors like civic groups. This has naturally led to the emergence of challenging perspectives regarding many issues. In the democratized society of South Korea, the formerly dominant narrative on national identity created by the state now faces challenges and has lost its hegemony in providing "truth" and "rightness." While knowledge production used to be dominated by the sole state power in the past, now various agents, including the state itself, compete to claim a hegemonic status in providing the "true" stories for the society.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that there are multiple narratives about past events,

depending on the varying perspectives and interests of the social or national groups implicated in the stories. This is of great importance given that historical narratives influence how groups define their rights and duties, legitimize their political agreements, and judge the rightness or wrongness of their actions. Any account of the past thus has a political dimension, and all such accounts can be used to negate or legitimize the historical bases of claims made by social groups. Hence, there is necessarily constitutive tension between hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives. Hegemonic narratives convey the more stable, dominant, and consensual version of history, whilst counter-narratives are defined by their opposition or resistance to the dominant or hegemonic narratives.

The Sunshine policy of President Kim Dae-jung was not simply a policy change but an attempt to transform the hegemonic narrative about South Korea's relational identity with North Korea. Before the democratization, the North was only described as an evil enemy to be destroyed, and its leader as irrational. Policy change from containment to engagement and the positive portrayal of the leader of the North essentially required transformation of the hegemonic narrative, leading to a transformation of national identity. Furthermore, the transformation of South Korean national identity that had seen only the South as a lawful political entity on the peninsula takes on a special meaning because of the rather peculiar circumstance of a nation with a strong sense of ethnic homogeneity being divided into two political entities. The controversy over whether to call the North the main enemy [*chuchŏk*] is another example to show the fact that the inner conflict of South Korea pertains to the issue of national identity. The main enemy controversy comes from the reality that the two Koreas are pursuing dialogue and cooperation while they are technically at war, with a massive military standoff creating a practical threat to one another. It is, in fact, very awkward to define one's counterpart as the enemy while pursuing reconciliation and cooperation, but the North is still an enemy in a military sense. Hence, the dilemma associated with in-group discrepancy over a variety of issues in South Korea we currently witness can be properly understood only by taking identity politics into consideration. For instance, Shin Gi-wook (2012) claims that to adequately understand South Korean policies related to US-South Korea relations, one necessarily has to acknowledge the role of national identity that extends beyond policy and domestic politics. That is, the US-ROK relationship is linked to the issue of national identity for Koreans, while it is largely a matter of policy for Americans. To South Korea, the US is one of the most significant others that has shaped South Korea's national identity in the post-liberation era, rather than simply another state in the international system with which it shares certain interests. Thus, US-ROK relations along with inter-Korean relations have become a pillar of national identity for Koreans. Hence, the changes in South Korean views on the US during the 1990s and 2000s must be considered in the context of identity politics and identity transformation, reflecting a larger social effort or trend, led by South Korean progressives and leftists, to redefine South Korea's position (Shin Gi-wook 2012, p. 295-296).

During the Cold War, the anti-communist years, the world-view and interests of the South accorded with those of the US on the peninsula. However, with the end of the Cold War, South Korea's domestic regime change, and its subsequent engagement with the communist countries, South Korea transformed its views about the role they could play in emerging global and regional orders. Such revitalized thinking about national identity necessarily included reevaluation of South Korea's two most important relationships, those with its significant others: North Korea and the US. As a result, identity plays an increasingly important role in shaping Korea's relations with these nations and policy regarding them. Competition for narrative dominance and identity politics are in a constitutive relationship. That is, policy changes based on identity transformation toward the significant others have been influenced by narrative transformation, and dominance of narratives is, in turn, affected by institutional changes such as policies.

1.5 Hypotheses and Justification

The aim of the dissertation is to research how and why a variety of reforms led by the progressive administrations of South Korea, from foreign policies to the North and the US, toward domestic policies like "clearing up the past wrong-doings" and history textbook revision, have intensified social conflicts in politics and society, rather than contributing to the conflict transformation and reconciliation that they originally aimed at. While conflicts were initially centered around the policies toward two most significant others, inner divisions within South Korea now seem to extend beyond foreign policy areas. The most notable case is the current controversy over how to interpret the modern and contemporary history of South Korea, termed "history war," pertaining to self- identity.

This study primarily assumes that the social and political polarization within South Korea stems from fundamental disagreements over two highly important concepts in the formation of national identity: 1) the self, how to define South Korea, which means whether the birth of a South Korean government should be celebrated as a lawful and legitimate process, or treated as failure to establish one united nation; and 2) the significant others, the question of how to identify North Korea and the US. By closely examining two contentious narratives over South Korea's past that greatly influence the conceptions of national identity, the research highlights the fact that narratives on the national identity of South Korea were initially crafted in the context of intractable conflicts with the North, which has had great impacts on the consolidation of social conflicts. Narrative identity created during or after the war has been formed with a strong certainty of the self and others, thus being resistant to change. In particular, the "state-centered nationalism narrative" of contemporary

conservatives is in accordance with the state-sanctioned narrative in the authoritarian era that was formed with the firm certainty about the North as an evil enemy. Thus, those who see the reality of the nation through the lens of state-centered nationalism find it extremely difficult to adapt to the alternative narrative that identifies the North as a normal neighboring state to coexist with. It is important to note that it is a challenging task to transform narrative identity crafted in intractable conflicts. The two contentious narratives show a resistance to any change because they were initially formed during the intractable conflicts with the North. Reforms led by progressive regimes were not able to construct a transcendent and integrative narrative over national identity, while conservatives' opposition to narrative transformation grew strong.

Secondly, this study assumes that it is identity politics in which the rhetoric of othering/exclusion is frequently applied that has significantly affected the intensification of social and political conflicts in South Korea through creating a dualistic conception of self and others. In the state-centered nationalism narrative, Koreans who agree with the founding values of South Korea, liberal democracy and the free market system, are constructed as the self, and North Korea, a communist and totalitarian state, and its followers, whether they are currently South Koreans or North Koreans, are identified as an evil enemy to South Korea. In conservatives' rhetoric, the national division and the war are attributed to the North Korean regime and its evil ideology of communism. The rhetoric of exclusion in which political dissenters are categorized as pro-North or commies has been very common in South Korean politics. While framing opponents as pro-North is still frequently adopted in discourses of conservative politicians and their supporters, a new frame, that is "anti-South," has been adopted since the New Right movement emerged in the 2000s. In the anti-South frame, political opponents or those who are critical of South Korea are classified as anti-South Korean forces that deny the legitimacy of South Korea as the only lawful political entity on the peninsula and underline its birth as a failure of the united Korean nation. Hence, the narrative of conservatives presents a strong nationalism, yet South Korea-centered, so it is named the "state-centered nationalism narrative" in this dissertation. On the other hand, the "ethnic nationalism narrative", based on strong ethnic nationalism and anti-imperialism, sees North Korea as part of the self to be united regardless of political ideologies. In this narrative, the nation and masses [*minjok*] are defined as pure and absolute self, while pro-Japanese collaborators, who later turned into pro-US ruling elites in South Korea, are constructed as the hostile others, traitors to the nation. What is problematic in this narrative is that Japanese collaborators are perceived as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes, without considering personal and social contexts in which they served or related to the colonial government. Hence, those who were once categorized as collaborators by historians are depicted as homogeneously evil, and the descendants of those collaborators also often fall into the same category of evil traitors who demonstrate the same fixed vicious patterns of

behavior. In the statement on the March 1 Independence Movement Day in 2019, President Moon openly mentioned that "the term, the reds [*ppagaengi*], is the legacy of pro-Japanese collaboration that should be cleared up for the nation's better future" (SŏngYŏn-ch'ŏl 2019). His statement intended to warn of the danger in the rhetoric of exclusion of rightists, in which whoever is critical of South Korea is treated as commies and North Korean sympathizers. However, this also creates itself another danger, which is already revealed in his supporters' rhetoric, that opponents who are critical of his ideas and against the North fall into a category of pro-Japanese collaborators based on the dichotomy between good self "nationalists" and evil "anti-nationalists." He also mentioned in the luncheon with the descendants of Korean independence fighters who currently live abroad that there is a saying that "three generations of pro-Japanese collaborators will be prosperous while those of fighters for independence will be impoverished." And he emphasized that it is time to clear up. This is also to point out the lack of legal justice toward acts of collaboration and their consequent results. Although this is indeed true in many cases in which families of independence fighters have struggled with poverty and have not been rewarded by the state, this idea has a risk that many privileged and rich people that enjoyed wealth in the post-liberation era are treated as descendants of collaborators without considering historical and social contexts. This historical view clearly accords with the ethnic nationalism narrative in which the pro-Japanese collaborators are blamed for all the injustice and wrongs current South Korean society experiences.

This study assumes that both narratives have constructed antagonism toward their own hostile "others,": North Korean sympathizers, whether called pro-North, the reds, commies, or anti-South, in the state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives; and anti-nationalists, including pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators, and ruling elites in the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives. More importantly, these two contending narratives have been politicized to exclude opponents from South Korean society and politics, intensifying societal and political conflicts within South Korea.

Lastly, the study assumes that reforms led by progressive regimes failed to create an open and inclusive "dialogical space" between competing groups in the process of policy decision making and its enactment, thus deepening conflicts. The lesson learned from past experiences in the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations that enthusiastically promoted the engagement policy toward North Korea is that peace between the two Koreas cannot be attainable simply if all agree on the ideal of peace, yet it can be achieved only through patient and inclusive processes. Establishing a positive domestic context of South Korea toward peace, that is, consensus and cooperation with those who have different values and ideology, is a necessary condition for conflict transformation and peace settlement on the peninsula (Choi Jang Jip 2017). In order for an eventual unification to be achievable and sustainable, it is not enough just to say that both Koreas must be united under one

system. Unification must address the emotional and personal components of individuals which a country consists of. People will not naturally develop a sense of unity and belonging to a reunited Korea even if a political decision for unification is made. In Bloom's (1990) words, "nation building means both the formation and establishment of the new state itself as a political entity, and the process of creating viable degrees of unity, adaptation, achievement and a sense of national identity among the people" (cited in Grzelczyk 2014, p. 179). In this sense, unifying the two Koreas will essentially require the same complicated processes through which a new state is established. Hence, during the process of pursuing the engagement policy toward the North or a peace initiative on the peninsula, some degree of consensus and cooperation between groups in South Korea who have radically different national identity conceptions is a necessary condition for ultimate peace settlement between the two Koreas.

Throughout the last few decades, social scientists and activists have come to realize that in order to settle peaceful relations between the former rivals and move them into a phase of sustainable and stable peace, extensive changes are required in the emotions and mind-sets of group members on both sides. Stable and lasting peace can be defined as "consisting of mutual recognition and acceptance of an ultimate goal of maintaining peaceful relations through full normalization with cooperation in all possible domains of collective life that provide secure and trustful coexistence" (Bar-Tal &Halperin 2013, p. 945). In this framework, in almost every peace-building process, reconciliation between past rival parties is a necessary condition for establishing stable and lasting peace, and it is related to socio-psychological restructuring of relations between past rivals that allows healing from the pains of past conflict. This can be achieved through mutual recognition and acceptance, through open and free discussions about past conflict, and by taking responsibility and correcting past injustices and wrongdoing. Thus, building lasting and stable peace requires, on the one hand, structural changes that reformulate the nature of relations between the parties. On the other hand, fundamental socio-psychological changes of members in society are necessary, which means "adoption and internalization by society members of values, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, norms and practices that cherish peace, justice, respect of human rights, cooperation, trust, sensitivity and respect of cultural differences – all the foundations of a culture of peace" (ibid.).

At the time of writing, the expectation for a peace settlement on the Korean peninsula is greater than ever due to ongoing inter-Korean summits as well as the first and historical encounter between the two leaders of the US and North Korea, even though the second DPRK-US summit ended without reaching an agreement. Still, it is a positive sign that formerly hostile nations are willing to talk to find a way of coexistence. However, the degree of inner conflict within the South has grown even higher since the impeachment of former President Park Geun-hye in 2017, and there exist deep discrepancies over how to approach, and how to pursue, cooperation with the North.

Furthermore, we have seen in other post-conflict societies like Germany or Northern Ireland that a political declaration or peace agreement does not necessarily lead to genuine peaceful relations and reconciliation between the former adversaries. This justifies my argument that the narrative of rightists in South Korea who construct a strong national identity that still views the North as an arch enemy should be taken into consideration in advancing peaceful relations with the North. In the process of the engagement policy toward the North and peace initiatives on the peninsula, some degree of consensus and cooperation between conflicting groups in South Korea who have radically different national identity conceptions is a prerequisite for ultimate peace settlement between the two Koreas. Even if a peace agreement or a decision of political integration is made in high politics, it can be always dissolved by the public as we are just witnessing in the case of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU). Reconciliation goes beyond conflict resolution in representing a transformation in each party's identity.

With the impeachment of the former President Park, the conservative parties in formal politics are in crisis, losing their political power, and pro-Park supporters are commonly described as uniformly old and irrational, disregarded in academics and the media. However, there are still quite a good number of South Korean people who see the current political and societal issues through the prism of the conservative narrative identity, even if the hegemonic power of the traditional conservative camp in formal politics has been lost. More importantly, with Park's impeachment, groups of young conservatives who criticize political elites who abandon the "true" values and principles of conservatism have emerged, with the goal of the revitalization of conservatism. In addition, it seems evident that the political rhetoric of exclusion by politicians, whether progressives or conservatives, based on their own identity concepts, cannot bring genuine peace on the Korean peninsula. It is, therefore, now the time to examine the inherently divided nature of Korean national identity among South Koreans and to seek to develop an integrative and transcendent narrative both parties can accept through an open "dialogical space." In this regard, Kelman's (1999) argument that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is also a conflict based on strong identity conceptions, requires the development of a transcendent narrative in which each group recognizes its positive interdependence on the other has significant implications for the Korean case as well.

1.6 Methodology: Historical Case Studies

In researching the distinctive and performative roles played by dominant and alternative narratives, this study examines some historical case studies in which four critical junctures have been significant in the narrative transformation of South Korea. The dominant narrative contains key

national identity conceptions that structure the state's responses to contentious political issues. In other words, national identity conceptions about the self and the significant others set the context for political debate. I propose the concept of narrative identity as a useful tool to understand inner conflicts within South Korean society and examine how various actors, including the state and non-state, have struggled to attain the dominance of narrative identity at times of identity disagreement or competition through historical case studies. The study draws on a variety of sources and methods, including discourse analysis of written or spoken texts, official documents, media articles and in-depth interviews conducted in Seoul during field research in 2017 and 2018. The study regards narrative, understood here as social constructs largely shaped by power and politics, as a key analytical tool with which we can better understand societies, their power structures, and internal dynamics and tensions. Inspired by Michael Foucault's work, the research employs discourse analysis to deconstruct the relationship between power and knowledge in the society examined, and more specifically, to discern how particular knowledge becomes dominant and operates through societal institutions, thus suppressing alternative truths and exerting social control.

In the process of narrative identity transformation in South Korea, there have been four important junctures: 1) democratization in the late 1980s which provided dissident intellectuals with opportunities to raise their voices and promote their narratives in the public sphere, and the financial crisis in 1997 that well revealed the structural problems in South Korea's economy and accelerated political and economic democratization; 2) the rise of progressives and regime change to the two successive progressive administrations (1998-2008), through which the alternative narrative of progressives could be institutionalized in policies and regulations; 3) the resistance of conservatives in the 2000s to reforms led by progressives, and the emergence of the New Right which has a significance in that it contributed to revitalizing the historical view of conservatives; and 4) the crisis of conservatism with the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye and consequent self-reflection process on the part of conservatives. The study additionally draws on the outcomes of in-depth interviews with right-wing activists and participant observation in right-wing events, seminars, lectures and conferences conducted during the field research in 2017 and 2018 in Seoul to examine the influence of the historical juncture of the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye in the narrative identity of conservatives.

Importantly, given the contentious nature of political and social discourses on various issues in South Korea, this research refrains from providing its own account but instead describes the various ways in which master narratives are disseminated and endorsed or politicized. The terms conservative and progressive are direct translations of the Korean *posu* and *chinbo*, respectively, which are the most commonly used terms for the two political strains in South Korea. In a South Korean context, the term, conservative [*posu*], covers republican, conservative and rightist, while

progressive [*chinbo*] also includes a broad range of the political spectrum, from liberal, progressive, to leftist, socialist, communist. To define the exact meanings of those political sects in a South Korean context is beyond the scope of this dissertation, and thus the most common terms, conservative and progressive, will be generally adopted in this study, although rightist and leftist are often used as well.

1.6.1 First Juncture: Democratization and the Financial Crisis

Chapter 3 focuses on the emergence of an alternative narrative around the first critical juncture: the democratization movement in June 1987. The democratization movement that started in the 1980s opened the door to different voices being accepted in politics and academia, and challenged the hegemony of the state-sanctioned narrative that was created under authoritarian regimes. Since the 1980s, nationalist historiography in South Korea that had not been allowed for open discussion under the authoritarian regimes has been associated with leftist and progressive politics (Em Henry 2013, p. 16), aiming at not only looking to the future of the nation but also coming to terms with the legacies of past wrongdoings. Furthermore, the financial crisis in 1997 that seriously damaged the South Korean economy provided the opening through which the progressives and their ideology could enter the mainstream of South Korea's formal politics (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p. 62). The crisis exposed the structural problems of the old system of politics and the economy in South Korea, about which the progressives had always been highly critical. The financial crisis revealed the inefficiency of the economic system that had been praised with South Korea's fast growing economic development. One of the most direct political outcomes of the financial crisis was the election of Kim Dae-jung to the presidency in 1997, who used to be a long-time dissident and opposition leader. The financial crisis created widespread panic and anger among the population toward the ruling conservative coalition's corruption and mismanagement of the economy, providing an opportunity for Kim Dae-jung. The Kim administration together with former radical student leaders began introducing South Korea to many ideas and policies that had been once considered too leftist, and hence forbidden.

1.6.2 Second Juncture: Successive Progressive Administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun

The second critical juncture in the process of national identity transformation was the regime change from authoritarian conservative to the progressive administrations of Kim Dae-jung (1997-2002) and Roh Moo-hyun (2002-2008). Roh Moo-hyun's election in 2002 marked the rise of the progressives in South Korean politics. The progressives consist of those politicians, intellectuals, and

activists who led the student movement and formed a coalition against military dictatorship during the 1980s. Many of the new policies adopted by the Kim and Roh administrations caused inherent disagreement and conflict over South Korean national identity to come to the surface. Under the progressive regimes of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, the ethnic nationalism narrative became institutionalized as an official narrative through policy changes ranging from foreign policies toward the North and the US to domestic ones, such as the policy of "clearing up the past wrongdoings" and history textbook revision. Thus, chapter 4 focuses on policy changes related to two important concepts of national identity, the self and the significant others, North Korea and the US.

The institutionalization of this new narrative was regarded as an identity crisis for the conservative camp and its followers. As a result, the identity conflicts became more intense than ever in the 2000s. Many observers argue that competition between the two political camps was largely due to ideological difference. This is partly true since ideology is the most influential factor in the national identity construction of South Korea given that the nation was divided along ideological lines. However, this research aims to show that conflicts in South Korean politics and society were more about winning the dominance of narratives that greatly impact the reformation of national identity led by the two political strains of conservatives and progressives, which does not mean that competition happened only between political parties and politicians, but was expanded beyond the political arena, moving into the various realms of society such as education, civil society, and religion. Chapter 4 examines policy reforms divided into two sections: first, foreign policy changes under Kim and Roh which led to the reformation of the two significant others' identities; and second, the reconstruction of the self-identity, through such policies as "clearing up past wrongdoings" and the establishment of related laws and institutions like the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, Republic of Korea (TCRK), as well as reinterpretations of the war and war crimes.

1.6.3 Third Juncture: Emergence of the New Right and History War

The third critical juncture in narrative transformation is the emergence of the New Right movement around the same time of the Roh administration, which is closely examined in chapter 5. Thus, there is a temporal overlap between the second and third junctures. The New Right movement has led to sharp debates over how to interpret South Korean modern history, which is elaborated in chapter 6. The New Right separating from the traditional conservative strain was a kind of reactionary movement to progressives' attempts to institutionalize their narrative into policies and laws. Such revitalized thinking about national identity necessarily included reevaluation of South Korea's important relationships with North Korea and the US, as well as the self, the legitimacy of South Korea. Consequently, identity plays an increasingly important role in shaping Korea's relations

with these nations and policy regarding them (Shin Gi-wook 2012), which raised the strong opposition from conservatives/rightists. Amid such political and societal shifts, the so-called "New Right" emerged. The New Right was a conservative political movement motivated by the necessity to reinvent conservatism for a democratic context. At the core of this movement was the free market system based on the perspective of neoliberalism, from which scholars advocating the movement of the New Right began to reinterpret Korea's past (Macrae 2016, p. 329-300). With the emergence of the New Right movement and its effort to turn South Korean history away from the allegedly left-leaning narrative of progressives, the state-sanctioned narrative, which dominated before democratization, has now evolved into the "state-centered nationalism narrative", which emphasizes the legitimacy of South Korea as a true representation of the Korean nation and treats the North as an illegal entity and enemy.

The New Right as a reactionary movement to the dominance of the progressive narrative in society ignited the controversy over how to assess the past events of South Korea. Reforms in foreign policies under two progressive regimes which sought to set a different perspective over how to view the significant others have consequently led to conflicting narratives on how to identify the self, South Korea and its history. Thus, currently, the most controversial conflict in South Korean politics and society pertains to how to assess its modern and contemporary history, which is elaborated in chapter 6. Controversies over history are closely related to the core of national identity. The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives has been widely adopted as an official narrative since history textbook revision in 2003 from the state-issued history textbook to privately published textbooks. With this change, the master narrative over national history and identity has been transformed, more in line with the ethnic nationalism narrative. Since 2004 when the Text Forum, the New Right civic organization, was founded, conservative intellectuals and politicians who felt a threat from the prevailing progressives' narrative adopted in the textbooks and accepted among the public have consistently raised criticism over allegedly left-leaning textbooks. The controversy reached its peak when the former conservative president Park Geun-hye sought to return to the adoption of the single state-issued history textbook system, which was later abolished when the current progressive president Moon Jae-in took office. The debates over how to interpret South Korean history and how to identify the North and the US are still ongoing, including other issues such as enacting National Foundation Day and abolishing the National Security Law.

1.6.4 Fourth Juncture: The Impeachment of President Park Geun-hye

With the retaking of office under the two successive conservative regimes of Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, conservatives seemed to successfully regain a hegemonic political power

but the impeachment of President Park in 2017 totally changed the political scene in institutional politics as well as in civic political activism. Chapter 7 focuses on a new type of political activism of conservative civic groups, which emerged after one of the most significant historical junctures in South Korean history, Park's impeachment. The crisis of conservatism in institutional politics awakened the feeling of threat and crisis among conservative supporters, who then started to redefine the values and principles of South Korean conservatism, criticizing politicians who abandoned those norms and values for the sake of their own interests. This group of conservatives identify themselves as true conservatives, most of whom have been strongly against Park's impeachment, arguing that the rule of law in South Korea was damaged by the leftist populism. On the other hand, many of the media and academic intellectuals view this new trend of conservatism after the impeachment as the emergence of right-wing extremism in South Korea. Based on 15 in-depth interviews with right-wing activists and participant observation in right-wing events, seminars, and lectures, conducted in 2017 and 2018, chapter 7 aims to have a better understanding of the self-reflective processes of conservatism. Although the hegemonic status of the traditional conservative party in South Korea has been lost with Park's impeachment, there still exist quite a considerable number of people who see the reality of South Korea through the lens of the state-centered nationalism narrative. Political activism of conservatives is going through self-reflective processes, consolidating supporters of conservatism. It is noteworthy that young conservatives have emerged as leaders in this new trend of conservatism, which has never happened before. The lessons learned from the past progressive regimes advise us that it is a necessary condition for conflict transformation and reconciliation to include those who have different ideologies and values in decision making and the processes of peace initiatives. In order to do so, understanding the world-views of the two competing camps in South Korea seems mandatory.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Narrative Identity

In psychology, the idea of narrative began to emerge in the 1980s. Bruner (1986, 1990), one of the key scholars in the field, argues that narrative is the primary mode of thought and we understand the social world by constructing narratives. Through this process of story-making individuals can connect their mind to a social reality, taking its particular cultural and political contexts into consideration (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 76-77). While there exist various definitions of narrative, this study takes a narrow definition of narratives as "stories" that are "a spoken or written account of connected events" (ibid., p. 76) and storytelling. As such, narratives are possible forms of discourse, while discourses include narratives but cannot be reduced to narratives. Certain narratives of the nation constitute broader discourses of national identity as important components. Different narrative forms, such as historical accounts, myths and metaphors, contribute to discourses of national identity. Also, narratives are told in media such as novels, films, textbooks, or other spaces like news media in which discourses are actively produced. The speeches of leaders, the conversation of a community group, or the telling of an individual life story are other forms of narrative. Likewise, these storied accounts are found at every level of analysis and thus the idea of narrative transcends disciplinary boundaries.

2.1.1 Narrative Identity at the Individual Level

Through analysis of time and narrative to examine the difference between history and fiction, Ricoeur (1988) argues that both historical action and interpretive imagination shape narratives. In his book, *Time and Narrative,* he explains that history can be different from fiction, considering that it claims to be the "real" and "true" past (Ricoeur 1988, p.5). That is, it is fictive imagination that makes it possible for the past to be grasped. Mead (1970) made a similar comment about how the past is reinterpreted in light of the present and facilitates future plans (p. 241). History borrows from fiction the interpretive forms that allow the past to be reinterpreted in light of new experience that includes possibly conflicting information. According to Ricoeur, narratives about human pasts intermingle historical events and the resources of fiction that provide the narrative plot within which events are interpreted. Hence, a sense of identity is constructed through integrating the process of emplotment, which synthesizes experience in a narrative (Ricoeur 1991, p. 21). Events do not just happen but they carry the story along. Events may seem discordant until they are integrated and made sense of in the story. Plot, which is the organizing theme of a narrative, can weave together a complex

set of events into a single story. A plot is not only imposed but is also produced through a complex process that moves back and forth between events and plot structure until they are fitted together. Through the process of emplotment, the experience of time is given with meaning. The remembered and anticipated events of a person's life become the person's life story.

Ricoeur's analysis of narrative goes beyond just a semiotic or linguistic aspect of a text, merely concerned with the internal relationships within a text (Ricoeur 1992, p. 301). Rather, he himself describes his analysis of narrative as "hermeneutic", which indicates he is concerned with the text's relationship to the events of lived experience, as well as its internal workings. That is, while not denying the significance of language, he explicitly includes the analysis of the relationship between linguistic narratives and practical action. Ricoeur's hermeneutics approach to narratives emphasizes the reality of lived experience, of acting in the world, as a foundation to any attempt to understand the interpretive process. In his hermeneutics, the central focus is the process of interpretation, how past and future are refigured in the present. The complete hermeneutic circle of narrative and action involves the process of prefiguration, configuration, and refiguration (Ezzy 1988, p. 244). The narrative imagination prefigures lived experience with a symbolic structure and temporal schema of action. These events are then configured into a story with a central theme or plot that "mediates between the individual events or incidents and the story taken as a whole" (Ricoeur 1984, p. 65). This story, or text, then encounters lived experience again in the world of the listener or reader, who refigures and interprets the story as it influences his or her choices about how to act in the world.

Based on his analysis of narrative, Ricoeur (1988) develops a conception of self-identity. For him, identity is a narrative construction that is the product of the reflective process. Narrative identity constructs a sense of self-sameness, continuity and character in the plot of the story a person tells about him- or herself. The story then becomes the person's actual history (Ricoeur 1988, p. 247). What should be noted is that "identities are neither unchangeable substances nor linguistic illusions" (Ezzy 1988, p. 245). The self-continuous nature of identity is a result of the self-consistent character of narratives throughout lifetime changes. Narratives are integrally temporal because they take the events of the past, present, and future into a consistent narrative. While narratives can and do change, this does not mean that they cannot provide a sense of self-sameness that is substantial enough to justify talking about character as "a persistent unity of preferences, inclinations and motivations" (Pucci 1992, p. 193). Narrative identity is "coherent but fluid and changeable, historically grounded but "fictively" reinterpreted, constructed by an individual but constructed in interaction and dialogue with other people" (Ezzy 1998, p. 246). Thus, Ricoeur (1984) emphasizes that narrative identities are not static in their structures, but are produced through an ongoing integrative process (p. 48). In the same way, other scholars also emphasize the reinterpretation process in narrative construction. For instance, Mead (1959) also emphasizes the process of reinterpretation of the past to make sense

of one's actions in the present, and Goffman (1976) underlines how the past is reinterpreted for use in current situations. More importantly, Goffman emphasizes the influence of society's "basic values" on the construction of the story (p.139). Ricoeur (1991) also points out that shared cultural symbols have impacts on the development of narrative identities, mentioning "narratives handed down in our literary tradition" (p.33). However, the plot of a self-narrative is affected by a wide range of preexisting narratives, such as myths, films, and past conversations.

Another interesting point is elaborated by Goffman, who examines the force of the institutionally sanctioned narratives of hospital staff. In group therapy sessions for mental patients, the therapist attempts to "disabuse" the patient of the face-saving narratives and to "encourage an interpretation suggesting that it is he himself who is to blame and who must change" (Goffman 1976, p. 149). This is greatly significant in that it indicates the role of power and politics in the narrative construction of identity, which is more visible in constructing narrative identity of collectives such as a nation. Evans and Maines' (1995) study about incest has the similar argument of the "politics of storytelling." They demonstrate that the conventionally plotted structure used to interpret narratives of incest forced many victims of incest to remain silent. This is because there are no plausible, culturally acceptable plots within which they could narrate their experiences (p.303).

Concerning the role of power and politics, Ricoeur (1992) comments that a self-narrative takes on meaning, and an evaluation as "good" (p. 172), and can be the bridge to an ethical life (p. 187), which indicates that a theory of narrative identity has sociopolitical implications, although this aspect of Ricoeur's thought remains to be further elaborated. Goffman (1976) also mentions that behind each self is an institutional system. That is, "the self dwells in the pattern of social control that is exerted in connection with the person by himself and those around him" (p. 154). Thus, it is not simply the rhetoric of a narrated identity that supports a sense of a unified self. Relations with others through regular interaction with social networks and the routines of everyday life are also central to a person's ability to maintain a consistent and satisfying narrative. That is to say, narrative identities are sustained and transformed through the influence of social relationships as mediated by institutional structures.

2.1.2 Narrative Identity at the Collective Level

Narratives operate not only at the level of individual psychology but also at the collective. Just as the personal narrative of identity provides a sense of continuity, the collective narrative provides a sense of group meaning (Hammack & Pileck 2012, p. 84). In psychology or sociology, narrative identity at the level of individual functioning and development has been emphasized. In fields such as history and politics, on the other hand, the focus has been put on narratives at the

collective level, with analysis of institutionally produced texts, political rhetoric, and discourses more generally. A recent study has moved toward identifying the relationship between master narratives and personal narratives in an attempt to link the idea of narrative identity at multiple levels (Hammack 2008), which thinks of master narrative as dominant scripts that can be identified in cultural products and storylines, ranging from a group's history to meanings behind belonging to a particular social category (Hammack 2010, p. 178). Identity as narrative is thus not static, but narrative identity development is understood as a process that is closely mediated by social experience. In other words, identity development involves a process of narrative engagement in which individuals face multiple discursive choices to make meaning from life and experience through language (Hammack 2008). In this regard, identity is regarded as an internalization of speech (Vygotsky 1978), and is accessible through the act of narration (Hammack 2008), and of using language to make sense of individual and collective experience (Bruner 1987). The construction of narrative identity, assessed at the individual level through the telling of a life story and at the collective level through historical and ethnographic analysis (Hammack 2008), thus provides a window not only into processes of personal psychological adjustment and development, but also larger processes of social reproduction or resistance.

Narratives provide social representations of collective history that contribute to the positive distinctiveness of a group (Liu & Hilton 2005). They are embodiments of collective memory (Wertsch 2008), realized in an internalized psychological and societal speech (Vygotsky 1978) that provides both individual psychological and societal functions. These social representations are themselves utilized, referenced, and exploited by those in power for the sake of political aims and interests, often specifically to the nation-state (Liu & Hilton 2005; Wertsch 2008; Hammack 2010). Hence, stories are "inherently political and provide a motivational force for collective (in)action or (im)mobilization" (Hammack 2010, p. 179). Individuals have to identify themselves as society members for a society to exist. Social identity combines identifications, to a varying extent, with different groups (Tajfel 1982). The formation of social identity is based on a self-categorization process in which individuals group themselves cognitively as belonging to the same social category, in contrast to some other classes of collectives (Tuner & Reynolds 2001). In particular, as members of an ethnic group or a nation, individuals share a sense of belonging and identification with their group, which creates "cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects on a collective level" (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1443).

Collective memory is generally defined as a set of representations of the past that are collectively adopted and accepted (Kansteiner 2002; Wertsch 2008; 2002). These representations are placed in narratives that remind a society's members of the past events on a certain topic. Collective memory is a broad category under which there exist various kinds of memories as subcategories. The

two most important of such subcategories are popular memory and official memory (Nets-Zehngut & Bar-Tal 2013, p. 68). The former refers to the narratives held by society members, best revealed through public opinion surveys. This memory significantly influences the psychological and emotional reactions of the people holding it, and therefore is considered to be of great importance. The latter are the narratives adopted by a society's formal institutions, mainly state institutions. Official memory is discovered in media such as official publications by state institutions, television programs on state controlled channels, and history textbooks in countries with centralized educational systems. The narratives adopted in the official memory may be accepted, at least, by parts of society, hence permeating into the popular memory. In addition, official memory has its own significance given that it is delivered to society members continuously, affects the formal decision making of a nation, and is presented to other states as the official national narrative of the nation (ibid.).

One of the most important factors that influence collective memory is formal history such as how historians view the events of the past. History is typically regarded as a more accurate and true narrative of the past than collective memory (ibid., p. 69). According to Bartlett (1995), memory of individuals is fundamentally influenced by the social context in which they function (cited in Wertsch 2008, p. 121), which means that social organization gives a consistent framework into which all detailed memories must fit.

By examining the role played by narratives in organizing collective memory, Wertsch (2008) points out the issue of a distinction between two levels of narrative analysis: "specific narratives" and "schematic narrative templates" (pp. 122-124). Typically, narratives have to do with specific events, which Wertsch terms "specific narratives." The events involved in specific narratives are uniquely situated in specific space and time, and they may have occurred during one's own lifetime or in an earlier period. However, in the study of collective memory the focus is more on the level of narrative organization, concerned with general patterns rather than specific events and actors. This level of narrative organization is grounded in Wertsch's term, "schematic narrative templates" (ibid.). Based on these narrative templates, stories can reflect a single general story line, while varying in their details. Each template takes the form of a generalized schema that is evident and visible in any one of several episodes. A generalized narrative form may underlie a range of narratives in a cultural tradition. The focus in analyzing the narrative organization of collective memory is placed on identifying an underlying pattern that is expressed in each of specific narratives, not on each of the specific narratives (Wertsch 2008, p. 123). Bruner's (2002) expression that a narrative template is "a cookie cutter imposing a shape" on people's understanding of the past well displays its significance (p. 6-7). In the study of Russian accounts of WWII during its transition from Soviet to post-Soviet, Wertsch (2008) observes a transition from strict, centralized control over collective memory to open

public debate and disagreement, resulting in an unusually wide range of collective memory forms. As Wertsch argues that state control of memory can be found anywhere in the world, it may also be found in the case of South Korea. Throughout the period from the authoritarian era to post-democratization, a transition from state control of memory to open public debates over the past has been observed, resulting in two dominant but contentious master narratives, which are the two contending schematic narrative templates of South Korea in Wertsch's terms. In democratized societies, states are not the only social entities concerned with memory, but groups of all types are routinely concerned with the past for a variety of reasons. However, the state is an obvious focus of this study since it is the institution that has engaged in the largest single effort to control collective memory in modern times in South Korea. In particular, its capacity to control the production of the narrative resources employed in contemplating the past is generally the greatest among any other collectives (Wertsch 2008, p. 124).

The narrative theory of history and identity draws from social representations theory (Moscovici 1984), social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979), collective memory (Halbwachs 1980; Wertsch 2002) and narrative psychology (Bruner 1986, 1990). According to Liu and Hilton (2005), social representations of history provide people with a set of socially shared beliefs that legitimize their arrangements for society, especially government and relationships between groups. Historical representations condition the collective so as to make the same action easy for some people and almost impossible for others, even where their objective interests are similar. They shape content and context for the social identities of people through such things as traditions and collective memories of past conflict. As social identities are constructed in the context of relationships with relevant out-groups and act to protect the in-group unit and self esteem, histories, in turn, tend to be in-group favoring, emphasizing either positive aspects or important lessons from the group's past, and concealing the group's shameful pasts or focusing on its own victimhood while denying that of others. Because of their critical role in identity politics, social representations of history are strongly linked to state production and control, through such institutions as the public education system and official commemorations. However, this control must be negotiated internally with its own citizens, who often believe in alternative versions of history, and externally with other states that may disagree with versions of history that they view as untrue or distorted.

One of the most developed areas of narrative study which links psychological and political phenomena is concerned with the function of stories that serves to construct collective identity through the transmission of collective memory and the creation of myths to support that memory (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 85). In this frame, narratives refer to the institutionalization of social memory into a coherent story, either to provide the legitimacy of ruling elites or to justify dissenters' resistance (ibid.). For example, the narrative of Jewish victimization in the Holocaust justifies Israelis'

military occupation of Palestine territory and influences the beliefs about security as the top priority in Israeli national psychology.

The conception of narrative in this study is anchored in the notion that the process of narration is inherently social and political, and is concerned with a fundamental need for collective meaning. The focus is placed on the study of collective memory embodied in official documents such as textbooks that aim to instill a particular historical narrative. In the study on collective memory, there is an emerging consensus in empirical research as a social process. That is, studies that link levels of analysis reveal a process of dynamic engagement with narratives of collective memory, as opposed to a static, linear account of the relationship between social memory and individual subjectivity. Thus, individuals are deemed as active social meaning-makers whose appropriation of particular narratives over others offers insight into the political trajectory of a society (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 87). Another line of theoretical and empirical work that is concerned with the role of narrative in providing collective meaning focuses on social representations. According to Moscovici (1988), social representations "… concern the contents of everyday thinking and the stock of ideas that gives coherence to our religious beliefs, political ideas and the connections we create as spontaneously as we breathe" (p. 214). As such, it is social representations that provide individuals with a way of making sense of socially significant events or phenomena (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 87). Liu and Hilton (2005) argue that social representations of history play a crucial role in the development of group identity. At the national level, social representations of history are woven into a temporal form and serve as narratives that inform members about their identity, that is, who they are, where they come from, and where they are going. Narratives of history can thus be a useful instrument to strengthen and/or position national and ethnic identities in relation to others.

2.1.3 National Identity and Nationalism

Although many have prophesied the end of the nation in the era of the globalization, it still remains the most appropriate form of collective identity. There are two basic foundations of nationalism: first, the idea that the world is divided into nations; and second, that the nation is the only legitimate source of political power, notions which are still accepted as unquestionable principles (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 593). Smith (1991) defines a nation as "a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (p. 14). Based on this, Connor (1993) emphasizes one of the most important components of the nation, that is, the essentially irrational, psychological bond that ties fellow nationals together. This psychological or emotional bond is usually termed "a sense of belonging" (Connor 1978), which refers to the strong

attachment between the individual and the nation as collective self (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 595).

In understanding national identity as a concept or a social phenomenon, it is essential to take nationalism into consideration. Nationalism is the "ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation" (Smith 1991, p. 73). Nationalist doctrine is established based on three fundamental propositions: first, the world is divided into nations, each of which has its own culture, history, and destiny that make it distinctive from other nations; second, each human belongs to a nation and allegiance to the nation triumphs all other loyalties; and third, nations must be united and enjoy autonomous and free will to pursue their goals. In particular, the third proposition is of greatest significance because it actually implies that the nation is the only legitimate power in society and politics (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 595). Not only does each nation think of itself as unique and distinctive, but it is also certain that the world is made up of nations, all of which have equal worth and value, because they are all unique, thus enjoying the "universalism of the particular" (ibid.). Moreover, all nations have sovereignty, the right to self-determination, although in reality it can happen that the autonomy of one nation is called into question or denied by another nation. Hence, conflict arises between two national communities that compete for the legitimacy of their territory or cultural traditions. The reason why the propositions of nationalism have a significant meaning is that they emphasize that the existence of "others" is an inherent element in national identity and in nationalism. Nationalism does not only make a claim for the existence of the specific national community, but also distinguishes itself from others in a world that is composed of other separate and unique nations (ibid., p. 596).

National identity is the feeling associated with the concept of a nation. National identity is sometimes understood simply as a category of identification such as British, American, Japanese, and Korean. This simple form of definition does not offer much about individuals' self-understanding and social positioning (Todd et al. 2008, p. 14). Regarding national identity as the category of identification, in the case of South Korea, there has been a simple but complicated category change since the division. Some who value the ethnic Korean nation prefer to identify themselves as Koreans and to include North Koreans in the same category. But others who feel more loyal to the separate state of South Korea tend to identify themselves as South Koreans and view their neighbor, North Korea, as the other, whether hostile or friendly.

It is change in the content of national identity that is much more common than category change, and sometimes more significant politically is the content of national identity (ibid., p. 20). The content of national identity is revealed primarily through the "national narrative", which narrates the origins, history, and trajectory of the ethno-national group. A national identity gives people a sense of belonging and a way to relate to one another through a heightened "awareness of affiliation"

(Keane 1993), but differs from a state's identity. While both identities of a nation and state are constructed out of similar factors such as people, geography, religion and customs, a state is clearly different because it incorporates governing structures through regimes. As Jones and Smith (2001) argue, there seem to be two largely different yet related concepts to form a national identity: ascriptive qualities, such as ethnicity and kinship, that provide a more organic and biological grounding in one group's relationship to another; and voluntaristic qualities, such as civic roles and duties, that determine one's place within a political entity. There exists an inherent tension and complication in the relationship between the ethnic and civic components of a nation. Establishing a "nation-state" that consists of only one ascriptive group, that is, a homogeneous ethnic group evolving within the realms of the state, a fixed population, fixed border, and a government with an ability to enter into relations with other states, is simply non-realistic. Japan, Israel and the two Koreas are often referred to as the closest to the concept of a nation-state in this sense, largely because of their faith in ethnic homogeneity. Contrastingly, it is more common in contemporary society to have multi-ethnic backgrounds, just as many other states like most of the European states and the US do.

National identities are most often distributed though "regulated" knowledge transmission processes such as education, with schooling systems providing a top-down approach through which loyalty to the nation can be fostered by a government (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977). With educational systems providing the matrix for national identity to develop, especially by focusing on historical and civic elements that should be acquired in nation-building, the concept of pride and loyalty is largely seen as being one of the most recognizable manifestations of national identity (Grelczyk 2014, p. 180). A multitude of factors from war to economic development can have a significant impact on national identity. Because national identity is connected to most aspects of a group through their history, places, governmental structures and sense of pride, almost all countries would be interested in maintaining a strong feeling of national identity in order to both foster unity from within and communicate this unity to outsiders who might be seen as a threat, or a significant other. A significant other makes it possible for one group to develop its own identity in relation to another by distinguishing itself from another. A significant other could be a neighboring group that has shared a set of cultural traditions and/or historical experiences, one that threatens the sense of distinctiveness of the self, or one that plays a significant role when the self is in crisis (Triandafyllidou 1998).While the concept of a significant other is the most important component in national identity formation, it has been of great importance in the case of South Korea, which was established in the face of threat from the most significant other, North Korea, which competed with the South for ownership of the territory and cultural tradition, and is part of the same ethnic group, which makes the issue of South Korean national identity much more complicated.

2.1.4. The Others in Identity Construction

National identity has a two-sided character: on the one hand, it is about defining who members of the community are, and on the other, who are non-members. The notion of the other is inherent and essential in the nationalist doctrine itself, as seen in the former section. The existence of their own nation presupposes the existence of other nations. Most of the nations existing today had to fight to secure their survival and to achieve their independence. Most nations have significant others, from which the nation distinguishes itself. Triandafyllious (1998) thus argues that the identity of a nation is defined and/or redefined through the influence of "significant others," that is, other nations or ethnic groups which are generally perceived to threaten the nation, its distinctiveness, authenticity and/or independence (p. 594). Likewise, the concept of the other is inseparably linked to the notion of national identity. The opposition to the other is thus regarded as an intrinsic feature of nationalism by most theorists. For instance, Kedourie (1992) highlights that "there is a duty laid upon us to cultivate our own peculiar qualities and not mix or merge them with others" (p.51). The fundamental question of national identity is to define who "we" are and who "they" are.

Triandafyllidou develops her argument regarding the role of "the others" in defining national identity, depending on the concept of national identity proposed by Connor (1978; 1993) and the theory of nationalism and social communications developed by Deutsch (1966). According to Connor, objective resources like culture and religion cannot fully explain which group constitutes a nation. Therefore, specific characteristics such as geographical location, religious composition or linguistic homogeneity are significant components in that, to a certain extent, they reinforce national identity (Connor 1978, p. 389). They are not static but can be subject to change, while keeping the sense of autonomy and uniqueness that are crucial to give members the meaning of belonging to a nation (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 597). Connor stresses that the belief in a psychological bond, one universal feature of nationalism, ties community members together. Whether members of a nation are, indeed, ethnically related or not, does not matter, but what is important is that they believe they are (Connor 1993, pp. 367-77). It is this belief that leads them to a dichotomous conception of the world, through which members of a nation define themselves as a collective self, that is, fellow nationals, and the others as out-members of a nation (ibid., p. 386). Although Connor's definition of nationality, only focusing on ethnicity, fails to account for the existence of territorial or civic nations, his contribution is of great significance considering that he stresses that national identity induces a dichotomous view of the world. Having national identity thus means knowing not only who "we" are, but also who "they" are (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 597). Triandafyllidou points out that elements like culture, religion or language are important not only in national identity formation, given that they reinforce

the nation's identity to a certain degree, but also that they distinguish the in-group from the out-group and thus justify this dualistic worldview. Also, cultural traits, myths, traditions, and historical territories are integral components that distinguish "us" from "them," providing a clear contrast in concrete form between the nation and the others. At the same time, such traits are influenced by this contrast and so they further reinforce it (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 597).

To make explicit the role that the other plays in the (re)definition of national identity, Triandafyllidou claims that the conception of the other is a functional element inherent to the notion of nationality, based on Deutsch's (1966) functional definition of national identity. In his view, members of the national community are characterized by their ability to communicate with their fellow members better than they do with outsiders (Deutsch 1966, p. 97). Nationality, from this functional perspective means that members of a nation share with one another more than they share with foreigners. This definition also necessarily involves the concept of otherness.

Nationalist activists as well as scholars of nationalism tend to consider national identity as an absolute relationship. Either it exists or it does not. Either a group of people share some specific features, whether they are civic or ethnic in character, that make them of a nation, or they do not. However, national identity expresses a feeling of belonging that is relative. It is meaningful only to the extent that it is contrasted with the feelings that members of the nation have toward non-members. Fellow nationals are not simply very close or close enough to one another, they are closer to one another than they are to outsiders, so the definitions of self and others are likewise relative (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 598-99). National identity, thus, has a double-edged relationship: it is inward-looking as it involves a certain degree of commonality within the group; at the same time, its existence presupposes the existence of 'others', other nations or other individuals, who do not belong to the in-group and from which the in-group must be distinguished. That is, national identity is based on a set of common features that bind the members of the nation together. Contrary to Connor's assertion, these features cannot be summarized in the faith in common descent, nor can the national bond be equivalent to effective communication, as Deutsch argues. Rather, it includes a variety of elements, ranging from ethnic ties to a shared public culture, common historical memories and links to a homeland, and also a common legal and economic system (ibid., p. 599). On the other hand, national identity implies difference. In other words, it is both commonality and difference that render national identity meaningful. This means that national identity has no meaning in itself but it becomes meaningful in contrast to other nations.

National identity is two-sided (ibid.). Internally, the national bond is related to a certainty in common ethnic origin and/or to such a common culture as a system of traditions, ideas, symbols and patterns of behavior and communication that are shared by the members of the community. Also, national identity can be related to a specific territory, the homeland of the nation, as well as the

natural setting in which it can exercise its sovereign powers. Each national identity is usually based on a combination of these elements, although for some communities civic and territorial ties are stronger, and for others common ethnicity and cultural affinities are prevalent. These elements define the nation from within. They constitute a set of potential identity features. However, identity is always "constituted in interaction" (ibid.), which means that some of these features become significant because they separate the in-group from others. In this light, it is also true that the nation is defined from outside, through the contrast to other communities.

What separates the "significant others" from many others of a nation is that they are perceived to pose a threat to the existence of the nation, whether it is a physical threat or another, which blurs the uniqueness of the nation. This threat pertains to the nation's independence and self-determination, and in this perspective the significant other may be a nation that is in conflict with the nation because of territorial or ethnic dispute (Triandafyllidou 1998, p. 600). A significant other has significance in that the nation seeks to identify itself against it and, in turn, national identity is greatly influenced by it. According to this assertion, the most significant other for South Korea is the North, in that some South Koreans believe it indeed threatens or is perceived to threaten the very existence of the South. One of the main arguments this dissertation raises is that it is the discrepancy over the identity North Korea that creates and reinforces inner conflicts within the South Korean society between those who perceive the North as a threat and others who do not.

However, the significant other may also be a group that threatens to weaken the distinctiveness of the in-group. This may be an out-group that is culturally related to the nation, and therefore blurs the authenticity and uniqueness of its identity. These might, as such, be neighboring nations which share a set of cultural traditions and/or historical experiences with the nation, and hence they threaten the sense of distinctiveness and uniqueness of the latter (ibid.). In this light, for South Korea, China or Japan can be significant others in that they often attempted to argue that Korea was part of their nations in the past.

There is a third group of significant others that become salient in periods of social, political or economic crisis during which the identity of the nation faces crisis. The significant other in these cases serves to help the nation to overcome the crisis by uniting the people in front of a common enemy, reminding them "who we are" and "how we are different and unique." According to this, the US becomes one of the most significant others for the South. The US helped South Korea to fight against the communist invasion and reminded many South Koreans opposed to communism of who they were and how they were different from those communists in the North. In times of crisis, the significant other becomes the lever for the transition towards a new identity. Through confrontation with the significant other, the identity of the nation is transformed in ways that make it relevant under a new set of circumstances and/or respond better to the emotive and/or material needs of the members

of the nation (ibid., p. 603). This is exactly what happened in South Korea in the confrontation with the North, since the newly built nation, while having been greatly influenced by the US, had to adapt to the new environment of the Cold War.

2.2 Identity and Intractable Conflicts

Out of the 352 violent conflicts that have erupted since World War II, only 144 have ended with peace agreements (Harbom et al., 2006). In addition, Bercovitch's (2005) analysis points out that 75 serious interstate conflicts were violent, lasted at least 15 years, and were resistant to peaceful settlement among 309 conflicts that took place from 1945 to 1995. This ably demonstrates that many conflicts of contemporary times belong to the category of intractable conflicts, which are characterized by their protracted nature and resistance to any peaceful resolution (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 923). The Korean War, lasting from 1950 to 1953, when the ceasefire was agreed, which resulted in partition of the Korean nation, can be regarded as one of these conflicts. The war lasted three years but the two separate Korean states have never reached a peace agreement so far and, more importantly, there have been armed conflicts between them until recent times.

Conflicts erupt when two or more groups perceive their goals or interests to be contradictory to one another and thus irreconcilable, and decide to act based on this assessment (ibid.). In human life, it is quite natural to have conflict and conflicts erupt from many different causes. Among different categorizations of conflicts, Kriesberg's (1993, 1995) suggestion of the intractable-tractable as a criterion of conflicts is most useful in that it well reflects the core features of contemporary conflicts. Tractable conflicts refer to ones in which the involved parties seek to resolve them through negotiation, while avoiding violence. In contrast, intractable conflicts are prolonged largely because neither party involved in the dispute can win nor is willing to compromise for peaceful resolution. They involve great hostility and vicious cycles of violence, thus appearing seemingly irreconcilable and self-perpetuating. The conflicts between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and between Turks and Kurds in Turkey are the most notable cases of intractable conflicts (Bar-Tal 1998, p. 23). In addition, the fact that intractable conflicts pertain to issues of identity, values and beliefs, tends to cause the conflict to be protracted (Bercovitch 2005). They are thus exhausting, demanding, stressful, painful and costly in both human and material terms. Thus, from a human perspective, it is necessary that society members adapt to the conflictual situations, both in their individual and social lives. In material terms, it requires certain appropriate military, economic, political, societal, and psychological conditions for the society to successfully adapt to and cope with intractable conflict (Bar-Tal 1998, p. 23). The term "intractable" itself well represents one of the most significant features

of intractable conflicts, that is, their resistance to peace settlement (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 924). In the context of intractable conflicts, deep feelings of fear and hostility coupled with destructive behaviors make these conflicts very difficult to deal with and to further resolve. Hence when it comes to intractable conflicts, it is vital to take the emotional issues of the involved society members into consideration (Bar-Tal 1998; 2007; Kelman 2007).

Different perspectives in the fields of foreign policy and international relations have provided their own explanations about the sources of conflicts. Realism is very critical of the view that sees ideational elements as an important factor in understanding conflicts, instead focusing on material elements or exclusively on benefits and cost based on material incentives. The liberal tradition believes that humans are able to rationally pursue their ends and, thus, the preferences of the majority or public opinion can be a useful indicator for understanding conflicts. On the other hand, the constructivist school emphasizes the causal significance of ideational factors, arguing that social and historical contexts should be taken into consideration in understanding international conflicts. Nations have shaped varying identities and the clash or convergence of those cognitive factors can influence their choices in international politics. For constructivists, a secure community requires its members to possess compatible core values, mutual identity and loyalty, and a sense of belonging. Constructivism further emphasizes the role of emotion, arguing emotion matters at all levels of relationships. Although interstate perceptions or images of each other may not be by themselves the direct causes of interstate conflict, they help the parties involved in conflict to interpret the situation and perceive threats, and can therefore explain or anticipate the behavior and choices of one party towards the other. The identity of the significant others, especially in the context of conflict, is thus inseparable from the issue of security. Hence, national identity inherently pertains to the security policy decision making of a nation.

2.2.1 The Role of the Other in Intractable Conflicts

The important role of others in the construction of a national identity has already been elaborated in the earlier section. Here, the focus is put on the fact that the conception of the significant others, in particular, has greater impacts on national identity, especially in the context of intractable conflicts. Many of the conflicts that erupted in the post-Cold War era have been intense, protracted, and often deadly conflicts between identity groups within the same political structure (Kelman 1999, p. 582). For instance, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been long-lasting between two national movements claiming the sole occupation of the same territory (Bar-Tal 1998, p. 31). The Korean conflict can be regarded as similar to this, in that it has lasted for more than half a century since the truce agreement without creating a peace agreement. Both of the Koreas, who shared the same history,

language, and culture, claim that their own state is the only legitimate political entity and representation of the whole Korean nation, which shows the conflict between the two Koreas is deeply concerned with national identity. Even though both sides are now more pragmatic than before, a large element of the two societies is not prepared to abandon their ideological claim to have an exclusive legitimacy in the territory, or to modify their national narratives in a way that would concede that the other too has legitimate and authentic links to the land.

It is vital to note for this research that the psychological core of intractable conflict, as is the case between Israel and Palestine, is the perception by both parties that it is a "zero-sum" conflict, not only with respect to territory but, most importantly, the very existence of the other, which means that the other's status as a nation is a threat to its own existence and status as a nation (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1443). Each holds the view that only one can be a nation in the territory, that is, either we are a nation or they are. Over the course of the conflict, each side has been convinced that the ultimate intention of the other is to destroy it. Indeed, it is believed as truth that its own destruction is inherent in the other's ideology. At the time of writing, in the Korean case, even when the parties prefer to step toward a peace agreement on the peninsula, they are not fully convinced that the other has really abandoned the goal of destroying them and is sincerely determined to achieve the peaceful coexistence of two sovereign states in the land they both claim. When mutual trust of the two sides is at a low point, even the South Korean progressive regimes, who are generally more open to a compromise solution, have found it hard to remove the serious doubts people have about the other's real intentions. At a deep level, the perceived threat from the other still brings into each group the sense of fear about its own existence. This is the same for North Korea, who openly expresses its doubts over the real intentions of South Korean conservatives and the US. Thus, the zero-sum view of national identity is still very much in place, based on the idea that "fulfillment of the other's national identity is experienced as equivalent to destruction of one's own identity" (Kelman 1987, p. 355). It is this zero-sum view of national identity that creates a state of negative interdependence between two identities, which refers to the status in which the negation of the other's identity is mandatory in order to assert a group's own identity. Negative interdependence has significance in that it not only prevents conflict resolution and ultimate reconciliation, but also makes it more difficult and costly for each group to form and assert its own identity. In the relations established based on negative interdependence, it is not enough for one group to demonstrate its own legitimacy and authenticity as a nation, but it has the additional task of proving the illegitimacy and inauthenticity of the other, thus allowing time and energy consuming identity politics in which rhetoric of exclusion and othering is frequently used to delegitimize the other. One of the consequences of this zero-sum view and the negative interdependence of the two identities is the mutual denial of each other's national identity that is inherent in the conflict from the beginning

(Kelman 1999, p. 590). This is well displayed in the case of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, where the zero-sum view of national identity and the negative interdependence of the two parties' identities greatly contributed to the escalation and perpetuation of the conflict over the decades, and hindered its peaceful resolution.

The zero-sum view of national identity and the negative interdependence is one of the characteristics of the inter-Korean conflict. Since the division of the nation into two states in 1948, the authoritarian regimes in the past and conservative administrations in the post-democratization era in South Korea have identified the North as a threat to its own existence and vice versa. For instance, it is articulated in Article 3 of the South Korean Constitution that "the territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean peninsula and its adjacent islands (Constitution of Republic of Korea 1988 [1948])." Therefore, the territory North Korea currently occupies belongs to the ROK according to its constitution. In addition, this is the foundation on which North Korean defectors are eligible to achieve citizenship when they arrive in South Korea. North Korea also regards the South as the hostile enemy, seen in its justification of the nuclear weapons program that it has developed to protect its regime from the threats of South Korea and the US. Furthermore, North Koreans have regarded the military practices between the US and South Korea as steps to eliminate the North Korean regime on the peninsula. However, the situation in South Korea has been changed a lot since the progressives, who hold a different view on North Korea, emerged as a political power in the 2000s. Their narrative identity has collided with conservatives who still hold the traditional view of their northern neighbor. The progressives further argue that the goal of the North in developing nuclear weapons is not to threaten South Korea but to secure its regime (Lee Chi-yŏng 2018) or to develop its economy by decreasing the military expense in the long term (Kwak Dong-ki 2014), which is irreconcilable with the view of the conservatives.

Negative interdependence is expressed through the systematic effort to delegitimize the other by portraying its negative aspect as something beyond universal norms and ethics (Kelman 1999, p. 590). Equating Zionism with racism and Palestinian nationalist movements with terrorism can be the most extreme examples of delegitimization of the other. This tactic of delegitimization is effective in making the other's national movement inherently illegitimate from the beginning because racism and terrorism are morally unacceptable. Delegitimization in these cases often goes further through dehumanization of the other. It excludes the other from the moral community shared by all members of human society (ibid.). This extreme delegitimization and dehumanization have often been found in the condemnation from South Korean rightists of the North Korean human rights violations based on the universal norm of human rights. It declares that North Korea has no right to exist as a state because it does harm to its own people as well as disregarding its responsibility as a normal state to protect them. This is also one of the reasons why progressives and leftists in South Korea, who

generally take the lead regarding other issues of human rights, have remained passive or silent about the North Korean human rights abuses.

In politics, negative independence is expressed through the two involved parties' refusal to recognize each other for a long period of time (ibid.). Official recognition of the other could mean legitimizing the other, and thus lead to bringing one's own legitimacy into question. One of the frequently used tactics between the parties that rely on negative interdependence is creating and maintaining the demonic image of the enemy (ibid., p. 591). Affirming the enemy image is a common feature of conflict and indicator of group loyalty in deep-rooted conflicts. Advocates of a softer enemy image and of communication with the enemy run the risk of attracting intense suspicion and often accusations of treason, which is what happened in South Korea when the first progressive president Kim Dae-jung initiated the engagement policy with the North for the first time since the partition, and portrayed the leader of the North as rational. President Kim and successor President Roh Moo-hyun, who kept Kim's policy of cooperation and engagement with the North, were harshly criticized by opponents as North Korean sympathizers or traitors to the national security of South Korea. Another reason for maintaining the evil image of the enemy is that it is considered vital to justify the group's own cause. In the zero-sum view of identity in relation to conflict, any attempt to acknowledge the enemy's legitimacy is seen to detract from the group's own legitimacy. The zero-sum view of identity does not admit the possibility that both parties may have some justice on their side. In the context of intractable conflicts, the rigid certainty of the enemy image becomes a serious obstacle to efforts at conflict resolution. Each party is resistant to accept the fact that the other side might change (ibid., p. 591).

Another consequence of the negative interdependence of the two identities that has a significant meaning for the Korean case is the fact that the ideology and symbols that support each side's positive group identity and sense of legitimacy have entirely negative connotations for the other side (ibid., p. 592). That is why anti-communism among South Korean conservatives and rightists still works as a strong ideology to support their national identity conception, and as long as the North remains a communist, non-democratic state, this would be difficult to change, in particular for those who see the national identity of South Korea through the zero-sum view. Each party in the negative dependence relations perceives that the other has only one ultimate goal of destroying its own national existence and this makes it difficult to recognize the positive elements in the other's ideology and symbols. Hence, in relations based on negative dependence, it is not easy for both parties to develop the kind of empathy for the other, which is a necessary condition for reconciliation and a settlement of peace.

More importantly, the negative interdependence of the two identities derives from a view of the other's identity as a direct threat to one's own identity in which only one can prevail, which

means that asserting one's own identity necessarily requires negating the identity of the other. Kelman (1999) points out that there are two major types of negative identity elements that often come to the surface through the relationship to the other in a protracted conflict: the view of the self as weak and vulnerable; and the view of the self as violent and unjust (p. 593). These also characterize the narrative of conservatives who see inter-Korean relations based on the zero-sum view. The success of the other in achieving power or legitimacy may remind one of one's own group's weaknesses and vulnerabilities, which is often found in the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts. While Palestinians' own weakness and vulnerability is directly related to Israel's power, Israelis suffer from a feeling of vulnerability deeply rooted in the Jewish historical experience, particularly the Holocaust, despite its far more powerful military capabilities. The sense of vulnerability is also very prevalent among those in South Korea who themselves experienced the war or the oppression by communists in the northern part before the war. It is the psychological or emotional aspect of this sense of vulnerability that makes it extremely hard for some South Koreans to accept the North as a partner for cooperation. On the contrary, the leftists or progressives struggle with a sense of vulnerability that has its origin in other historical events, that is, their experience of oppression from the past South Korean authoritarian regimes, mainly due to ideological difference. This sense of vulnerability has a strong power in that it is deeply connected to the feeling of fear, which intensifies the inner conflicts within South Korea, where two groups that suffer from the sense of vulnerability originated from different roots.

The second negative element of each group's identity related to the other is the view of one's self as violent and unjust. In the Israeli and Palestinian case, it is the image of occupiers, oppressors and even racists for Israelis, while it is the image of violent, uncivilized terrorists for Palestinians. It is the extremely violent nature of the conflict that makes both parties face views of the self which are unacceptable for themselves, but it is impossible to entirely avoid them because these views reflect the way in which other nations see them through the conflictual situation. Unlike these views from outside, they tend to see and present themselves as not victimizers but the victims, arguing that taking violent measures is their last resort only when deprived of all other options. In this narrative, blames are placed on the other who forces them to take the role of aggressor. Nevertheless, the presence of the other constantly reminds them that they are engaged in violent actions that cast doubt on their decent and peace-loving self-images (ibid., p. 594-95). This narrative of victimization is also found in the Korean case between both Koreas as well as conflicting groups within South Korea. South Korea blames the North for the division of the nation and the eruption of the war through the sudden invasion. Also, the nuclear weapons program of the North reminds of the fact that it has never abandoned its ultimate goal of removing the South Korean regime from the peninsula, intensifying the feeling of fear as victims of the past war. On the other hand, the North blames the South for

making the Korean nation another colony of American imperialism, portraying the Korean nation as victims sacrificed by the US and internal betrayers who have collaborated with it. Within South Korea, progressives are blamed by conservatives for supporting the evil regime of North Korea, while the traditional ruling conservative elites are criticized by progressives for the division of the nation only for the sake of their own interests under the influence of the US, thus betraying the one Korean nation. In the rhetoric of conflict, each party claims the status of victim and each denies the role of victimizer.

It is noteworthy that negative self images are, ironically, often brought to the fore during the process of conflict resolution. This is because, for ultimate reconciliation to be achieved, it is necessary to confront them rather than suppress and deny them. Agreeing to a compromise necessarily means accepting the reality of one's own weakness, and acknowledging the other's rights and legitimacy leads to admitting one's own past wrongdoings. More importantly, to achieve conflict resolution, which aims to reach a transformation of the relationship and ultimate reconciliation, it is essential to have some revision of each party's self identity by accepting its own negative aspects and the other's positive features. In case of South Korea, there exist some who see that the country is still in a state of conflict and at high risk of war considering that the North now has the nuclear power, while others believe that the two Koreas are out of an intractable conflict and the North is willing to transform itself and hence the South should abandon its hostile attitude toward it. It is not surprising to see multiple narratives regarding the self and the significant others in a democratized society, but what matters in South Korea is that two radically conflicting views constantly compete without an open and inclusive dialogical space. As a result, people tend to share their opinions only with those who have the same view and consequently their certainty that their view is right is only consolidated, which deepens the division of South Korean society.

2.2.2 Narrative Identity in Intractable Conflicts

Intractable conflicts greatly affect many aspects of national identity, such as its nature, contents and functioning. First of all, under intractable conflictual circumstances, society members' sense of identification with and attachment to the nation tends to be intensified to meet their psychological needs of belonging and security. Second, collective identity in times of intractable conflict offers strength for society members to sustain themselves, even in times of danger, as their sense of belonging increases. Third, this enhanced social identity becomes the basis for unity, solidarity, and coordination so that the society can cope with the conflict conditions. It is strong social identity in intractable conflicts that makes society members ready, even for extreme sacrifices (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1443). This is because psychological mechanisms become active to stop new information

contradicting existing beliefs and affecting their faith. In normal situations, when the society is not in conflict, people are open to learning and integrating information from the outside and adjusting to it. People are able to and willing to tolerate some uncertainty about their preexisting beliefs, accepting that beliefs they hold may change after reflecting on new experiences and information within the environment, and consequently acknowledging that those beliefs may have even been wrong from the beginning (Chhabra 2016, p. 253). In the context of conflict, however, people that have reached the limits of their tolerance when they experience new information contradictory to existing beliefs begin to psychologically disintegrate. At these times, a psychological process to protect the self is activated to shut down the learning channels. This psychological shut-down works as a filter against any dramatic change, shutting down the capacity to take in any new information about others and the world, as well as that of their existing beliefs about the self, others, and the world. As a result of this psychological process, beliefs are frozen and people become resistant to change. Rigid certainty about their assessment of what is right is only intensified. Not only feelings of ambivalence about what they know, but also the capacity to accommodate and assimilate new information is lost. Transforming those beliefs that have provided a sense of stability is regarded as a threat to their being. Historical events of collective violence between groups and the collective memory of these events further shape and intensify the beliefs about the self and others. With these beliefs comes a degree of non-reflective certainty about them, thus they resist any new information contradictory to their beliefs (ibid.).

In addition, intractable conflicts clearly include severe negative experiences and emotions such as threat, stress, pain, exhaustion, grief, trauma, and have costs in both human and material terms (Bar-Tal 2007, p.1434). Hence, as the intractable conflicts are prolonged, the collective psychological state permeates institutions and the communication channels and gradually shapes the socio-psychological infrastructure of the society (ibid.). This infrastructure has three pillars that constitute the cognitive-emotional basis for the long-term psychological state: collective memory of conflict; societal beliefs that comprise an ethos of conflict; and collective emotional sentiments that serve as foundations of the developed culture of conflict (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1435; Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 936). Collective memories in the context of intractable conflict are developed to present the history of conflict to members of the society. Their goal is not to provide an objective truth of the past but to tell a story about the past to create a socially constructed narrative which is based on actual facts of past events, but is biased and selective to meet the society's present needs (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1436; 2009, p. 369), thus providing a black and white narrative which enables "parsimonious, fast, unequivocal, and simple understanding of the history of conflict" (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1436.). It should be noted that the competition for the dominance of the collective memory creates another confrontational field where, during or after the conflict, each society tries to instill its own version

of collective memory to its members and then to justify its collective memory as right and true to other societies in the world (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 937). Secondly, as Bar-Tal suggests, under prolonged intractable conflict societies are likely to develop an "ethos of conflict," which refers to "the configuration of central societal beliefs that provide dominant characterization to the society and gives it a particular orientation" (Bar-Tal 2000, p. xiv). This is of significance given that it provides the shared mental basis for society members, unites them, offers a meaning to social life, justifies the social order and creates the framework through which society's present and past concerns, as well as its future goals, can be understood (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 937). An ethos of conflict is said to be a relatively stable worldview that allows humans to organize and comprehend the prolonged context of conflict. Therefore, it can be seen as a type of ideology (ibid., p. 938). As an ideology, it provides a coherent and systematic knowledge base that helps society members to have the coordinated behavior and society's leaders to direct the decision making, the development of the societal system and its functioning (ibid.). Thirdly, while conflict escalates, the societies involved develop a set of collective emotional sentiments that is dominated primarily by negative feelings like hatred, despair and fear (Bar-tal 2007, p. 1439; Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 939). Among such feelings, hatred and fear are of importance since, while hatred provides the emotional basis to view the opponent in the conflict, the sense of fear maintains the vicious cycle of violence. Due to recurring experiences of threat and danger resulting from the conflict, society members may become oversensitized to anything that signals danger. This oversensitization to fear prevents society members from taking risks, thinking creatively about the conflict, or breaking the cycle of violence (Bar-Tal & Halperin 2013, p. 939). It is essential to note that the socio-psychological infrastructure eventually becomes the foundation of the evolved culture of conflict, which becomes hegemonic, and provides a dominant interpretation of the present reality and past and future goals, and an outline of acceptable practice. More importantly, once intractable conflicts become solidified and institutionalized within the culture of conflict, they are likely to remain over a long period, despite fluctuating in their intensity. As a result, the same psychological repertoire that helps society members cope with the challenges raised by the conflict, now prevents them from identifying and taking advantage of opportunities for peace. Furthermore, in the context of intractable conflict, the evolved socio-psychological infrastructure which dominates the society through the period of the conflict, eventually shapes or transforms the nature of national identity (Bar-Tal 2007, p. 1443). That is, societal beliefs about the ethos of conflict and collective memory offer contents that invest social identity with meaning. These contents are expressed in various cultural products like language, societal ceremonies, symbols, myths, commemorations, texts, and so on. They are institutionalized in the societies involved in intractable conflict, leading to the continuation of conflict (Liu & Hilton 2005).

While intractable conflicts are often cited as competing for material resources and political or territorial control (Kreisberg 1993), those conflicts also greatly affect the construction of stories that encourage intergroup antagonism at the collective level (Hammack 2008; Liu & Hilton 2005). Narratives are meaningful in that they provide social representations of collective history that contribute to positively differentiating one group from others (Liu & Hilton 2005). They are embodiments of collective memory (Wertsch 2008), realized in an internalized psychological and societal speech (Vygotsky 1978) that provides both individual psychological and societal functions. These social representations are utilized, referenced, exploited, and consequently politicized by those in power to serve the wider political interests of a nation (Liu & Hilton 2005; Wertsch 2008). Stories are, thus, inherently political and provide a driving force for collectives (not) to act or (de)mobilize (Hammack 2010, p. 179). For example, post-conflict societies, such as Rwanda or Northern Ireland, struggle with how to represent historical narrative in educational settings. South Korea has been also struggling with representations of the past since the advent of its nation building, and it is how to interpret its past that is at the core of constructing national identity and is still one of the most controversial and politicized topics. Thus, the construction of South Korean national identity is in progress or in the process of transformation.

Narrative can be problematic when it serves to maintain or exacerbate intractable conflict, but it can also play a role in conflict reduction precisely because of its conceptual salience in such conflictual settings. Kelman (1999) argues that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict requires the development of a transcendent narrative in which each group recognizes its positive interdependence on the other. In theory, just as narrative can divide groups, it can help to unite those involved in conflict by making collective claims explicit, particularly through the sharing of personal narratives (Hammack 2010, p. 179-180). The resistance of societies in the context of intractable conflicts to peaceful resolution lies in an intense socio-psychological infrastructure that plays an important role in the conflicts' eruption and perpetuation. The infrastructure leads to a one-sided orientation towards the conflict, eventually leading to the conflict's continuation and inhibiting its de-escalation and peaceful resolution (Nets-Zehngut & Bar-Tal 2013, p. 68). Nevertheless, with time, some of the intractable conflicts de-escalate and even embark on the process of peacemaking. This process is usually preceded, accompanied, or followed by a transformation in the socio-psychological infrastructure, such as changes in conflict goals, and shifts toward less de-legitimization of the other or a less positive assessment of the in-group.

2.3 History in Post-Conflict Societies

2.3.1 Collective Memory and Conflicts

As mentioned, narratives operate at the level of collective psychology as well as at the individual level, and the collective narratives provide a sense of group meaning, which derives from a direct engagement with stories that convey collective memory (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 84). Collective memory is generally defined as a set of representations about the past that are collectively adopted (Kansteiner 2002; Wertsch 2008). These representations are assembled in narratives that recall the past events on a certain topic. Collective memory is a general category that includes various kinds of memories as subcategories, among which two such subcategories are of importance: popular memory and official memory (Nets-Zehngut & Bar-Tal 2013, p. 69). The former comprises the narratives held by society members, commonly manifested via public opinion surveys. This memory significantly influences the psychological reactions of the people holding it, and is therefore regarded as greatly important. On the other hand, official memory comprises the narratives adopted by a society's formal institutions, mostly state institutions. Official memory is expressed through official media such as publications by state institutions, programs on state controlled television channels, and history textbooks in countries with centralized educational systems. The narratives held by the official memory may be adopted, at least, by parts of society, and then penetrate into the popular memory. Official memory has its own importance considering that it is conveyed to society members continuously, has great impacts on formal decision making, and is presented in the international arena as the national narrative (ibid.). Collective memory is often influenced by formal/analytical history such as the way historians view events of the past. History, typically more accurate in objectively portraying the past than collective memory, may challenge the hegemonic narratives of collective memory.

The collective memory formed in an intractable conflict creates the narrative held by a party involved in conflict, describing its beginning, its process, and its major events. Typically, it aims to tell a narrative relevant to the society's present situation and future aspirations, thus being functional and being biased, rather than providing an objective history of the past. A biased memory of conflicts is functionally utilized, in particular, during the climax of the conflicts, since it provides each party with the socio-psychological basis that is necessary to meet the enormous challenges that such a conflict produces, and to support the country's international image. It is this typical function of collective memory of conflict that often results in the construction of such emotions as mistrust, hostility and hatred toward the other party in conflict, all of which contribute to continuation of the conflict, rather than to its resolution. However, what should be noted is that transformation of this

memory into a less distorted and biased narrative can promote peaceful resolution of the conflict. This transformation accelerates the emergence of beliefs, attitudes and emotions that change the views of the other so that the other can be recognized in a more legitimized, humanized, personalized, and differentiated way. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of such a transformation is of great importance in the promotion of conflict resolution.

Liu and Hilton (2005) emphasize the crucial role of social representations of history in the development of group identity. At the national level, social representations of history serve as narratives that inform members about who they are, where they come from, and where they are going. History helps construct the essence of a national identity, how it relates to other groups, and provides a nation with information on what options they have for facing present challenges. A group's representation of its history conditions its sense of what it was, is, can and should be, so it is central to the construction of its identity, norms, and values. Nations' representations of their history have a significant political meaning because through them we understand how and why countries will react differently to a challenge where their common interests are seemingly the same (Liu & Hilton 2005, p. 537). Narrative study linking psychological and political phenomena is concerned with how stories serve to construct collective identity through the transmission of collective memory and the creation of myths that support that memory. In this frame, the social memory is institutionalized into narrative, a coherent story that serves to maintain the political status quo, justify the ruling regime or provide legitimacy for resistance. Thus, for example, the narrative of Jewish victimization in the Holocaust well serves to legitimize the military occupation of Palestine territory and to influence the beliefs about security considered as a top priority to Israeli national psychology (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 85).

2.3.2 History Education and Identity

Collective memory is key to the politics of nation-building and history education plays a central role in the formation of national identity. For example, Bar-Tal (1998) points out that Israeli history textbooks' emphasis is placed on Jewish victimization, unity, and security, while providing a positive depiction of Jewish Israelis and a negative depiction of Arabs. While such narratives within institutional education have strengthened Jewish Israeli identity in the midst of conflict, they may actually contribute to perpetuating conflict (Hammack & Pilecki 2012, p. 85). Research on the role of historical narrative in educational materials in Israel suggests that stories of collective memories serve particular political interests for constructing and maintaining identity. There has been other empirical research done to examine this process in other nations. One such important study is Buckley-Zistel's (2009) analysis of history education after the Rwanda genocide. She analyzes the

government discourses about history teaching to argue that the state is seeking to write a new narrative of ethnic history to transcend past divisions. Not only does history education provide information about the collective past, it also develops the meanings of current situations and affairs. It is a common occurrence that textbook content on conflicts is written to strengthen the self identity in relation to the identity of the significant others. Events of extreme violence and conflict are narrated in such a way as to mythicize the self and demonize the other (Chhabra 2016, p. 243). The content of history in school curricula usually supports the legitimacy of regimes and the power of ruling parties, and it articulates their respective points of view, ideology, and position. Moreover, school history curricula promote basic values and beliefs of a nation and support a society's specific view of the history of conflicts and violence. History education serves this function in a context, in particular, where the past is not easily reconstructed (Korostelina 2008, p. 25), through influencing public discourses, reshaping loyalties to certain groups or to a nation, and developing a perception of a shared past. And history textbooks provide the most articulated and widely accepted ideas of citizenship and a nation's past (Hein and Selden 1998).

The role of history as an important player in identity formation has been emphasized also in several theories of social psychology. Social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979) defines that social groups are communities of people who share common characteristics, experiences, and behaviors. In this context, social identity is a result of the processes of identification with other group members. Group members typically share similar social identities, such as values, beliefs, and attitudes. Social identity is constructed through the process of social categorization and intergroup comparison, including knowledge about group history and historical relations with others. This cognitive component has an emotional dimension, which reflects feelings about belonging to an in-group or relating to an out-group. In the construction of social identity, not only the perception of similarities but also of difference is of great significance, as pointed out earlier. In order to create and maintain group identity, it is necessary to have strong historical components that illustrate the main content of group identity and specific intergroup relations with significant others.

The meaning of social identity usually contains several components such as traditions and values, language, members' general characteristics, history, ideology, relations with others, the image of others and "reverberated identity", which refers to a group's identity that results from comparisons with others (Korostelina 2008, p. 34). When one or more of these components are more dominant than others, a different mode of identity meaning is formed. A "depictive mode of identity meaning" is created if components like traditions and values, members' characteristics, and reverberated identity prevail. "Ideological modes of identity meaning" are formed by the prevalence of an ideology of the group and relations with others. If the history of the group and its relations with others becomes most important, a "historical mode of identity meaning" is constructed. Lastly, the

dominance of a reverberated identity is defined as a "relative mode of identity" (ibid. pp. 34-35). What is important to note is that except for a depictive mode, other modes of identity meaning can provoke violence based on different motives. Ideological modes of identity meaning can lead to conflict based on ideological differences, historical modes can create conflicts based on chosen traumas and history of intergroup violence, and relative modes can provoke conflicts based on intergroup prejudice and biases.

The conflicts between the two Koreas are thought to have been provoked largely because of their ideological differences. Therefore, history education has been used as an instrument of ideological warfare between them. History curricula in both countries have traditionally seen their own state as superior and have been believed to represent the traditions and the true nature of the Korean nation. The description of one's own country as superior in value and ideology leads to the formation of loyalty to the state and a strong national identity. Consequently, the ideological mode of national identity is widely adopted in both Koreas to develop loyalty to the ruling party or regime. In the ideological mode of national identity, ideology takes a position and role of national identity, replacing the history and culture of the people, and history education significantly influences any ideological war with a rival. This well explains what has happened in South Korea since the division, in particular, under the authoritarian regimes, during which the ideology of anti-communism was a surrogate for the national identity of South Korea, dominating all related discourses. History education served as a tool to promote anti-communistic ideology. However, since the two progressive administrations took office from 1998 to 2008, the narrative of history textbooks has changed significantly, and is now based on strong ethnic nationalism that sees the North as part of one Korean nation. Opponents of those regimes have strongly resisted history textbook revisions since then, arguing that this narrative change in history textbooks does serious harm to South Korean national identity and its legitimacy. Thus, social and political conflicts within South Korea that are provoked based on the mixture of different ideological preferences, contending interpretations of history, and intergroup biases against each other (between political leftists and rightists) have intensified. History textbook narrative transformation led by progressives thus contributed to intensifying conflicts, rather than conflict resolution in South Korea, and this will be closely elaborated in the latter part of the dissertation.

In history textbooks both Koreas, their common ancestry and history, as well as the ethnic cultural heritage, are accepted as an objective truth regardless of the ideological division. This is well illustrated in the myth of *Tan'gun*, the legendary founder of the Korean nation, who is declared and believed to be the common ancestor in both Koreas. However, in the South the issue gets more complicated because although the formation of national identity in South Korea is constructed around the concept of the monoethnic and monolingual, the long-term division has led to an increase in the

civic notion of national identity. Based on this, some South Koreans see only those who agree with its founding values, such as liberal democracy and a free economic system, as accepted citizens, while others still view ethnicity as central in defining the notion of self. This discrepancy among South Koreans over how the Korean nation in the context of division should be defined is a significant factor that causes serious identity conflicts within South Korea.

2.3.3 History Education in the Post-Conflict Societies

History education has been at the center of contested, political, curricular, and pedagogical debates throughout the world, in particular, regarding teaching past conflicts or violent events, and the special focus of these controversies is mostly placed on the content of history textbooks (Chhabra 2016). One of the many challenges societies emerging from violent conflict face relates to the question of how to deal with the divisive past of violence in ways that contribute to conflict transformation and ultimately peace and reconciliation. A history of collective violence often results in conflicting memories around the historical truth. It thus often initiates controversies on what should be taught to younger generations about the past for the sake of a better future of the nation. Schools, as one of the key instruments of socialization, have inevitably been affected by societal dynamics and tensions, in particular during conflict or in the aftermath of conflicts, including power struggles and related "memory wars" or "history wars." As a result, school education becomes a crucial arena in contestations for political legitimacy. Especially, the history taught in schools, as an important site of official identity and memory, is the object of great political and societal contention. As such, extensive textbook research has underlined the salient role of history textbooks, describing them as powerful cultural artefacts that have traditionally been utilized as conveyors of official knowledge (Apple 1993; Smith 1991). They are functional in that they serve as central instruments of nation-building and citizenship formation, and as important sites for the construction and transmission of national identities and memories. Hence, history textbooks are often politicized, becoming a significant battlefield in struggles and conflicts over identity and power. Critical textbook studies have shown that, as a result of these struggles, their content is produced to serve the specific aim of legitimizing the beliefs, values and norms of dominant groups in society, thus being political rather than being neutral (Bentraovato 2017, p. 39). History textbooks, therefore, have great potential for creating and intensifying conflict. The glorification of the self and marginalization and exclusion of others in narratives of history textbooks are a frequently used tactic to promote loyalty to a particular nation. The greater role of history textbooks comes into play especially in the aftermath of violent conflict in their conveying and solidifying of prejudice, stereotypes and enemy images through their dissemination of somewhat mythical narratives that describe identities of the self and

others as primordial, monolithic and antagonistic. They often justify intergroup hatred and in-group natural superiority, victimhood and historical entitlement to territory, while emphasizing negative aspects of the other. In doing so, history textbooks are utilized as an efficient tool to reinforce antagonistic perceptions and inequalities which the conflict transformation literature have pointed out as characteristics of protracted identity-based conflict in deeply divided societies.

In this light, history textbook revision is an inherently contested and selective process conducted and effected by those with real interests and political power. It includes negotiations and deliberations, which may provoke tensions. History textbook revision in post-conflict societies faces particular challenges. Competing group narratives may be divided concerning various issues from the causes and processes of conflict, to identity of the victims, actors' roles and responsibilities, and the motivations, legitimacy and implications of their actions. In addition, the terminology to define and describe violent events can be chosen differently with each presenting different meanings and implications. The same event can be interpreted in conflicting ways, ranging from liberation to aggression and invasion or occupation. As Bar-Tal (2007) suggests, in post-conflict society each party involved in conflict tends to selectively shape its collective memories of the conflict (p.78). While blaming the other for the outbreak and continuation of the conflict and its violence and atrocities, they can choose to focus on their own self-justification and victimization, which eventually prevents the society from stepping toward ultimate reconciliation. Efforts aimed at confronting and teaching the violent past and its various controversies are often disregarded for fear of any possible destabilizing of the fragile peace that tends to characterize post-conflict societies (Bentrovato 2017, p. 42). In reality, post-conflict societies have taken various measures, reacting to the demands and challenges related to teaching younger generations about the violent past through textbooks. The variety of approaches and strategies adopted includes shorter-term stopgap measures often promoting narrative strategies such as silence, evasion or elision, through the establishment of moratoria and the banning or the emergency revision of existing textbooks. In the longer-term, such teaching supports different concepts and methods, including single narrative or multi-narrative and multi-perspective approaches (ibid.).

On the other hand, history education in schools has also increasingly been seen as a significant element with great potential for the peacebuilding and transitional justice processes aimed at ultimate reconciliation between parties involved in conflict (Bentrovato 2016, p. 211). As a result, a growing body of research has examined the distinct role of history education in conflict and peace, inspiring lively debates on how to teach history after conflict. In opposition to the generally accepted idea that history textbook revision poses challenges for societies emerging from recent violent conflict, often serving as a battlefield for competing narratives and interests, it is emphasized in recent literature of peace studies that history textbook revision also offers opportunities for potential

means of conflict transformation (Bentrovato 2017, p. 39). In order to drive history education in post-conflict societies toward conflict transformation, the socio-psychological view on conflict introduced by Kelman (2008; 2010a; 2010b) should be taken into consideration. The concept posits that protracted international conflicts, like those between Israel and Palestine or India and Pakistan, are driven not only by structural issues but also by the collective needs and fears of their populations. These needs are not limited to the material necessities of food, shelter, and safety but also include such psychological needs as identity, security and the removal of fears, which can be provoked by several factors like the collective memory of events of historical trauma, decisions and policies pursued by political leaders, and the media. To meet these needs, beliefs that legitimize the self and delegitimize the other are typically formed and utilized in politics. Societal norms are constructed based on these beliefs. In an effort to maintain coherence, society members tend to resist any information contradicting or challenging these beliefs and norms (Chhabra 2016, p. 244). The interactive, problem-solving approach that conceptually draws on the socio-psychological analysis of conflict, however, argues that an understanding of the societal needs and fears, as well as the resulting beliefs, can provide opportunities and openings for building a sustainable peace between conflicting groups. According to the socio-psychological analysis of conflicts, collective identities of post-conflict societies that are formed with strong beliefs about self and others come to have a certain degree of non-reflective certainty about those beliefs. In a positive way, this non-reflective certainty creates a sense of inner coherence as well as providing a set of expectations about the world (ibid., p. 253). Non-reflectivity refers to the fact that human beings, who are open to learning and integrating information from the outside and adjusting it in a normal situation, begin to operate a process of automatic and psychological shut down, which stops any new information contradictory to existing beliefs from affecting the learning channels. Consequently, the capacity to take in new information about self, others and the world becomes "frozen," with only rigid certainty formed. This rigid certainty, created as a result of psychological mechanisms in society members' mindsets, must be taken into consideration during the process of conflict transformation aimed at ultimate reconciliation. For instance, in South Korea, many extreme rightists who have the firm conviction that South Korea is still technically at war with the hostile enemy, the North, may have this psychological mechanism that screens out any new information about the North that contradicts existing beliefs. Without considering this rigid certainty about their assessment of what is "right" that those rightists hold, any policies toward peace and conflict resolution on the Korean peninsula will necessitate a hard struggle to achieve their end goals.

2.3.4 Monumental History versus Critical History

In societies with a recent history of violence, the past is of great significance because it gives meaning to present events and policies, impacts how notions of justice and equality are perceived in society, constitutes intergroup relations and perceptions, and determines the ways in which people envision the future of their nation. The past is expressed through different forms, from the memories of those who have lived through violence, to stories and traumas passed on to young people, to representations in the mass media and official narratives. As explained in the earlier section, history education is one mechanism that deals with the past, providing the most systematic account of the nation's past and establishing beliefs about relations between groups within a given society. As societies recover from violence, history education is influenced by the complex process of changing political and societal systems and redefining national identity. As an instrument of nation-building and citizenship formation, history education highly depends on the views of political elites concerning the nature of the nation itself, the implications ascribed to the past, and the power structures and connotations of identity promoted by existing political regimes (Korostelina 2016, p. 289).

One of the typical dilemmas post-conflict societies face is making a choice between critical history and monumental history, both of which refer to the most important functions of history in society. In this section, based on Korostelina's (2016) analysis regarding dilemmas of history education, two types of history that function in society, monumental and critical history, will be introduced and will be used as an analytical framework for historical narratives of South Korea. Monumental history refers to the functions of history to legitimize the ruling regime and develop loyalty among the younger generation. The intention of monumental history is, thus, not to provide an understanding of what happened in reality, but to promote a process of selective remembering and forgetting particular narratives based on explicit judgments about the importance of specific events in the history of a nation. These judgments are heavily affected by the ideology of a ruling regime that prefers some events to others because they are deemed significant and essential for the regime's values and goals. In this light, monumental history has mythical functions. Mythic narratives function to define and recreate the particular implication of national identity and legitimize the power of the in-group. The in-group is portrayed as a vital foundation of the nation with exclusive rights to define national identity, being progressive, honorable, and signifying the shared vision of a constructive future. The out-group is described as an illegitimate agent of nation-building, alien to the nation, regressive, with narrow goals. Mythic narratives validate the actions, authority, and domination of the in-group as representing the whole nation, signifying "rightness" in a nation, and having exclusive rights to nation-building. The master narrative of South Korea that had been promoted by

the state and was dominant before the democratization in the late 1980s was clearly monumental in that it was typically used to justify legitimacy of the ruling regimes and to encourage loyalty to the state, while portraying the North as the hostile out-group that has no right to claim legitimacy as a political entity on the Korean peninsula.

On the other hand, post-conflict societies can choose critical history over monumental. Critical history holds all perpetrators accountable and shows the complex roots of violence without promoting loyalty to one particular side. History is, thus, no longer restricted by a regime or powerful group but rather becomes open to constant criticism and reinterpretation. In critical history narratives can be reconstructed through the process of confronting and considering alternative narratives. During this process, stories of different groups and communities within the nation are put together, allowing multiple interpretations and analyses of the roots and causes of violence, as well as reconfiguration of dominant narratives. Progressive intellectuals and politicians in South Korea have tried to see the past events through different perspectives to bring multiple narratives into the representation of history. These attempts, however, have been undermined by several factors. Among those, the most crucial is the politicization of history so narratives of two competing political strains have not been put together, but have merely been constantly competing. In addition, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, itself, still shows some features of monumental history, thus intensifying conflicts between the two narratives. In the following section the detailed characteristics of monumental and critical history will be introduced.

In monumental history, mythic narratives support the dominance of a particular group through the following mechanisms: 1) impediment by out-group; 2) condemnation of imposition; 3) positive in-group predisposition; 4) validation of rights; and 5) enlightenment (Korostelina 2016, p. 291).

Table 1. Five justification mechanisms adopted in monumental history

Mechanisms of Monumental History	
Impediment by out-group	- assumes the right of the in-group to exclusively define the meaning of national identity and to delegitimize the out-group as an illegitimate agent of nation-building. - portrays the correct activities of the in-group and the wrong activities of the out-group.
Condemnation of imposition	- justifies the assertion that the in-group is inclusive and embodies the interests of all groups in the nation, while the out-group is exclusively promoting its own specific values, policies, interests, and ideology. - assigns the essential representation of the whole nation to the in-group and narrow, corrupt interests to the out-group

Positive in-group predisposition	- portrays the in-group as having more abilities and competencies, which can incorporate innovative skills, democratic and humanitarian values, than the out-group. - describes the out-group by its simplistic culture, backward mentality and non-progressive ideas.
Validation of rights	- defines the in-group as having the correct vision of national development and thus possessing an entitlement to develop the nation. - rights are rooted in a more authentic culture, connection to territory, birthright, and acknowledgement by international society.
Enlightenment	- highlights the readiness of all people in a nation to pursue a specific aim, such as the promotion of liberalism or an ethnic state. - emphasizes the in-group's better ability to distinguish shared ideals and enlighten others for the successful achievement of goals. - more prominent in the foundation myths.

(Source adapted from Korostelina 2016, pp. 291-93)

The first justification mechanism, impediment by out-group, emphasizes a conflict between two groups with the premise that only the in-group embodies the positive values of the nation. The out-group is depicted as the one that prevents the goals of the in-group by promoting conflict, instituting specific policies, endorsing an erroneous ideology, and oppressing and discriminating against in-group members. Thus, the duality between "good" and "bad" group is justified through the portrayal of the correct activities of the in-group and the wrong activities of the out-group. This mechanism postulates the right of the in-group to exclusively define the meaning of national identity and to exclude the out-group as an illegitimate agent of nation-building. The second justification mechanism, condemnation of imposition, justifies the claim that the in-group is inclusive and embodies the interests of all groups in the nation, while the out-group is exclusively promoting its own specific values, policies, interests, and ideology based on traditions of its ethnic or regional culture and language. The third justification mechanism, positive in-group predisposition, portrays the in-group as having more abilities and competencies than the out-group. These can incorporate innovative ability and skills, democratic and humanitarian values, and tolerance. In contrast to the in-group, the out-group is characterized by its simplistic culture, backward mentality and non-progressive ideas. This mechanism is employed to justify the necessity of the in-group to fight with a backward out-group, and defend progressive national development. The fourth justification mechanism, validation of rights, defines the in-group as having a correct and right vision of national development, and thus possessing an entitlement to develop the nation. These rights are rooted in its more authentic culture, connection to the native land, birthright, and acknowledgement by international society. In case of exclusion, the out-group is denied its rights, and its members are treated as alien or hostile. This mechanism justifies the power of the in-group as rooted in the

authenticity of its history and connection to the land. The last justification mechanism, enlightenment, highlights the readiness of all people in a nation to pursue a specific aim, for example the development of civic society or the promotion of liberalism or an ethnic state. At the same time, it stresses that some people have limited abilities to achieve these described outcomes because of their persistent, outdated mentality, and a reliance on populist leadership. The in-group is portrayed as having a better ability to distinguish shared ideals and enlighten others for the successful achievement of these goals. This mechanism justifies the power of the in-group, being more enlightened and progressive than other groups. Through these five mechanisms of justification, mythic narratives are constructed to define and recreate the particular connotation of national identity and legitimize the power of the in-group.

The dilemma societies recovering from recent violence face lies in making a choice between monumental and critical history, and is connected to the concept of "collective axiology," which defines boundaries and relations among groups and sets criteria between in-group and out-group (ibid., p. 294). A collective axiology is a common system of values that suggests moral guidelines to in-group members on how to perceive and treat members of in-groups and out-groups, and how to maintain or change relations between them. Two variables characterize the dynamics of collective axiology: the degree of collective generality and the degree of axiological balance (ibid., p. 295). Post-violent societies face the desire to promote national unity and the temptation to maintain an exclusive national narrative that denies the rights of specific other groups or suppress the possibility of alternative narratives. However, what should be noted is that the positive presentation of the self might limit its ability to critically address historical injustices done by the self. The approaches to the dilemma of monumental versus critical history can vary within a specific country.

Figure 1. Two variables of Collective Axiology
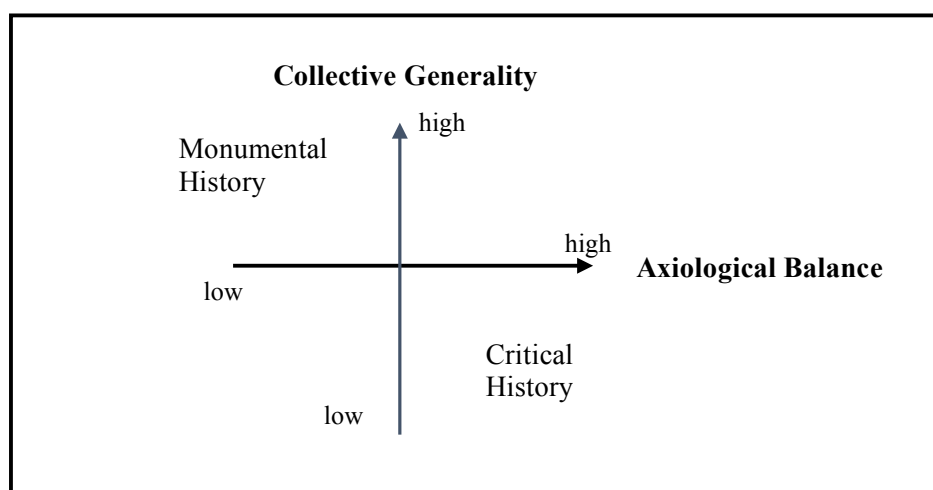
The degree of collective generality "refers to the ways in which in-group members categorize the Other, how they simplify, or not, their defining (essential) character" (Rothbart & Korostelina 2006, p. 45). Collective generality includes four main attributed characteristics: homogeneity of out-group members' perceptions and behaviors; long-term stability of their beliefs, attitudes, and actions; their resistance to change; and the scope or range of the out-group category (Korostelina 2016, p. 295). A high level of collective generality is connected with the view that regards an out-group as consistent, homogeneous, demonstrating fixed patterns of behavior, committed to durable, rigid beliefs and values, and thus being reluctant to accept changes. A low degree of collective generality reflects the perception of the out-group as differentiated, exhibiting a variety of behaviors and readiness for transformation. The degree of collective generality varies significantly between monumental and critical history. In monumental history, an enemy is typically described as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes. The image of an out-group is thus regarded as rigid, fixed, and homogeneous. In critical history, the diversity within an in-group and out-group are emphasized and their cultural and political structures are portrayed as more complex and at times conflictual.

Axiological balance refers to "a kind of parallelism of virtues and vices attributed to groups" (Rothbart & Korostelina 2006, p. 46). Balanced axiology includes the recognition of positive aspects as well as negative features among both the in- and out-groups. A historical narrative with a high degree of axiological balance acknowledges one's own moral faults and failings, while one with a low degree of axiological balance perceives the in-group as morally pure and superior and the out-group as evil and vicious (Korostelina 2016, p. 296). Monumental and critical histories show sharp contrast in their presentation of axiological balance. In monumental history with a low degree of axiological balance, intergroup relations are presented based on the dichotomy between in-group victimization and out-group aggression. Such presentations are vital in denying in-group responsibility for aggressive and violent actions. The biases and prejudice are transformed into deep beliefs about the out-group as an essential arch enemy, thus decreasing any possibility of mutual understanding. In critical history with a high degree of axiological balance, education presents not only positive but also negative actions of the in-group, providing critical analysis of political and social foundations, and consequences of negative events.

The "state-centered nationalism" narrative of rightists can be clearly categorized as monumental history with a high degree of collective generality toward the out-group, that is, North Korea, which is thus portrayed as a political entity with a homogeneously evil ideology and fixed patterns of behavior. The state-sanctioned narrative during the authoritarian era highlights the positive achievements of South Korea, while ignoring injustice and wrongs conducted by ruling regimes. Hence, it was clearly monumental with a low level of axiological balance. This has gradually changed in the state-centered nationalism narrative of current conservatives in that it

acknowledges the negative aspects of the past regimes, such as dictatorship and human rights abuses. On the other hand, the ethnic nationalism narrative of leftists displays many features of critical history in that it includes some formerly forgotten memories in the official history in particular, with respect to the wrong-doings of past authoritarian regimes, such as human rights violations and undemocratic actions. In addition, it includes positive portrayals of North Korea. However, what should be pointed out here is the fact that the narrative of progressives is also still partly monumental. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, the Korean nation and the masses [*minjok*] are defined as the absolute and pure self, while constructing the out-groups within the nation, so-called, the group of anti-nationalists like pro-Japanese or pro-American collaborators as hostile, blaming them for almost all the past wrong-doings and injustice in South Korea. Consequently, it creates another dichotomy of good and evil, that is, nationalists versus anti-nationalists, and fails to provide explanation for the complex roots of violence and division of the nation, which will be elaborated in detail throughout the dissertation.

South Korea is not the only country that faces a dilemma. For instance, in Ghana between 1987 and 2010, two versions of monumental history were presented in history textbooks, depending on the political party in power (Sefa-Nyarko 2016). Changes in political power resulted in changes to history curricula. Each change provided opposite and contentious interpretations of Kwame Nkrumah's 1950 Positive Action and his legacy. The monumental history promoted after 1987 stressed his positive impact on social development, while post-2001 textbooks emphasized the negative aspects, such as the numerous human rights abuses and destabilizing effect of Nkrumah's actions, which resulted in nationwide chaos. Both versions promote a very unbalanced axiology, in which the past actions of the party in power are presented as important for social development and progress, while the actions of the opposition are depicted as destructive and promoting violence. The case of Ghana has many implications for South Korea, as it resembles quite closely what happens in South Korea regarding high school history textbook revision whenever the regime is changed, in that the assessment of the past regimes and the birth of South Korea are interpreted in a radically different way. This will be closely elaborated in the later part of the dissertation. The monumental history of Ghana employs the "impediment by out-group" mechanism to describe the fight between two political parties, in which the one party signifies positive values of the nation. The opposition is presented as creating conflict, establishing erroneous policies, promoting the wrong ideology, unfair treatment, oppression, and use of violence. This mechanism helps to promote one party's exclusiveness in defining national policies and representing the nation. It also uses the mechanism of "condemning imposition", which rationalizes the claim that the in-group represents the interests of every group in the nation while the out-group is imposing its own narrow ideology, interests, and policies over everyone and wrongly claims to symbolize the nation. However, the latest editions of

Ghanaian social studies textbooks (2008) began to include critical history. Instead of the simplistic praising or criticizing of specific personalities of the other, they present an analysis of the functions of social institutions, examining individual contributions within the institutions and structures of the state. It is argued that this step toward critical history became possible because of dialogue that has been developing between different political parties and growing political stability since the 1980s, creating a "dialogical space". Initiated by both political parties, this exchange has involved citizen representations from a variety of social groups and different political affiliations that comprise Ghana. As mentioned, this progress toward creating a critical historical narrative through creating dialogue between competing groups has great significance for the case of Korea.

In Croatia, another example for South Korea, history education uses both critical and monumental history (Maric 2016). Most topics, even when sensitive and controversial, are presented from multiple perspectives, which has helped to promote critical thinking. However, in some textbooks, topics of "national importance" such as the Homeland War are presented in a form of monumental history that do not allow for varied interpretations. In the presentation of the war, military history dominates the historical narrative, depicting the Croatian Army as liberators and Serbian nationalism and Serbian paramilitary units as instigators of the war. Thus, this monumental history is based on an unbalanced collective axiology. The description of the actions of Croats omits any discussion of Croatian nationalism, Croatian involvement in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the suffering of Serbs, while Serbs are uniformly depicted as the aggressor. The level of collective generality is also very high, which means students are taught to identify the collective victims and the collective aggressors, disregarding any individual contexts. South Korea's history education is a case in which students are forced to think based on a dichotomy between aggressors and victims or between anti-nationalists and nationalists without considering historical, social, and personal contexts.

2.4 Identity Politics

Everyday knowledge about history does not result only from transforming scientific fact into common knowledge and delivering it to the public, but rather is a result of political and social processes through which the accounts of the past attain hegemonic status, being accepted as "true" and "right." It is not surprising but natural that there are multiple versions of accounts and interpretations about past events in democratized societies, depending on varying perspectives and interests of the social or political groups implicated in the storytelling, that is, narratives. As a result, there is constitutive tension between hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives. This is of

significance in that historical narratives influence how groups define the present, for instance in how they identify their rights and duties, legitimize their political agreements, and make claims on the rightness or wrongness of their actions. Any account of the past thus has a political dimension, based on which a nation can make a decision on how to react to the social and political issues it faces and how to envision its future.

2.4.1 Power Struggles for the Dominance of Knowledge and Truth

As clarified in the introduction, identities in this dissertation imply not only symbolic constructions but also institutional practices and everyday interactions, through which identities are produced, reproduced and transformed. Thus, the term, discourse, will be used in the broader sense of Foucault, as "systems of meaning, including all types of social and political practice, as well as institutions and organizations" (Howarth 1995), rather than in a narrow sense of texts. Identity is not only constructed in relation to textual meanings but also within institutionalized relations of power, which means that discourses on national identity operate in the context of the institutional support and practices that they rely on (Mottier 1997). Since Foucault's discourse analysis examines how specific discourses reproduce or transform relations of power as well as relations of meaning, discourse in this study concerns the macro-level of structural orders of discourse, that is, broad historical systems of meaning which are relatively stable. Discourses are reproduced and transformed by specific individual and collective narratives, which refers to a limited sense of "stories" and "story-telling" in this study. Narratives are one of the possible forms of discourse. Hence, while discourses include narratives, they cannot be reduced to narratives. Narratives of the nation over the common past are understood as important components of broader discourses of national identity. Different narrative forms such as historical accounts, myths, and metaphors contribute to discourses of national identity.

The focus in this research regarding narrative analysis is placed on the social and political role of narratives in constructing national identity and national identities are defined as narratives which are concerned with the drawing of boundaries between "us" and "them", which is inherently related with political processes. Mechanisms of othering, that is, constructing specific groups of people as others, are politically important aspects of identity narratives. As seen in the theory section about intractable conflict, at times of war mechanisms of othering toward the enemy become particularly intense and significant, often taking the form of presenting the other as non-human or evil. War has also played a crucial role in the formation of the national identity of the two Koreas, making them identify each other with great hatred as arch enemies. However, with democratization in South Korea, a group of people, commonly categorized as progressives, liberals or leftists, have

found the cause of the war and the division in those Koreans who served the imperial powers of Japan and the US, pursued the establishment of a separate nation, allegedly for their own political interests, and later emerged as a new political power in South Korea. With the rise of progressives in institutional politics in the South, their narrative, in which not the North but internal betrayals of anti-nationalists should be blamed for tragedies and injustice of the nation, started to attain dominance in the society and to be institutionalized in many areas from foreign to domestic policies. The new idea of reconciliation toward the former enemy state and the new narrative on the birth and developments of South Korea consequently and ironically generated severe political confrontation over South Korea's self identity and relational identity toward the North and the US.

As mentioned at the beginning of the dissertation, the aim of the research is not to claim, support, or prove which version of narrative is more "true" than the others, but rather to expose the political motives and contexts behind the creation and promotion of particular narratives in the South Korean context by examining the inner-conflict over national identity. The aim of the study is ultimately to contribute to finding a way in which competing narratives over national identity can be transformed into a direction that leads to conflict transformation within South Korean society as well as ultimate reconciliation between the two Koreas.

Foucault in his theory relies on Nietzsche's (1974) notion that knowledge is always a fragile compromise, produced by the clash and negotiation of conflicting interests. In line with Nietzsche, Foucault argues that knowledge is the outcome of a battle between political and social groups (Foucault 2000). In this notion, truth and power are interlinked. They are generating and maintaining each other, consequently producing a specific "regime of truth" which varies from society to society (Foucault 2002, p. 132). It is this regime that defines which discourses are allowed and accepted as true, and provides the mechanisms to make ethical claims by distinguishing between right and wrong. Foucault (2002) also claims that "there is a battle 'for truth,' or at least 'around truth'" (p. 132). The political battle is fought with the use of the discursive weapons of knowledge and power which determine the formation of a context-specific truth (Foucault 2004, p. 190). This battle is about the status of being accepted as truth with all its economic and political implications, not about the truth itself. Conflicting versions of "truth" and "right" which function as tactical weapons are created by dynamics of power and knowledge.

In Foucault's (2004) thinking, war is not only constantly dividing societies, it is rather the foundation of all institutions of power just as military institutions are at the center of all political institutions. This can be well observed in the case of South Korea, where after liberation from Japan, many former police and military officials who served for the colonial government occupied key positions in the newly established South Korea's public and private sectors with strong support from the US military government. In post-liberation South Korea, it can be thus argued in line with

Foucault (2004) that "politics is the continuation of war by other means" (p. 13). The authoritarian regimes of South Korea in the post-war era put much effort into keeping the image of the very enemy, the North and its communist ideology, alive through the creation of fear, through the perpetuation of a state of exception, through propaganda and censorship, through selective commemoration or through narrative formation of collective innocence and victimhood. Hence, the governments' policies worked like a military strategy to strengthen their own position against a common enemy. In this sense, knowledge is nothing but a weapon, a tactical deployment in that war (Foucault 2004). This is true in the case of South Korea. It was because of regime change to two successive progressive regimes from 1998 to 2008 that the narrative identity of South Korea was partly transformed through changes in various policies such as history textbook revision and foreign policies toward the North and the US, and this is elaborated in the rest of the dissertation. These attempts were in part successful in transforming the official knowledge and the master narrative in South Korea with their newly attained political and social power, but have failed to persuade those, mostly rightists, who had the radically opposing narrative, and ultimately to yield a transcendent narrative on which conflicting groups within the South Korean society can reach agreement, thus promoting reconciliation.

2.5 Narrative Strategies in Post-Conflict Societies for Conflict Transformation

Given the changing nature of contemporary conflict toward more frequent internal conflicts and civil wars within one political entity than international conflicts, the primary challenge societies emerging from violent conflicts face is to find a way to not only exist together peacefully with the former enemy, but even at times cooperate and share power. However, despite this change, representations of the past and history teaching still remain as weapons for these collective struggles.

Although South Korea is not an exceptional case as a society that has experienced recent violence in war and is currently neighbor with the former enemy, it is a unique case in that the former enemy is its own half of one ethnic nation. Thus, South Korea currently faces two important conflicts: one, with the North that has been successful in developing nuclear weapons; and the other, internal divisions over how to identify itself and its significant others, North Korea and the US. At the time of writing, the historical summit between the US and the North, as well as inter-Korean summits, are ongoing to find a way to avoid the danger of nuclear war on the peninsula. Even if the peace agreement or political declaration is made through summits and consequently the North agrees to denuclearization, the sources of tension always exist on the peninsula as there are possibilities the North can always resume the nuclear program unless the hostile relationship is fully transformed into relations of mutual trust between both Koreas, as well as between the North and the US. Furthermore,

even if the end of war is declared through a series of summits, there is still a high possibility that internal divisions within South Korea will stay strong for a while because it is another challenging task to transform the identity conception of those who see the North as an existential threat to South Korea and prioritize the strong alliance with the US for its security. As elaborated earlier, the identity shaped in the context of intractable conflicts is consolidated as beliefs in the firm duality between good self and evil enemy, being resistant to change. For the delicate conflict transformation process, it is, therefore, challenging but essential to replace the identity of the former enemy with that of a political partner for peaceful coexistence.

There has been a recent shift in peace and conflict studies from "conflict resolution" towards "conflict transformation", which refers to the process of reaching a durable and mutually acceptable solution between former enemies (Psaltis et al. 2017, p. 2). Conflict transformation is more concerned with the transformation of structures, systems, and relationships that initially cause violence and injustice, focusing on a constant end goal of the settlement of peace and the end of structural injustice (ibid.).

In the following section, the narrative strategies that are usually adopted by post-conflict societies are explained. Then a "transformative model of post-conflict textbook work" is introduced as a suggestion to achieve ultimate conflict transformation through narrative transformation, from conflicting and contentious toward inclusive and transcendent. This proposed model has implications for the peace project led by the progressive South Korean governments, given that it highlights the necessity of procedural cooperation with those have conflicting ideas, values and ideologies in the process of peacemaking between the two Koreas. Even if all agree with the ideal of peaceful coexistence or unification of the two Koreas, it cannot be achieved without creating consensus and cooperation in the processes of policy decision making, and its installment between conflicting and competing groups in South Korea.

2.5.1 Short-term Approach: Silence, Evasion, or Elision

As elaborated before, post-conflict societies take various measures in responding to the demands and challenges related to teaching younger generations about the history of the violent past through textbooks. One of the commonly adopted approaches is a shorter-term stopgap measure that often promotes narrative silence, evasion or elision, notably through the establishment of moratoria and the banning or the emergency revision of existing textbooks. It also includes longer-term textbook development work, allowing multi-concepts and methods. This includes single- or multi-narrative and multi-perspective approaches (Bentrovato 2017, p. 42).

McCully (2012) points out that after conflict, "dealing with the recent past is especially

problematic because the situation is still heavily disputed, raw, and characterized by personal trauma, anger, and grief" (p. 154). In this light, a commonly adopted strategy in the immediate aftermath of violent conflict is the establishment of moratoria, which means "the temporary suspension of history education or its recent history segment, including its textbooks" (De Baets 2015, p. 6). Also, a "rhetoric of silence" (Ondek 1993) is often adopted, based on a belief or a political pretext that the society can benefit from the passing of time. Bentrovato (2017) argues that this option is justified by at least four arguments: first, a time of silence is necessary for national healing and reconciliation, while allowing time for society to come to terms with the past; second, there exist political obstacles to the possibility of objectively and safely confronting the past when parties, in particular perpetrators who were involved in the conflict, still hold powerful positions; third, sufficient time is needed for scientific and legal investigation, and for documentation to reveal the truth and to reach consensus about the past; and fourth, from a more practical point of view, in the short term post-war countries commonly face so many different challenges, including insecurity, poverty and institutional weakness, that a governing entity has no capability to deal with history textbook revision as a priority. Behind such arguments, without doubt, there often exist vested interests of political actors concerned with delaying all confrontation with the past in order to secure their political power and legitimacy (ibid., p. 44).

Evasive approaches to history textbook work in post-conflict societies are often criticized because silence on victims' suffering in textbooks may bring victims into renewed injustice, while buying time for political powers to manipulate grievances for their vested interests. Hence, critics argue a short-term strategy of silence about the painful pasts leads to the perpetuation of conflict. As many observers in peace and conflict studies have pointed out, confrontation and redress of historical injustice is mandatory for ultimate intergroup reconciliation.

In South Korea under the authoritarian governments, the strategies of narrative silence, evasion, and elision were often adopted. For instance, the issues relating to pro-Japanese collaboration remained silent and under-investigated until recently, partly because many of the collaborators or their descendants have hold powerful positions in the new state of South Korea. In addition, the issue of violence inflicted by a state power, such as mass killings of civilians in war time, was erased from the master narrative as well as from history textbooks, with regimes claiming that immediate challenges the state faced, such as threats from the North and economic development, must be prioritized.

2.5.2 Longer-term Approach: Single- and Multi-Narrative Approaches

As societies emerging from recent violence develop their political systems toward

democratization, calls for a democratic process of post-conflict history textbook writing are growing. This process may include the development of materials jointly authored by representatives from across historical conflict lines (Bentrovato 2017, p. 47). In the case of South Korea, it was also with democratization that history textbook pluralization was adopted in school education. However, there have been no jointly developed resources between conflicting groups, but instead the dominant state-sanctioned narrative was gradually replaced with an alternative narrative, a move which has consequently elicited strong criticism from people who have constructed their narrative identity based on the predominant state-sanctioned one.

Empirically, in collaborative textbook projects implemented by international organizations, two main alternative narrative approaches have been adopted: a traditional single-narrative approach, presenting a mutually agreed and accepted "compromise narrative" that combines a common understanding of history; and a pluralistic multi-narrative and multi-perspective approach which presents contentious narratives for critical interpretation, refraining from supplying an authoritative narrative (ibid., p. 49). The single-narrative approach to history textbooks includes collaborative construction of a narrative based on mutual agreement through the processes of negotiation and compromise, which harmonizes the perspectives of conflicting parties. For this consensus-based model that is ideal for settling peace, it is necessary to include joint efforts in the negotiation for a common narrative, whereby special focus is made both on eliminating enemy images, bias and stereotypes, and emphasizing historical elements possibly conducive to reconciliation, such as positive interactions between conflicting groups throughout the relevant history (Pingel 2008). In post-conflict countries, the conventional single-narrative approach has, however, often been taken as a strategy to foster unity and social cohesion by political powers. First of all, this approach contradicts current historiographical trends that promote a critical way of thinking about the past. In addition, in divided societies in the aftermath of violent conflict where the appeal of the construction of one dominant historical narrative is very strong, there exists a risk that a new state-sanctioned and uncontested master-narrative or official truth may emerge, which is top-down and selective, excluding or disregarding alternative memories and narratives. In this state-sanctioned narrative, difference and diversity are often described as a threat to the unity of the nation. Furthermore, the single narrative is likely to reproduce existing power relations by endorsing the beliefs, values, norms and identity of dominant groups, in particular the ruling regime, thus possibly creating new or renewed injustice.

Given those negative aspects of the single-narrative approach, the "enquiry-based multi-narrative and multi-perspective approach" is the most preferred in recent historiography. The emphasis of this approach is placed on an interpretive and evidence-based process of historical enquiry, which regards all narratives as "provisional and open to question" (McCully 2012, p. 148).

In this approach, students are taught plural and multiple narratives regarding the past, which is deemed to be more democratic and better able to create opportunities for open discussions and rapprochement by encouraging students to think critically of irreconcilable group narratives and presumed truths (Bentrovato 2017, p. 53). On the other hand, this approach might face problems in its implementation if historical narratives given to students are highly contested and conflictual. For example, the methodology of permanent questioning in this approach may only lead to producing uncertainty and further destabilizing the nation, rather than supplying a definite or clear and positive narrative of the past. Also, the challenge in this approach lies in the fact that the processes of questioning and critical thinking are very complicated and need time and patience from both teachers and students. If they are not effectively equipped with the tools and dispositions of the historical profession, this approach, by focusing on differences and controversies, may further consolidate polarization rather than helping communities transcend competing narratives and encouraging reconciliation (ibid.).

2.5.3 Transformative Model for Narrative Transformation

Various examples of recent empirical research in post-conflict textbook writing emphasize the attitudinal change that can be achieved by collaborative initiatives bringing together opposing conflict parties to produce textbooks or guidelines based on the transcendent narrative that is mutually agreed and accepted, called "a transformative model of post-conflict textbook work" (Bentrovato 2017, p. 54). This model highlights that the possibility of the conciliatory role that textbooks play relies partly on whether collaborative textbook development can encourage a process of "narrative transformation" of the competing accounts that initially create conflict. Depending on social constructionism, the framework of the transformative model puts its emphasis on the reframing of conflict narratives and related history throughout the conflict transformation processes that aim to provoke changes in intergroup perceptions and attitudes that are considered key to ultimate reconciliation. It regards narrative re-examination and reconfiguration as a critical step towards transforming conflict-relationships between opposing parties (ibid.).

Specifically, textbook writing work can provide a golden opportunity to create a "dialogical space" (Hermann 2004) in which participants engaged in conflict can be involved in reassessing and redefining their narratives and their underlying antagonistic perceptions and belief systems. In doing so, it is necessary to have textbook projects involve and facilitate sustained cooperative interaction, and critical and constructive confrontation with the painful past. By engaging former enemies in such processes of social learning, textbook work may act as a catalyst for narrative transformation. It can, in other words, contribute to broadening the narrow and limited narratives based on the simplistic

dichotomy between good self and evil others, and to creating more complex and nuanced narratives over the complicated roots of the past violence and conflict. The processes involved in this transformative model of textbook work may ultimately allow a transition from competing narratives that are mutually recognized as irreconcilable and incompatible, toward more inclusive, pluralistic and balanced narratives (Bentrovato 2017, p. 55).

It is necessary to bear in mind that the transformative model of post-conflict textbook work requires a number of key procedural principles and prerequisites. First, an inclusive, symmetrical, and democratic collaborative approach to textbook revision and development must be adopted. This is critical to both initiating and signaling a crucial shift from a conventional method, in which knowledge is determined by dominant groups, toward more democratic practices, where history is co-narrated by representatives of different groups, guaranteeing diverse voices in society being equally represented and heard in the textbooks. Second, it is necessary to shift from a common strategy of silence about conflict, controversies and diversity toward acknowledging and openly confronting differences. The parties must acknowledge that it is natural to have multiple and diverse perspectives and narratives on history, which can lead to a meaningful and constructive dialogue on the shared but divisive past. The parties then need to be engaged in each other's narrative by questioning assumptions and preconceptions that may inhibit rational and constructive intergroup dialogue on the shared history. In conflict situations, it is commonly said that "awareness of the enemy's similar humanity is easily lost from view" (Nussbaum 1992, p. 282), keeping groups trapped in dichotomous victim/perpetrator discourses that perpetuate vicious cycles of violence and prevent rapprochement (Bentrovato 2017, p. 57). These transformative processes are undoubtedly challenging to implement and can only be achieved by long-term efforts. They require extensive groundwork to build mutual recognition and mutual trust, especially at the beginning of the project considering that the parties involved in conflict may still hold rigid defensive and offensive attitudes. However, the potential of this transformative model of post-conflict textbook is considerable to build and empower a cooperative community by providing a space for constructive intergroup engagement and collaboration. More importantly, this model has implications for peace initiatives led by the South Korean government in that it highlights the importance of a dialogical space during the process of policy implementation. Choi Jang-jip (2017) points out that in order to have the ultimate peace settlement the peace initiatives aim at, it is necessary to include those who have different perspectives, values, and ideologies in the process of policy decision making and its enactment, which is the lesson learned from the former progressive regimes' attempt to transform the policy toward the North from containment to engagement.

3. First Juncture: Democratization and Narrative Transformation

This chapter aims to closely examine the "ethnic nationalism" narrative of progressives, one of two contentious master narratives, which has become dominant since the 2000s when the progressives emerged as a political power in the institutional politics of South Korea. Hence, the focus of this chapter is concerned with the first historical juncture, the democratization in the late 1980s and the financial crisis in the late 1990s, which provided the progressive and leftist politicians and intellectuals with opportunities to raise their voices and offer their perspectives on the various social and political issues. Before taking a close look at the outcomes of the first juncture, the social and political contexts in the period before the democratization that heavily influenced the birth of the ethnic nationalism narrative will be first introduced in the following section. Subsequently, the process through which the ethnic nationalism narrative has gained its dominant status, and social and political contexts that made possible the rise of the ethnic nationalism narrative will be elaborated. Lastly, key concepts of the ethnic nationalism narrative will be analyzed.

3.1 The National Identity Formation in the Process of Nation-Building

Societies coming out of foreign occupation are left with the task of rebuilding themselves, which includes not only material and economic reconstruction, but also political restoration, national reconciliation, and the reinvention of national identity. Although the tasks are concerned with the future of the nation, these can only be achieved when the legacy of foreign occupation and the violent past are dealt with. In particular, it is essential that the nation's shameful past be overcome so as to reestablish national self-esteem and national identity. This process of building national self-consciousness often has a strategy with two aspects: a group of scapegoats is selected and blamed for the nation's shameful past; and selective events and memories are chosen and glorified, through which postwar national unity can be promoted (De Ceuster 2002, p. 215). With the former strategy of singling out a group of perpetrators, the majority of the people can be categorized as a majority group of victims of foreign occupation, relieved of the sense of guilt, while the latter strategy of the mythicized narrative makes it possible for a shameful period of foreign occupation and war to be integrated into a nation's history.

The popular memory that a majority of social groups in a country share sometimes collides with the collective memory, which is elevated to the national myth, most often in the master narrative. However, what should be noted is that different memories and narratives always remain alive in society along with the mythicized master narrative, and are shared by members of various social

groups. The master narrative might prevail for a long period of time but different voices eventually emerge, questioning the hegemonic narrative and challenging the interpretation of the nation's history. According to Wertsch (2008), memory is distributed in two ways: 1) socially in small group interactions; and 2) instrumentally (p. 121). The latter, instrumental distribution, is performed by agents acting individually or collectively, and employs cultural tools, such as the internet or narratives. An important transformation of memory in human cognition occurs when various forms of cultural tools that offer external symbolic storage have emerged (ibid.). Hence, the rise of new forms of external symbolic storage, for instance, written texts on/from the internet, leads to fundamental change in our remembering. This was the case in South Korea. With extensive volumes of progressive intellectuals' publications published in the 1980s and 1990s, together with a political open space for public debates provided with the democratization, the state-sanctioned narrative on how to identify the nation and how to remember past injustices and wrongdoings was faced with great challenges, and consequently alternative narratives emerged.

As elaborated in the theoretical chapter, one of many challenges post-conflict societies face is related to how to deal with the divisive and violent past, which often leads to conflicting memories. Within nations, the imminent task of creating and mobilizing collective identity often leads to the oppression of other identities. In particular, the imperatives of nationalism can repress alternative concepts of collective identity. In this light, national identity is thus a totalizing idea, forcing alternative identities such as class, gender or region to be subordinated in the realm of politics (Robinson 2008, p. 54). At the level of a nation-state, the state constructs and maintains a master narrative of nation which acts as an official story of the nation. This master narrative functions to legitimate the existence of the state and nation internally and to unify people. On the other hand, it is projected externally, for a nation to be acknowledged in world politics.

What is essential in the process of new nation-building is to draw a line between us and those who do not belong to us, which bounds a nation culturally, politically and territorially. Narratives of nation, therefore, are influential in setting standards for inclusiveness or exclusiveness. It is historians who create, transform, and maintain narratives, and give a nation the character of individuated beings which are given a narrative that is supposed to be adequately suited to the world (ibid., p. 53). In a nation-state where the master narrative is highly contested, academic analysis conducted by historians or intellectuals becomes of great significance, often utilized as a political weapon. Resources provided by those intellectuals, with which the master narrative can be deconstructed or reconstructed, are often regarded as threats to the master narrative propagated by the state authorities and the socio-political formation upon which the nation builds. In modern Korea where there have existed highly contested and emotional discourses about the legitimacy of two separate states, historical narratives have been often adopted as a political instrument. Koreans living today in both

Koreas hardly have a memory of a Korean state that is both sovereign and undivided, and the division has greatly affected Korean identity. In this context, the process of othering in South Korea has been one of the most integral components in the formation of national identity. It is not unusual for South Koreans to negatively represent the North as a state that is uncivilized, backward and totalitarian, and is oppressing its own people. On the other hand, in other discourses, the people in the North appear more positively because they are less westernized, being closer to the pure Korean nation before the fall of the South into the evils of imperialism. The former, negative representation of the North, can be easily found in conservatives' narrative, and the latter in progressives', which is based on a strong belief in ethnic nationalism. However, both narratives have common ground in that "North Korea becomes a strong component and defining characteristic of South Koreans' representations of themselves" (Grinker 1998, p. 8). Representation constitutes the ways in which people individually and collectively depict something or someone verbally, visually, or through other expressive means, such as music (ibid., p. 6). In this light, science, poetry, and religion are all forms of representation, each of which is a subjective lens of interpretation, both for a person who makes the representation and for those who perceive it. Representations provide symbolic resources with which the event or object to be represented can "speak." In addition, social representations of history can explain how a society has come to be the way it is now and justify its responses to current challenges (Liu and Hiton 2005, p. 538). They have multi-voices, given that the meanings of a representation can be wide-ranging. At times, some meanings are salient in some contexts but not others, depending on their social use. For example, the national flag of South Korea used to signify patriotism for the nation and partly still does. However, it is now more a sign of conservatism, largely due to its use in the "*Taegukgi* (South Korean national flag) rally" that is the pro-Park street protest mobilized to criticize the impeachment of former President Park Geun-hye, in which most participants are rightists. The power of representation also depends on the power of the agents who construct them. These aspects of representation inform us that the meanings of historical objects and events are revealed and conveyed through specific practices, such as speeches, rituals, or other social representations.

South Korea is filled with different kinds of representations of North Korea, which is of significance in that they tell us about the extent to which South Koreans establish their own identity as the opposite of or in relation to the North. Democratization in South Korea that increased possibilities of open discussion and debate has also contributed to remarkable ambivalence about how to identify with the North as a South Korean. The conventional historical master narrative, that is, the state-sanctioned narrative under authoritarian regimes, blamed the leaders of the North, the late Kim Il Sung and his two successors, for the tragedy of the nation. In this regard, North Korea is not represented as a group of people but as an illegitimate entity illegally occupying the northern

territory that originally belonged to the South, the true representation of the Korean nation. The progressive regimes that took office from 1998 for the following ten years, however, see it from an opposite perspective; for them, the North is perceived as a group of people who ethnically belong to the same Korean nation, and the North as a state is treated as a legitimate political entity. These conflicting representations are well represented in the contentious narratives of progressives and conservatives, which are the source of societal and political conflicts in contemporary South Korea.

In the following section, the early process of national identity building in a newly born South Korea will first be introduced, before closely examining the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives which emerged in the 2000s as a dominant narrative with two successive progressive administrations.

3.1.1 From Legal to Historical Justice

With its liberation from Japan in 1945, Korea struggled with political and ideological chaos, facing dramatically changing circumstances in domestic and global contexts, which unfortunately led to Korea's division into two states. Each Korea was initially controlled by the military governments of the Soviet Union and the US, respectively, after liberation. Korean political leaders in both areas had to face the task of national recovery. The legacy of foreign occupation needed to be overcome through national cohesion but this was not the case for South Korea because liberation and subsequent control by the US military government came about in a process of extreme political tension and chaos. Under the US military government, those serving in Japan's colonial regime were not punished despite the public's anger and hatred, calling them "betrayers of the nation." This was because the US military that arrived in Korea without having much knowledge about the nation recruited experienced Korean officials who had experience of governing the nation under the Japanese colonial government. Those individuals remained in positions after liberation without any process of legal judgment for their activities during the colonial period. Hence, it was the public's morality, not a legal assessment, which played a significant role in judging pro-Japanese collaboration in the post-liberation era. Reflecting public sentiment, the Special Act on Punishing Anti-National Conducts was passed in the Korean National Assembly in September 1948. The first President of the South, Rhee Syngman, was forced to create the Special Investigation Committee (SIC) to investigate and prosecute Japanese collaborators, which did not, however, last long. Rhee believed that the fight against communists within the South was a priority for the newly established state over the issue of collaboration. Even though it agreed to establish the institution, the Rhee government was passive in supporting the SIC's activities, arguing that the SIC was heavily influenced by its communist-influenced leadership (Kim Dong-choon 2010, p. 530). As a result, the

SIC ended its activities within a year, without producing much of an outcome. This absence of legal justice for acts of collaboration has greatly influenced contemporary South Korean politics, which will be explained in detail in the rest of the chapter.

The geographical partition reminds many South Koreans, especially progressives, of failure to achieve national unity and has been a source of constant challenges to the authority of the South Korean ruling elites that were blamed for having pursued the establishment of a separate state for the sake of their own interests (De Ceuster 2002, p. 216). Each Korean state has integrated its own interpretations of the ancient and modern history into a master narrative which aims to justify its claim to legitimacy. In both cases the state has implemented considerable means to repress counter-narratives, to police the writing of history and shape public opinion around a common understanding of why its polity should be recognized as the true expression of Korean collective identity. In North Korea, there is virtually no visible dissent, and in the South during the authoritarian era, any challenges to the master narrative were highly suppressed. The Rhee government was overturned by the wave of student-led protests in April 1960. The collapse of the Rhee regime provided another opportunity for the struggle of legal justice in South Korea. The bereaved families organized demonstrations to demand a full investigation into the mass killings by the state power and established the National Association of the Bereaved Families of the Korean War Victims, thus challenging the state-sanctioned official narrative of the war, in which the Korean war is only described as an anti-communist battle against a communist invasion (Kim Dong-choon 2010, p. 532). However, uncovering the mass killing incidents of civilians by the state forces around the time of the war posed a great threat to this monumental narrative of the war. In response to the anger of bereaved families, the ruling Liberal Party that led the National Assembly organized the special committee on the Fact-finding of Massacres in May 1960. The intention of the Liberal Party that had been a strong supporter of President Rhee was, however, only to alleviate the anger of victims' families and the public, as seen in the committee's short life that only lasted eleven days. It is argued, in particular by the progressive and leftist camps, that the failures to clean up the past wrongdoings in the early years of South Korea have led it down a path of injustice. Collaborators were not only able to avoid any legal punishment but have also enjoyed privileges by keeping their social positions and wealth in the South Korean society.

However, democratization and the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s opened the debates over the dominant master narrative of authoritarian rule, which, however, still endures with strong support from its followers (Robinson 2006, p. 56). Any attempts to acknowledge the North, which is the issue so sensitive and so deeply related to regime legitimization of the South, were viewed as almost treasonous before democratization. In such a climate, it was historians working under the strict monitoring of the government who had to begin

the process of defining a civic perspective of national identity to accompany the preexisting ethnic nationalist consciousness that had developed during the colonial period. In societies emerging from recent violence, the politicization of history is not unusual. Protracted conflicts are driven not only by structural issues but also by collective needs, including not only the material but also psychological demands such as identity and security. In order to meet these needs, beliefs that legitimize the self and delegitimize the other are formed. In doing so, post-conflict societies tend to choose monumental history that serves to meet those psychological demands through developing self-esteem or loyalty among the people, as well as serving to legitimize the ruling regime. While the politicization of history is very common in post-conflict societies, as mentioned, history has more significant meaning in the Korean context, where strong ethnic homogeneity is believed to be an objective truth. The politicization of history in South Korea was mainly a product of the contested origins of the two Koreas being widely believed as one ethnic nation (Robinson 2006, p. 60).

On the other hand, in South Korea, the politicization of history has been further intensified largely due to the failure of its legal system to bring justice to pro-Japanese collaborators, a point that many scholars argue (Kim Dong-choon 2010; de Ceuster 2002; Em 2013). Despite overwhelming public support for some form of retribution right after the liberation, hesitation from the executive party had stopped legal justice from being applied to collaborators, most of whom already had taken the important positions in politics and society in the South after liberation or at least had some relations with political elites. In addition, the first administration of Rhee Syngman put the priority on the task of national reconstruction in the wake of the devastating war. With legal justice aborted, historians took on the task of revealing and removing the legacies of Japanese colonization. However, historical justice was not able to be realized until several decades had passed, because political circumstances before democratization prevented historians from openly venturing into the political issue of collaboration.

This failure to provide legal justice reemerged in the 1980s when zeal for democracy was high among political dissenters and students. When a process of democratization was embarked on in the late 1980s, it was not only about looking to the future but also coming to deal with the legacies of a shameful past. In this context, publications on the collaboration issue flourished. The collaboration issue used to be treated by scholars with great anger and even expressed as the "original sin," corroding the spirit of the Korean nation. As one of the historians puts it:

> Collaboration is the original sin of Korean society. If this issue remains unresolved, not only can Korean society not develop, but even utter survival will be a major problem. Collaboration is the wellspring of both the division and economic dependence of the Korean nation. Military dictatorship was collaboration's bastard child and social upheaval its result. No matter what problem arises in Korean society, it is never unrelated to the

question of collaboration (Kim Pongu 1997, cited in De Ceuster 2002, p. 207).

This statement, almost hysterical, well reveals a theory of postliberation Korean national history, which most collaboration publications relied on. This theory maintains that the Korean nation's history was stolen by a group of traitors to the nation, which refers to pro-Japanese collaborators at the time of liberation and later pro-US collaborators. Under the protection of the United States Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), a compromised colonial elite remained in power. Through alliance with Rhee Syngman, they were able to protect themselves from the challenge posed by the investigations of the Anti-Traitors Investigation Committee. Having thus secured their positions in state power it is argued, according to the argument made by liberal dissenters and historians, that they cost the unity of the nation for the sake of their own interests. With the beginning of Kim Dae-jung's presidency in 1998, the political resistance movement to uproot remnants of Japanese colonialism seems to have weakened because the issue was now discussed in an open space for sound historiography, making possible a less emotional and more rational approach to it.

3.1.2 Nation-Building and the State-Sanctioned Narrative in South Korea

Patriotism as a set of allegiances, loyalties, the emotion of national pride and a sense of shared national identity (Nussbaum 1996) and emotional attachment to a country is well harmonized with the efforts of state actors who aim to maintain and legitimize the distinction between us and the other. Sovereign states make extensive use of history to promote those historical narratives that suit their political goals and interests. Hence, political power tends to continuously monopolize the historiographies of the new independent states engaging in the nation-building process of a new sovereign state (Zadora 2017, p. 258). On the other hand, in a transitional period, for instance, from authoritarian regimes to democracy, governments are also prone to using history education to promote a new sense of nationhood through transformation of official narratives on history and national identity (Hajjat 2012, cited in Zadora 2017, p. 259). In this regard, school history textbooks as the most efficient instrument of ideological transmission and nation-building are closely monitored by the state (Schissler 2005).

Following violent conflicts, a key objective of a new government is to narrate a history in a way that helps unify the divided society. This, for instance, can be done by creating a national identity, in particular via the notion of an all-inclusive political identity like citizenship, which can serve as a vehicle for overcoming the divisions that were critical to the conflict. In such a case, nation-building turns into a project of national reconciliation and it is predominantly achieved by reforming the

identity through narratives about a past and accordingly envisioning a future. Collective identities are produced not only through memory discourses, since remembrance has a coercive force which creates a sense of belonging (Nora 1993, p. 11), but also through forgetting (Renan 1990). Post-conflict societies may choose to forget "uncomfortable knowledge" and shameful pasts, and transform them into an "open secret" or taboo, "known by all, but knowingly not known" (Cohen 1995, p. 138). In this light, Cohen (1995) introduces the term, "social amnesia," which refers to a mode of forgetting by which a society separates itself from the less glamorous past (ibid.). It might take place at an organized and official level, in such ways as the deliberate cover-up and the rewriting of history, or through the type of cultural dysfunction that occurs when information is missing. This dissertation is primarily concerned with the former.

In terms of the politics of narrating national history and memory, Hobsbawm is predominantly concerned with how authorities invent traditions and their seeming continuity with the past in order to maintain authority, promote social unity, and create a common culture (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983). Hobsbawm's approach resonates with Anderson's (1983) view of a nation as imagined. The significance of both concepts lies in their explanation of how political power influences the choice of narratives about what is remembered and what is forgotten, and how this constitutes collective identities in the present. In this light, "memory is a struggle over power and who gets to decide the future" (De Brito et al.1997, p. 38). History-telling and remembrance are thus profoundly political since the outcome is central to present-day preferences for forms of the state, its social relations, and subjectivity (Ashplant et al. 2004, p. 6). The political aspect of history-telling is rooted in practices which bind rituals of national identification in order to produce a collective identity (Balibar 1996). This takes place at the level of (re)writing and teaching history (Buckley-Zistel 2009, p.33).

In South Korea in the aftermath of the Korean War, a group of ruling elites who took the lead to build a new state disseminated a version of history with the intent to legitimize the establishment of South Korea and their possession of power in it. Based on anti-communism, history was used to instill resentment against communism and to emphasize South Korea's continued struggles to defend democracy against communists within South Korean society as well as in the North. The difficulty in building national identity in South Korea lay in the discrepancy between an ideal, the one unified ethnic nation, and the reality, the division of the nation. For South Koreans in the post-war era, the category of the North Korean state and Korean communists had to change from the "us" to the "other." Relying on this clear division between self and the enemy, during the authoritarian regimes all contacts with North Korea or communists were harshly suppressed and even described in terms of betrayal to South Korea, a true realization of the Korean nation. Hence, for the South, North Korea became the convenient enemy to which all problems and all failures it faced were attributed.

This national identity conception of a new state of South Korea based on strong anti-communist ideology is frequently discovered in the first President Rhee Syngman's official statements. In the public rhetoric at the beginning of his presidency, key themes to establish national identity were anti-colonization and civilization.

> Our nation has been respected as the country of courteous people in the East because we have been **civilized** by following the three fundamental principles and the five moral disciplines in human relations [*samgangoryun*] (Rhee Syngman November 18, 1957). [emphasis by the author]

> It was proved to what extent the people in our country are **civilized** through the past election. …I am asking you that we do better so that we can be respected by people in the world (Rhee Syngman March 25, 1958).

By emphasizing that the Korean nation has been civilized throughout its history, following rules and respecting moral principles, his narrative seeks to establish historical continuity of South Korea as a true representation of the whole Korean nation, while delegitimizing the North since it is uncivilized. In Rhee's statements the Korean nation is portrayed as civilized but lacks strength in the economy and military. However, rather than describing the lack of its economic and military capability negatively, it is suggested in Rhee's rhetoric as a practical aim to be achieved.

> After Japan signed the commercial treaty with the US, western countries like the US, the UK and France asked us to open trade with them. … if at that time, our ruling elites had been clever enough to open trade and foreign relations with them, we would have established economic and military strength without experiencing oppression. By taking lessons from history, we should find the right way for our future (Rhee Syngman August 10, 1949).

For Rhee, communism is also a matter pertaining to levels of civilization, as seen in many his statements, in which it is treated as an uncivilized ideology which disregards the traditional moral principles like "Three Bonds and Five Relationships in Confucianism [*samgangoryun*]." In this regard, the anti-communism of Rhee can be understood in the context of civilization theory.

> We have several moral principles like Three Bonds and Five Relationships that we have learned and practiced for a long time. If we make a society, where there are no distinctions between elders and children, or between higher and lower people, it is returning to a four-thousand-year-old uncivilized society. … The way communists follow is to make all people equal by disregarding social hierarchy, and this ideology of equality by social revolution destroys the universal order. We do not believe that this way of equality should be pursued in a democratic society (Rhee Syngman December 30, 1957).

In Rhee's rhetoric, the Korean nation was civilized, respecting a long tradition of social order and practice, only it lacked economic and military capabilities, while the West was understood as both civilized and rich in those capabilities. Also this civilization theory is adopted as an instrument to effectively exclude North Korea and its ideology, arguing that its ideology is uncivilized so civilized Koreans should not follow it.

Another authoritarian president, Park Chung-hee's idea that the ultimate goal of modernization can be achieved through development, is frequently revealed in his official statements. For instance, he stated that "focusing on security and development of military and economic capabilities is the only way not only to protect our state and nation as well as proceeding to peace and prosperity but also to bring unification forward" (Park Chung-hee 1979, p. 305). Anti-communism was also at the core of his political ideology. In his statement on August 15, 1969, to celebrate National Liberation Day, he clearly declared "communists" as the enemy of the state, saying that "in order to have liberation, freedom and peace, the most urgent thing to do is to prevent invasions of communists" (Park Chung-hee 1969). In his statement at the press conference of the beginning of the year, on January 15, 1976, he criticized North Korea's request to release the political dissenters in the South, allegedly communists, saying that "those who may be regarded as patriots for the North Korean communists are traitors to us. How could I release those who cooperated with agents of North Korea and communists?" (Park Chung-hee 1979, p. 23-34). He declared that communism can invade society through poverty. Based on this argument, he prioritized economic development as a way to establish an anti-communistic society (Park Chung-hee 1962, p. 35). Unification can also be achieved, in his view, through economic development and modernization, as reflected in his policy "Unification after Development".

Importantly, the statements of Rhee and Park reveal three common strategies: first, the establishment of an ideal state, which is for Rhee a civilized nation with military and economic capabilities, and for Park a modernized nation with capabilities; second the emphasis on the presence of an enemy for South Korea, that is, communists and North Korea; and third, alertness for internal betrayers, naturally pro-North sympathizers and communists living in the South. The master narratives that were developed later have also been constructed around these key strategies but from different angles. As mentioned, and it should be reiterated once more, that the objective in this research is not to evaluate and criticize those narratives, but to draw out their different strands.

Before democratization, the authoritarian regimes of Rhee and Park attempted to use the highly centralized education system to (re)construct a coherent national identity according to the goals they set, justify the legitimacy of the government, defend its state, and rebuild the economy, ultimately hoping to unify the two sides as a single nation-state under its own political system.

History was seen as a crucial component for transmitting ideological goals and has been inextricably tied to the development of South Korean national identity. Using history both as a source of identification with an ethnic nation and as a means to promote the civic values and legitimacy of the ruling regime, as well as to delegitimize the North, resulted in ambivalence about what kind of identity should be promoted for the nation's future (Edward & Alisa 2005, p. 189). Thus, the state-sanctioned nationalism aimed to legitimize the Southern regime vis-à-vis the communist North through praising the political system and democracy of the South and acclaiming its economic policies and its fast industrial development. This would provide South Koreans with reasons to be loyal and grateful to their state and its ruling regime. Education played a central role in this project and in particular, history education was to offer the undoubted evidence that would demonstrate the legitimacy of the regime and the political system. Most importantly, it could inspire the feelings of love for and pride in their nation among students, providing them with allegedly "true" and official knowledge of their glorious traditions. In this light, the history of South Korea in the aftermath of war incontrovertibly displays features of monumental history. In the 1963 Korean History textbook, anti-communism was promoted without mentioning North Korea, except in only one section, the conclusion of the second edition, in which the North is only mentioned with regard to unification (Edward and Alisa 2005, p. 190). The most important theme in these early history textbooks was victimization of the Korean nation, emphasizing the hardships Korea had suffered at the hands of imperial power, namely Japan. Denouncing Japanese imperialism well suited its ideology of anti-colonialism and served to increase patriotism and the desire to defend the nation.

President Park Chung-hee's intention to implement development education is well marked in the third major curriculum revision in 1973, aimed at economic growth. This orientation in education policy had begun under Rhee's presidency, but it was consolidated under Park and the curriculum was revised accordingly. As in the past, anti-communism remained an important element of the history curriculum in the third revision (ibid.). The North was only discussed within the parts where the processes causing the Korean War and the war itself were explained. Excluding information about the North from textbooks is part of South Korea's attempts to reduce its importance and influence in the minds of students, and effectively to deny its existence. Yet, at the same time by downplaying the existence of North Korea, the textbooks encouraged students to look forward to the issue of national unification, not to focus on the division. This well illustrates a paradox in the state-sanctioned narrative under authoritarian regimes to generate patriotism towards South Korea on the one hand, while emphasizing the homogeneity of and the pride in the Korean nation that must include the North in the narrative. Thus, textbooks under authoritarian regimes highlighted that North Korea would not abandon the possibility of using force to achieve unification in order to communize the South. This served to reinforce the notion of the North and communism

as barbarous and hostile, and to confirm the self-image of the South as civilized and peace loving.

Due to President Park's long-standing military dictatorship, Koreans experienced severe political conflicts and confusion in the late 1970s when the pro-democracy movement, that aimed to dismantle the military dictatorship and the corresponding oppressive measures of the military government, was very active. In this context, the government emphasized anti-communist education and the "Korean naturalized democracy" as part of its national ideological training (So Kyunghee et al. 2012, p.799). The state-sanctioned Korean identity that was formed through this national ideological training was, however, in direct contradiction with the alternative narrative of national identity that had been created on the foundation of ethnic nationalism and had been popular among, in particular, political dissenters at the time. The military government wished to invent a narrative of national identity based on the anti-communistic ideology that put priority on economic development over democratization and unification as a tool to fight against communism, which political dissenters were strongly against. The invented narrative by the state was repeatedly injected through school education, and it became the dominant narrative of Korean society until the 1990s. The master narrative, as formulated under the military regime, explicitly linked the post-liberation establishment of the ROK to the continuous resistance movements of the Korean people against Japanese colonial rule. By doing so, the history of the colonial period was explained, focusing on an enumeration of different opposition movements while being isolated from the wider historical context with the exclusion of all ideological conflicts among the different resistance movements. In particular, the armed resistance of socialist and communist groups, which was evidently highlighted in the North Korean textbooks (Robinson 2006, p. 56), was erased. As a result, South Korea has become a nation where nearly all aspects of economic, political, and cultural identity are defined in opposition to North Korea, and where despite being an ultimate goal, unification is paradoxically a threat to South Korean identity, the construction of which is based on anti-communism (Grinker 1998, p. 8).

In terms of history of the colonial period, the collaboration issue is minimized in the state-sanctioned narrative and acts of collaboration are attributed only to a small number of national traitors. Through this, a clear distinction between the core tradition of the resisting Korean nation and the corrupted minority of collaborators is formed. Furthermore, by banning discourses related to collaboration from the mainstream of the nation's historiography, there is no more need for detailed explanation in the public sphere regarding the post-liberation failure to bring legal justice to collaborators. A tactic of blaming a small number of collaborators allowed the majority of the population to be free from any sense of responsibility or guilt. The purpose of this master narrative clearly fits into the political project of rebuilding national unity in the wake of liberation. More importantly, this state-sanctioned narrative attempted to find the legitimacy of the regime in its commitment to the independence movement by linking the establishment of South Korea with

resistance movements. However, collaboration publications that began to critically unfold the master narrative in the 1980s challenged the claim of the government about the political ancestry of the South Korean regime in the independence movement, while not greatly questioning the national myth of the resisting nation as a whole (De Ceuster 2002, p. 218). In doing so, these publications effectively challenged the regime's justification for its legitimacy and exposed the fact that the nation's "correct" history was distorted by a compromised group of elites.

On the other hand, the "industrialization first policy" for economic development of Park's administration was also deeply connected to its anti-communistic ideology. Having experienced colonial exploitation, poverty, and the destruction of the Korean War, the industrialization-first policy was determined to pursue economic development at all cost. In the name of efficiency, productivity, and national security, human rights and democratic procedures were disregarded. Also, the policy that prioritized the economy was justified by the claim that it was the fastest way to achieve the ultimate goal of unification and the best way to prevent another invasion from the communists. In this light, the industrialization-first policy was staunchly anti-communistic. Traditional conservatives who strongly supported the authoritarian regimes and industrialization-first policy regarded the US as South Korea's "savior" as well as its closest ally, insisting on the continued presence of US troops on its soil. Although the alliance between the US and the ROK was strained at times, it was never questioned, at least, by the South before the democratization, and neither the South nor the US doubted that North Korea was the common enemy (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p. 59)

According to the state-sanctioned master narrative under the authoritarian regimes, the Korean nation-state came into being in 1948, three years after liberation from Japanese colonial rule. Due to the rejection of the Soviet Union, a UN-sponsored presidential election was held, limited to the southern area under the US military rule, which legitimated a new democratic republic of South Korea. The focus of the state-sanctioned narrative is put on the idea that it was the communist puppet state in the North that precipitated a war of aggression against the legitimate, democratic South, and consequently the externally imposed national division remained and South Koreans had to build the nation isolated from their northern brethren. Subsequently, the story of successful economic development further legitimated South Korea as the true representation of the Korean nation because it successfully guided the Korean people onto the world stage and brought prosperity to the majority of its people. The key elements in this narrative are that the South Korean state managed to defend the nation against an international communist invasion and successfully developed its liberal democratic political system and free market economic system, as opposed to its Northern enemy who put its people through continuous sufferings through its failed political and economic system.

On the other hand, North Korea constructs an opposite understanding of its birth from that of the South. Its master narrative values its anti-Japanese partisan guerrilla leadership along with a

successful anti-imperialist struggle against Japan which played a crucial role in awakening and directing the revolutionary power of the Korean laboring masses. It highlights that the North organized a democratic people's republic, successfully purged pro-Japanese elements, initiated self-reliant economic development and set up the nation on a truly democratic and autonomous basis. In this narrative, in sharp contrast to the state-sanctioned narrative of South Korea, Western imperialism continues to support its puppet state, the South, while North Korea has successfully constructed an autonomous socialist state representative of the true historical Korean nation and the masses. The key elements in the North's narrative are its successful struggle against colonial and imperial powers, the mass base of its politics, its autonomous economic and political development, portraying itself as a victim of the intrusion of Western imperialism (Robinson 2006, p. 56-57). Thus, the most important ideological development of North Korea is the theory of *juche* (*chuch'e*), which by the end of the 1960s became the basic ideology, replacing Marxism-Leninism. *Juche*, meaning self-reliance or self-determination, remains the official ideology of North Korea until today. Nationalism in North Korea, which is well disclosed in its *juche* ideology, is built against Japanese colonialism and American imperialism (Shin Gi-wook 2005, p. 80). It claims that Koreans must manage all political, economic, and military affairs without relying on foreign intervention or assistance. As in other states in the world, education in North Korea was to be the main method of instilling the *juche* ideology in the nation's youth and history was at the very core in this endeavor.

Master narratives in both Koreas after liberation are clearly monumental, forgetting much, remembering selectively, and carefully repressing alternative interpretations of the past. They also function as an efficient instrument to legitimate the state's politics and unite its people. Continuing tension between the two narratives of both Koreas was ensured through the fierce hostility toward each other, the militarized nature of each regime, the lack of an institutional setting for peace settlement, the presence of US troops under the UN flag in the South, differential recognition from the outside world, and the memory of violent conflicts (Robinson 2006, p. 57).

In South Korea, as seen in its state-sanctioned master narrative, anti-communism and economic development worked to mobilize national unity through the 1970s but it was, ironically, the very success of anti-communism and capitalist development that has created contradictions within South Korean society. These contradictions are particularly obvious regarding national identity and interpretations of history. During the authoritarian era, the idea that narratives which contradict the legitimizing master narrative are dangerous for national security effectively prevented historians in South Korea from open enquiry. In this light, it was considered dangerous to acknowledge any contribution of leftists, let alone communists, to the anti-Japanese struggle, and the Korean War was regarded as an outcome of the international conflict imposed on the peninsula rather than a civil war. Historical silence over a number of other past events was also enforced by the state

power which wanted to protect its dominance of the South Korean master narrative. Choi Jang-jip (1993) wrote immediately following national division that Korean nationalism "became transformed into a statism that privileged anti-communism over unification" (cited in Grinker 1998, p.23). National Security Law in South Korea has continued to inhibit freedom of speech about the North. The South Korean governments before democratization had long bolstered their power by promoting a Cold War discourse that depicted the North as the enemy and had justified a strong authoritarian state that censored the flow of information to its citizens. Song Du-yul (1995) suggests that the continuing conflict between North and South was, indeed, framed as anti-communism, which later transformed into more of an anti-North ideology with the collapse of communism in the world. The principles of communism are no longer South Korea's main enemy, but instead the relational principles between North and South have taken center stage. South Korea, according to this view, wants to destroy its northern enemy and is using anti-communism as an ideological weapon to justify and achieve its goal. Grinker (1998) adds that Song Du-yul (1995)'s claim points out that South Korean intolerance of a variety of different political views is determined ultimately not by the National Security Law, but by the widespread sentiments that fear the threat from the North and thus support the continued existence and exercise of the law (p. 24). This signifies that South Korean identity is heavily dependent on the existence of its enemy. The national identity of South Korea that was inherently constructed with extreme polarization from the birth of the nation focuses on the notion of either for us or against us, allowing little room for debate, contest, or a middle ground.

An additional problem of national identity construction in South Korea has to do with the potentially ambivalent relation between people and state (Grinker 1988, pp. 23-32). The split between the people and the state has made it possible for South Koreans to develop a discourse in which North Korea attributes agency and power only to the state, more precisely, only to the Kim family. In the state-sanctioned narrative in South Korea, it is thus emphasized that in the North the state power neither constructs, nor is constructed by its people. As a result, for a long period, the North Korean people were only described as hostages or victims kidnapped and oppressed by totalitarian dictator, Kim. However, what should be noted is that this master narrative in which the people of North Korea were virtually absent has lost its hegemonic narrative power with the rise of progressives in Korean politics. In the late 1980s, South Korea began making a dramatic transition to democracy. In 1987 the country held its first free and direct presidential election. During the period of transition, the military establishment, as well as the collusive ties between government and business forged by the authoritarian governments of the past, became the targets of reform (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p. 60).

In the following section, the transformation that occurred in the society and politics of South Korea with its democratization and rise of progressives in institutional politics will be introduced. A

close examination of the narrative identity of progressives will then follow.

3.2 The Rise of Progressives and Their Narrative Identity

Though a dominant narrative enjoys a hegemonic status, it does not mean that no counter narratives exist. The master narrative that is acknowledged as official and true in society always coexists with alternative memories and narratives that are deviant from or conflicting with the hegemonic one. The possibility of narrative transformation thus exists all the time but it can take place only if these counter narratives successfully challenge the status of the hegemonic narrative. While individual and group memories were handed down from generation to generation, in the case of South Korea, the postwar myth and master narrative propagated by the authorities were eventually deconstructed by historians, mostly progressive or leftist, who thought it was their task to deconstruct national myths and propose a critical view of the collective memory these myths created. With democratization in South Korean politics in the late 1980s and the 1990s, the state-sanctioned narrative of authoritarian regimes was gradually replaced with an alternative narrative claiming to correct a "false" history that had contributed to consolidating the power of the past regimes and justifying their violence toward the masses in such examples as human rights violations of laborers. The propagation of "true history" and "clearing up past wrongdoings and injustice" under progressive regimes in the 2000s constituted an integral part of a bold attempt to transform narrative identity of South Korea through policy changes. The narrative of progressives recounts a history of the ethnic unity of the Korean nation, blaming the authoritarian regimes of the South for the division of the nation in the pursuit of their own political interests with strong support from the US. The narrative transformation in politics and society in South Korea originated from that of historiography. In the following section, the efforts of intellectuals to transform historical narrative will be examined, and then the rise of progressive politicians in South Korean politics as one influential factor that led to the official master narrative transformation will be discussed.

3.2.1 Challenge to the State-Sanctioned Narrative

In South Korea, democratization provided the domestic context that opened the public sphere for free debates and as a result facilitated the rethinking of national identity (Shin Gi-wook 2012). During the years of authoritarian rule from the late 1940s to the early 1990s, the state explicitly advocated the anti-communist conception of national identity based on the state-sanctioned master narrative and suppressed any alternative in the name of national security. In the process of

democratization, however, civil society and intellectuals, mostly progressives and leftists, challenged the authoritarian notion of identity, opening debate over the proper form of Korean identity. Liberalization of the intellectual and academic climate, together with a change in the anachronism of the Cold War view, challenged the post-war master narrative.

As mentioned in the earlier section, in South Korea, where the legal justice for pro-Japanese collaborators was aborted during the nation-building process, it is by historians and intellectuals that the state-sanctioned myth was demythicized. The first major challenge to the hegemony of the official narrative in relation to post-liberation history actually came from an American historian, Bruce Cumings. Although it was essentially meant to challenge established US scholarship concerning the origins of the Korean War, his first volume of *The Origins of the Korean War* (1981) undermined South Korea's myth about its foundation by providing a detailed analysis of how the Republic of Korea was born. In the South, censorship and monitoring of authoritarian governments in academic production had discouraged historians from engaging in authentic academic research in the field of modern and contemporary history. The history of the colonial period had focused only on the history of the non-communist resistance movements and thus, was limited in time to the late 1920s since the growing importance of the communist or socialist movement in the Korean independence movement of the 1930s and 1940s had made the latter period of the Japanese occupation politically too sensitive to handle. It was in the 1980s when the process of democratization got firmly underway that the open challenge to the master narrative by Korean historians gained momentum (de Ceuster 2002, p. 218).

Challenges led by liberal historians emerged in opposition to the military regime that prohibited scholarly research over certain topics such as collaboration, as well as its industrialization-first policy. Liberal historians and politicians who sought to transform the state-sanctioned narrative, focused on two factors: collaborators' unacceptable behaviors and the sacrifice of *minjung* [the masses] in the name of industrialization. In particular, the collaboration issue was one of the most embarrassing topics for the ruling elites who found their legitimacy in their deep involvement in the moderate independent movements under colonial rule, which is highlighted in the state-sanctioned narrative as heroic resistance against Japan. The evidence, raised by historians, of collaboration by leading members of those movements effectively eroded the legitimacy of the South Korean regime (de Ceuster 2002, p. 219). Seen from this perspective, the collaboration issue has a significant political implication and is, indeed, much more related to the post-liberation development of a South Korean state than to the colonial period. The focus of historical research regarding collaboration acts is placed on the fact that the timid attempt at legal justice had failed, allowing compromised elites to hold on to power and leave the country with an unresolved past. The clear argument of a new historical approach to collaboration is that this failure of legal justice has led to an impaired moral

foundation of the ROK. The political implications of such a negative assessment of the morality and birth of South Korea are the essence of the collaboration studies, in which collaboration is not treated as a closed chapter in the nation's history, but as an issue of crucial importance to Korea's present and future. In the words of Im Chong-guk (1991), a leading scholar of collaboration studies: "The autonomy of a Korean nation that is not able to remove the remnants of Japanese imperialism is meaningless, just as the unification of such a nation is nothing but a daydream" (p. 20). In this light, clearing up the legacy of collaboration is thought of as a necessary condition to achieve an ultimate goal of unification.

Likewise, South Korean progressive intellectuals have been actively engaged in the explosion of critical studies in a wider range of disciplines, the more active ones being history and the social sciences. Much of the emphasis has been put on debating the cause of the national partition and the impact of continuing foreign domination, which, in their views, has nurtured immorality and injustice in the politics and society of South Korea. This has led to a gradual shift in the master narrative from the state-sanctioned one to one of ethnic nationalism. While the national literature debate paved the way for this critical thinking in the 1970s, the immediate catalyst for this intellectual movement was the publication of the first volume of *Korean History before and after Liberation* [*HaebangChŏnhusaŭiinsik*] in 1979, which was later to become a six-volume series. 1979 was the year when the nation saw the sudden ending of the nearly twenty-year old Park Chung-hee regime (1961-1979) with his assassination. Furthermore, the 1980 massacre of the citizens of Kwangju, who rallied in the street to express their anger against the subsequent military coup, was a watershed event. Because it was mandatory to have the approval of the US army commander in order for the supreme command of the South Korean armed forces to order a military action such as the one that took place in Kwangju, South Koreans began to question the role of the US in the massacre and in other issues. It became clear for the Korean public that the US's military interests in South Korea lay beyond humanitarian concerns. This was one of many factors that led to many South Koreans' reassessment of the relationship between South Korea and the US (Choi Chungmoo 1993, p. 89). As mentioned, at this juncture of historical upheaval, Bruce Cumings's monumental work, *The Origins of the Korean War*, first published in 1981, offered a fresh shock for South Korean intellectuals, who had been searching for a term to define Korea's deferred postcoloniality, and opened a new door to the critical discourse of decolonization (De Ceuster 2002; Choi Chungmoo 1993; Em 2013; 1993). In his book, Cumings challenged the dominant discourse over the Korean War and declared that Korea had been denied its liberation by America, who regarded the removal of Japanese rule from Korea as an insignificant event. This consequently paved the way for the American domination of Korea (Choi Chungmoo 1993, p. 89).

Throughout the 1980s, critical studies, many of which adopted Marxist or Neo-Marxist

methodologies, reassessed the role of South Korea in the totalitarian spread of capitalism in the world and its complicated domestic manifestations. Social scientists were highly critical about Korean scholarship's emphasis of modernization theory. Critical sociologists argued that the American-dependence in social sciences was attributed to the South Korean military government's implementation of its aggressive modernization policy, in the form of state capitalism, at the cost of enormous social problems, including the widening class gaps and furthering the proletarization of the underprivileged class. However, the sudden rise of Marxist analyses failed to seep into the terrain of anti-communistic ideology in South Korea. This may be attributable to their own faults, that is, the uncritical and indiscriminate application of classic Marxism (ibid., p. 90).

Hahm Chaibong (2005) finds the roots of progressives in leftist nationalism that has been shaped through their own interpretation of history (p. 62). In their view, being a true nationalist means being not only anti-Japanese, but also anti-capitalist, considering the capitalistic nature of the Japanese empire. For them, leftist nationalism should have been Korea's guiding ideology after liberation in 1945 but this failed to emerge largely due to the US imposition of military rule in South Korea and its support for the establishment of a capitalist regime in 1948. As a result, Cold War anti-communism as a national identity began to overwhelm nationalism in the South. Unlike the earlier generation of South Korean dissidents that focused on the undemocratic nature as well as injustice of the authoritarian regimes, the progressives have focused more on its anti-nationalistic character (ibid.). They have regarded industrialization as a capitalist-imperialist imposition to exploit South Korea's oppressed *minjung* and liberal democracy as a political system to sustain bourgeois class interests that had succeeded in dominating South Korea with US backing. In this context, it is not very surprising to find pro-North Korean attitudes in the narrative of progressives. It is argued in the narrative of progressives that North Korea, unlike the South, thoroughly purged the Japanese collaborators, many of whom then fled to the South. It adopted a foreign policy which was independent from China and Russia during the Cold War and stood against the only remaining superpower, the US, after the collapse of world communism. For many progressives, North Korea stood firm for all the significant values of nationalism, anti-capitalism, and anti-imperialism, which they have cherished and the South Korean government seems to have disregarded.

Intellectual developments also evolved in line with a popular movement, known as the *Minjung* [the people, the masses] movement, which began in the wake of the popular April 19 Revolution in 1960 and developed into an anti-colonial national unification movement by the end of the 1980s (Choi Chungmoo 1993, p. 90). Its proponents found the origin of the movement in Korea's long tradition of popular nationalist movement, from the 1984 *Tonghak* Peasant War and the 1919 March First Independence Movement to the April 19 Revolution which overthrew the Rhee Syngman regime (1948-1960) that enjoyed strong backing from the US. Also, it was the people's uprising

Kwanju in 1980 and the mass killing perpetrated by South Korean military forces that broke the state-led ideological hegemony (Em 2013, p. 16). Drawing on the historical narrative of liberal and leftist historians revealed in the book, *Korean History before and after Liberation,* the *Minjung* movement covered a broad range of social activities, including the anti-authoritarian democracy movement, the labor movement, and the national unification movement, aiming to constitute the *minjung* as a national subject. Although its leaders included various political dissenters from all levels of society, it is students that were at the center as the most active agents. The South Korean government repressed any sign of the leftists, and labeled any organized protest as an act of communist infiltration. Nevertheless, the *Minjung* movement worked a site of collective resistance movement against the politics of terror. It is critical to note that the *Minjung* movement has contributed to a radical reinterpretation of histories, crossing over the boundaries between politics and culture, and between the present and collective memories of the past, in order to suggest an alternative future, while inspiring a popular sentiment for resistance. Choi Chungmoo (1993) regards the *Minjung* movement based on the theory of decolonization as the emancipatory struggle from a colonial past and a neocolonial present of the South which distorts the Korean identity (p.91). The *minjung* discourse in South Korea has its meaning as the major contending voice against the dominant narrative imposed by the state. The *Minjung* movement has effectively adopted a counter-hegemonic historical narrative, which reforms the "silenced history of the people" (ibid.).

Foucault (1977) has suggested that the silent and erased memory would contest the validity of the official memory. The people of South Korea, deprived of their voice in the official narrative under the authoritarian rule, carefully kept their memories alive, in the form of personal narratives, which were often found in the novels and short stories that started to be published in the late 1980s. This process of re-memorization has also contributed to South Koreans' reconstruction of their history. With this new trend, the main focus of the Korean historiography has shifted from the domestic issues discussed within the boundaries of the anti-communist ideology toward a national unification which could finally transcend ideological differences. In this light, some observers have focused on this narrative shift derived from competing concepts of nationalism in historiography, politics and society of South Korea (Em 2013; Shin Gi-wook 2006; Yun Hae-dong 2011; 2012).

3.2.2. The Rise of Progressives in Institutional Politics

Until the mid-1990s, the counter narrative was confined to the radical fringe of South Korea's intellectual and political spectrum. However, the democratization that was embarked on in the late 1980s opened its doors for different voices to be accepted in politics and academia (De Ceuster 2002; Shin Gi-wook 2012; Em 2013; Hahm Chaibong 2005). Since then, nationalist

historiography in South Korea has been interwoven with leftist and progressive politics (Em 2013, p. 16). It sought not only to look to the future but also to deal with the legacies of a shameful past. Furthermore, the financial crisis that badly damaged the South Korean economy in 1997 provided a golden opportunity for the progressives and their ideology to enter South Korea's political mainstream (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p. 62). The crisis exposed the problems of the old system. The progressives had always argued that South Korea's political and economic system was illegitimate and morally corrupt. The financial crisis revealed that the structure of South Korea's economic system that was widely praised as an example of great success was, indeed, inefficient and problematic. One of the most direct political consequences of the financial crisis was the election of Kim Dae-jung to the presidency in 1997 (ibid.), who had been a longtime dissident and opposition leader. This was because the financial crisis had created widespread anger among the population at the ruling conservatives' corruption and their mismanagement of the economy, eventually providing the opportunity for Kim Dae-jung. Progressives who were encouraged by the fact that the presidency passed to an opposition leader, Kim, for the first time in South Korean history, began to join the mainstream political process. Their experience in civic organization, propaganda, and political mobilization, along with skills finely developed during their resistance movements against the authoritarian governments, helped their successful transition to electoral politics. Kim Dae-jung, who needed to build a new political coalition to push through his seemingly "radical" or "left-leaning" policies in the eyes of conservatives, welcomed and actively supported attempts of former activists in student movements or in other civic movements to join the institutional politics. Many South Koreans, even those who disagreed with the progressives' worldview, also welcomed this flow of new leaders into a political system which had been dominated for a long time by corrupt ruling elites from the authoritarian years. The ruling coalition led by Kim Dae-jung and former radical student leaders began introducing South Korea to many ideas and policies that were once considered too leftist, and hence were banned. Many of those new ideas and policies caused inherent inner conflicts within South Korean society to surface in the 2000s, commonly known as the "South South Conflict [*namnamkaldŭng*]", which is elaborated in chapter four.

Roh Moo-hyun's election in 2002 marked the rise of the progressives in South Korean politics. The progressives in a South Korean context constitute a broad spectrum, including those politicians, intellectuals, and activists who led the student movement and formed a coalition against military dictatorship during the 1980s. Yet their view is quite different from that of the earlier generation of pro-democracy movement leaders who were filled with the zeal for liberal democracy. It was the contradiction of capitalism created by South Korea's rapid industrialization during the 1960s and the 1970s that made the progressives take action in the late 1990s and 2000s. Due to their experiences with laborers who were working under inhuman conditions, this new group of

progressives came to regard capitalism as a dehumanizing system (ibid., p.61). Through the process of searching for a deeper structural cause of injustice in South Korea, what progressives discovered was the US's strong backing for dictators in South Korea for its own "imperial" and "hegemonic" interests on the peninsula. They also believed that they could trace the source of current maladies and inequality in South Korea far back to the Japanese colonial period when Korea underwent coerced modernization, which is the backbone of the counter-narrative of progressives that challenged the state-sanctioned master narrative. For progressives, colonial industrialization not only distorted the industrial structure of Korea as an economy dependent on the imperial powers, Japan in the past and the US in recent times, but also created a Korean bourgeois class that have enjoyed prosperity through collaborating with those imperial powers. In this narrative, leftism and nationalism are closely linked and combined (ibid.). Because of the capitalist nature of the Japanese empire, for progressives being a true nationalist meant being both anti-Japanese and anti-capitalist. Unlike some rightists or bourgeois nationalists who claimed a possible link between nationalist and capitalist, the leftists who believed they were the only true nationalists hoped to remove the legacy of Japanese colonial rule, the capitalist system. From the perspective of the progressives, then, leftist nationalism should have been Korea's guiding ideology after liberation, which failed to emerge due to the US military rule in South Korea during 1945-1947 and its support for the establishment of a capitalist regime in 1948. With this failure, anti-communism as a national ideology began to overwhelm nationalism. Most pro-Japanese collaborators remained in their positions in the government or the public institutions like police and military without any legal punishment, because the newly installed government needed their help in fighting the communists and in setting up a pro-US regime in South Korea. What should be noted here is that the leftist nationalism that most progressives subscribe to is based on the strong sentiment of anti-imperialism (anti-Japan and anti-US) and anti-capitalism. Furthermore, it is believed that the political system became even more reactionary under the government of Park Chung-hee, a former Japanese Imperial Army officer, who seized power through a military coup in 1961. Park rushed to establish formal diplomatic relations with Japan in 1965, only 20 years after liberation. Many viewed this too hasty normalization of relations as a sellout, even though Japan provided as reparations an aid package totaling $800 million, money that the Park regime invested in strategic industries that later became the mainstay of the country's economic capability. Further, Park's decision to send troops to the Vietnam War to support the US created strong criticism. Although those policies of Park proved pivotal for South Korea's economic growth as well as for upgrades to its military capability, it was a clear indicator for progressives to illustrate South Korea's reliance on the US. Later, the fact that the US stood by another authoritarian regime of Chun Doo-hwan, who took power in the political vacuum during the aftermath of Park's assassination provided firm confirmation for the progressives that the imperial

US manipulated and sponsored South Korea in order to make it a militarist, capitalist, imperialist state (Hahm Chaibong 2005, p. 61-62).

This leftist nationalism supported by progressives clearly conflicts with the predominant state-sanctioned master narrative. Thus, when the progressive regimes of KimDae-jung and RohMoo-hyun attempted to change various policies based on their perspective, conflicts between the two contradictory narratives came to be inevitable. It is closely elaborated in chapter 4 how progressive governments institutionalized their views on national identity into policies, and consequently how societal conflicts that had been inherent in South Korean society from its birth came to the fore in the 2000s. Before proceeding to this, the transformation in historiography that greatly influenced the formation of the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives will be introduced in the following section. A detailed analysis of the ethnic nationalism narrative and its limits then follows.

3.3 Historiography after Liberation

With the absence of legal justice after liberation, it was historians who took on the task of eliminating the legacies of Japanese colonization. Although the state power stopped historians from delving into this forbidden research field of colonization, historians brought the silent and erased memories back to the open sphere of debate with democratization. In order to have a better understanding of the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives that is now generally accepted as the official narrative of South Korea, it is necessary to trace the process through which the historical views of South Korea have transformed into their current form.

By 1948 when two separate governments were officially established on the peninsula, many leftist intellectuals had crossed the 38th parallel toward the North, due not only to anti-communist repression in the southern part, but also to offers of employment and opportunities to take part in the newly installed DPRK. At the same time, intellectuals and politicians who had struggled to achieve a Left-Right coalition, in particular those who had strongly opposed the UN-sponsored election in 1948 which consequently created South Korea, were subjected to repression and terror from the South Korean police and right-wing groups. In this context, along with American backing, historians who had sought "non-political" historiography during the colonial period seized nearly all the major academic positions in the South (Em 2013, p. 150). Soon after the establishment of the separate state in 1948, Marxist intellectuals in South Korea had no options other than either fleeing to the North or going underground.

Although the student revolution of April 19, 1960, which overthrew the first South Korean

administration of Rhee Syngman, was crushed by a military coup in 1961, its democratic opening provided an opportunity for a younger generation of historians to narrate history in new ways. In *Kuksasillon* [A New History of Korea], published in 1961 and written as a history textbook, Yi Ki-baek presented the narrative of modernization. In adopting modernization theory promoted by American academics and advisors, *Kuksasillon* created a non-Marxist postcolonial narrative that was anti-Japanese but uncritical of American intervention (ibid.). On the other hand, Marxist historiography of the 1930s was revitalized as nationalist historiography in the 1970s and 1980s. Through their empirical studies about the latter half of the *Chosun* dynasty that explored the internal dynamic underlying Korea's historical development, the two historians, Kim Yong-sŏp and Kang Man-gil, highlighted class struggle in the *Chosun* dynasty, based on their anti-colonial and oppositional nationalism. In their research, their view of modernization in the *Chosun* era is very critical. It is argued that modernization efforts from the late nineteenth century were an instrument only to reflect the narrow interests of the westernized elites who had roots in the landed class of *Chosun*, which led to dependency on foreign powers. According to this narrative, this modernization of the late *Chosun* resulted in all the tragedies of Korea such as Korea's colonization, national division, the war, and the corrupt political and economic system of South Korea (ibid., p. 152).

This revisionist historical narrative is well represented in the publication of 1979, *Korean History Before and After Liberation*[*Haebangchŏnhusaŭiinsik*] (Em 2013; Choi Chungmoo 1993; Pak Tae-gyun 2007), edited by intellectual and journalist Song Kŏn-ho. This book argues that liberation which should have started a new history of Korea failed to make the oppressed people [*minjung*] become the sovereign subject [*juche, chuch'e*] of history. Furthermore, the territorial partition of Korea along the 38th parallel right after liberation provided former collaborators and those who served the new occupying powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, with chances to divert history from its true path, which well explains the consequent struggle for the Korean people. Song's essay primarily targets Rhee Syngman, the first president and the arch anti-communist (ibid.). Rhee was criticized largely because of his passive attitude towards legal punishments of collaborators, including former Korean police officials who had tortured and killed independence activists. Criticism regarding Rhee Syngman is one of the key components in the book, *Korean History Before and After Liberation*. He was also blamed for distorting the real meaning of liberation with such acts as: delaying land reform; interrupting the work of the US-Soviet Joint Commission, consequently preventing the formation of a unified nation; and adopting the anti-communist ideology in order to establish a separate state in the South, perpetuating the 38th parallel division (De Ceuster 2001). While *Korean History Before and After Liberation* focused on a critique of Rhee, it consequently created an influential dichotomy which is vividly alive in the current progressives' discourses: between true nationalists and anti-communists who were indeed anti-nationalists because they

betrayed the nation by using anti-communist ideology to pursue their own interests; and between people [*minjung*]-based true democracy and the mere form of democracy (Lee Namhee 2007).

In the following section, the key concepts of the nationalist narrative that are of critical importance in the current progressives' understanding of national identity will be elaborated in detail

3.3.1 Collaboration Discourse

The state-sanctioned narrative promoted by the authoritarian regimes explicitly finds the legitimacy of the ruling elites of South Korea in its deep involvement in the independent movement against Japanese colonial rule. Collaboration in this narrative is minimized and attributed only to a small number of traitors in order to fit the political goal of rebuilding national cohesion in the wake of liberation. Only when a more liberal atmosphere for open debates was created in South Korea, did historians begin to venture into this controversial issue.

It was independent scholars like Im Chong-guk that ignited a movement to break the political silence regarding the sensitive collaboration issue (De Ceuster 2002, p. 219). It was at the time of the signing of the normalization treaty with Japan in 1965 that Im published a book, *Study on pro-Japanese Literature* [*Ch'inilMunhak-ron*] (1966). Contrary to the state-sanctioned narrative, which only celebrates the glorious aspects of the nation's past, he believed that the dark and shameful pasts of a nation had to be reflected in history. A private research institute, the Institute for Research in Antinationalist Activities [*PanminjokMunjeYŏn'guso*], was founded in 1991 and followed Im, who had been the lone voice in narrating this controversial topic. Later, the collaboration discourse had been taken on by young historians who saw researching collaboration as an extension of their political activism (ibid., p.220). In contrast, mainstream academics generally remained silent.

What should be noted here is the fact that political convictions had underlain many of the collaboration works even though most of the publications in the early 2000s seemed to develop beyond the earlier ideological leaning (ibid., p. 222). For instance, in the case of Im Chong-guk, a pioneer of collaboration study, despite his outstanding archival work, his historical understanding was too simplistic and deterministic (Yun Hae-dong 2015a; Kim Chong-in 2014; de Ceuster 2002, p.225). This becomes all the more problematic when he consequently classifies all those Korean reformers who ever had any contact with Japan under colonial rule into the single category of pro-Japanese collaborators. As a result of such an approach, in collaboration discourses national autonomy becomes the supreme historical principle. This theme of autonomy is further elaborated by Kim Pon-gu, director of the Institute for Research in Antinationalist Activities, in the introduction to a three-volume publication of 1994, *History that is undigested* [*Ch'ongsan haji mot'an yŏksa*], in which he links pro-Japanese collaboration with acts of betrayal to the nation (de Ceuster 2002, p.

224). For him, a key to national survival is autonomous development in the economy by opposing market liberation, and in politics through reevaluation of the defense alliance with the US. Along with the dichotomy between nationalists and anti-nationalists, which refers to the imperialists who collaborated with Japan in the past and with the US in the present, autonomy is another key theme in this revisionist historical view. In order to achieve a nation's ultimate goal of its autonomy and consequent unification, anti-nationalists, that is the traditional ruling elites of South Korea, have to be removed and the united people regain their control over the nation's future. These are the most critical concepts in current progressives' rhetoric.

Another crucial component of the ethnic nationalism narrative is the link between the struggle for democracy and the goal of reunification, which is found in Kang Man-gil's argument that the era of division could not be properly understood without taking the colonial period into consideration. According to him, it is necessary to have a proper grasp of the colonial period to objectively analyze the relations between foreign intervention and various domestic political forces (Em 1993, p. 464; de Ceuster 2002, p. 224). Kang's focus was placed on the critique of colonial policies, as in other literature of collaboration, in particular for raising anti-national elites that took control over the political fate of the South. Hence, in the narrative of ethnic nationalism, it is the primary argument that only with a clear understanding of the root cause of the divisions within South Korea as well as between the two Koreas, that is the legacy of collaboration, can unification be made feasible.

Furthermore, the legacy of collaboration is closely linked to the wider social resistance against authoritarian rule. In this regard, the collaboration issue also deeply pertains to the *minjung* discourse on history, in which the people's will was disregarded for the sake of the political elites, most of whom collaborated with Japan during the colonial period. Although the term *minjung* lost its popularity in scholarly discourses with democratization, its ideas remained in other related terms. For instance, Kim Pon-gu talks in his texts in the 1990s more about *minjok* [nation] and *sahoe* [society] as opposed to the anti-national forces, [*panminjokseryŏk*], rather than *minjung* (de Ceuster 2002, p. 224). By replacing the term *minjung* with *minjok* as a category to define self, Kim Pon-gu expresses his assertion that the authoritarian regimes are constructed as oppositional forces of *minjok* who have no right to rule the nation. In this way of enlarging the scope of *minjung* to the nation, the ruling elites are effectively excluded from the nation due to their anti-national acts of collaboration. It is noteworthy that this narrative leads to the conclusion that not only did the authoritarian and the successive conservative South Korean regimes lack legitimacy but that, ultimately, the Republic of Korea as a state was established against the people's will, and was therefore ill-founded from its beginning.

It is worth paying attention to De Ceuster's (2002) strong assertion that the collaboration

issue was "exorcised" in two contending narratives with two different purposes (p. 230). Firstly, in the case of the authoritarian regimes' narrative, called "the state-sanctioned narrative" in this study, it was exorcism of silence, attributing collaboration only to a small group of those politicians who were directly responsible for the annexation of Korea in 1910. This aimed to restore the Korean national spirit and self-esteem in the nation's future. The silence about collaboration also served to justify the South Korean regime's claim to ancestry in the resistance movement under colonial rule. Contrastingly, the narrative of ethnic nationalism promoted by liberals, progressives, and dissent groups, enlarged the group of collaborators to all those who at some point had been in touch with Japan, particularly targeting the upper strata of Korean society (ibid., p. 231). Hence, the main focus of the ethnic nationalism narrative on the collaboration issue is to question the political legitimacy of the South Korean authoritarian and conservative regimes. As a result, its collaboration discourses have become highly political beyond the boundary of academic research, which has led to inevitable conflicts with those traditional ruling elites.

3.3.2 Anti-imperialism (Anti-Japan and Anti-America)

Despite its highly critical historical and political consciousness, the collaboration issue was accepted by the public as relatively familiar through rhetoric of national spirit and anti-Japanese nationalism in the 1990s. The damage to the national spirit was one of the most common types of rhetoric in nationalist discourses to account for the origin of all kinds of social evils in post-liberation Korea. Not exclusively limited to the collaboration issue, the term, *ch'inil* [pro-Japanese], was broadly utilized to describe the colonial legacies and their lasting influences in contemporary South Korean society. Particularly in the 1990s, the collaboration discourses were more closely connected with the rhetoric of national spirit. Yi Hŏn-jong (1990) argues that the failure to purge collaborators essentially damaged the national spirit of the Korean nation. This was attributed to the South Korean regime that officially prioritized the interests of a group of collaborators at the cost of national morality and legitimacy. According to Yi, the consequent suspect morality of the South Korean regime has allowed it to be more susceptible to such historical wrongdoings as military coups, dictatorships, and corruption. This understanding of the relationship between historical development and national spirit was deeply entrenched within the early collaboration discourses. Hence, reforming the collaboration narrative was treated as the most imminent and important task to restore national self-esteem, morality and spirit, and historical legitimacy.

Early collaboration discourse was represented through anti-Japanese sentiment. One of the underlying messages in collaboration discourse was anti-imperialism, which, in the perspectives of progressives and leftists, implicates both Japan and the US. Kim Sam-ung (2008), who clearly

displayed anti-Japanese sentiment in his books in the 1990s, asserts that Japan has never given up the intention to re-invade Korea with its growing economic and military power. This dubious tone over Japan is widely found in the prevailing anti-Japanese discourses in the 1980s, in which pro-Japanese collaborators are depicted as those who promoted Korea's economic subordination to Japan after the Korea-Japan Normalization Treaty.

Anti-Americanism, which had not yet been observed in public in the 1990s, later became a crucial part of collaboration discourse in the 2000s. Although not being as strong as anti-Japanese sentiment, anti-US sentiment is of significance given that it has contributed to reaffirming the collaboration discourse as a historical reality, not just as a historical past. In the 1980s and 1990s, the expression of anti-Americanism was considered almost a social taboo, being limited to the radical realms of student activists, labor movement activists, and leftists or social activists. In the 2000s, with regime change to the progressive strain of institutional politics, Korean society witnessed the prevalence of anti-US sentiment (Shin Gi-wook 2012, p. 289). A very tragic incident in which two schoolgirls were killed by a US armored vehicle in June 2002 later drew great public attention when the US military court determined that the two US soldiers involved in the incident were innocent. In November and December 2002 Koreans held a series of nation-wide candlelight vigils to memorialize the two young girls. Around the same time, the US request for the Korean military to participate in the Iraq War fanned the flames of growing anti-US sentiment. The spread of anti-US sentiment contributed to reassessment of the US' role in South Korea, as well as in inter-Korean relations and unification. The strong alliance with the US, one of the most significant others for South Korea, had never been questioned before democratization but now became one of the intense controversies within the South. By analyzing South Korean media reports over the period of 1992-2003, Shin Gi-wook (2012) points out that democratization and progressive regimes' attempts to redefine the South's important relationship with the North and the US greatly affected the growing anti-Americanism in South Korean society.

In the early 2000s, Korean society saw an upsurge of anti-US sentiment, and public opinion was also not particularly conducive to the friendly attitude of Korean right wing conservatives toward the US. Further to that, the arrogance of the conservative majority *Hanara* Party [Great National Party, GNP] in the National Assembly made it easy for Koreans to accept the dogmatized historical narrative of pro-Japanese collaborators as a reality and truth: pro-Japanese collaborators became strong pro-US authoritarian regime supporters, many of whom represent Korean conservatives such as GNP, conservative media, and reactionary/conservative groups. This kind of overtly simplified classification was widely adopted and circulated in public spheres like media and internet websites. This was the point at which history and political activism were firmly intertwined. The collaboration discourses have significant political meaning because in discourses it is believed that the pro-

Japanese collaborators turned into pro-Americans in the post-liberation era of South Korea and became strong supporters or the ruling elites themselves of the authoritarian regimes. Through these discourses, the collaboration discourse effectively delegitimizes the ruling elites, mostly conservatives. The public acceptance of anti-Americanism in the 2000s eventually allowed the progressives to voice their critical opinions on the US policies on the Korean peninsula. That also functioned to exacerbate division and tension between the right/conservatives and the left/progressives.

3.3.3 Division of the Nation

Following democratization, the division of the Korean peninsula has become another major focus in the discourses of political activists. The issue of division is not a matter of the past but of the present, just as the collaboration issue was discussed within the context of the post-liberation establishment of a South Korean government and state, especially focusing on the fact that pro-Japanese collaborators cooperated with the American Military Government with the aim of maintaining their control over Korean society. The importance of pro-Japanese collaboration discourse is placed in its great implications for contemporary South Korean politics and is also connected the issue of national division. The main argument of collaboration discourse is that former pro-Japanese collaborators, who later became pro-American, effectively prevented a unification of the Korean peninsula for the sake of their own political interests to secure their power. The publications regarding collaboration thus reconstruct the entire history of the Republic of Korea from the very beginning of the nation, focusing on the absence of legal punishment and the consequent failure to uproot former collaborators from the society, which brought the division of the nation. In this light, the control of military and authoritarian regimes over the nation is regarded as an inevitable outcome resulting from morally corrupt political alliance from the beginning of the existence of South Korea. The implication of these publications is thus that South Korea was born with its original sin through failure to uproot collaborators, and that as a result the whole nation's history is destroyed and distorted by the ruling elites who are descendants of those collaborators and have no legitimacy to govern the nation. Thus, restoring the "true" and "correct" history of the nation is the imminent task to pave the way for the unification and true autonomy of the reunified nation (de Ceuster 2002, p. 231). In order to do so, historical truth over pro-Japanese collaborators must be revealed and all the legacy of collaboration be removed from the society.

Political developments in Korea, and in particular the deepening of democracy with the coming to power of Kim Dae-jung, have added strength to the ethnic nationalism narrative. After all, President Kim launched a second nation-building [*che-yikon'guk*] campaign on the fiftieth

anniversary of the Republic of Korea in 1998 (Sŏng Han-yong 1998), thereby implicitly supporting the claim that the preceding regimes were lacking in legitimacy. More importantly, the collaboration issue has been integrated into the mainstream of Korean historiography under the progressive regimes. This led to the transformation of the official narrative from the state-sanctioned narrative of the authoritarian regimes to the ethnic nationalism narrative through institutionalization, including policy change toward the significant others as well as other domestic policies (Shin Gi-wook 2012, p. 304).

3.4 The Formation of the Other in the Ethnic Nationalism Narrative

The state-sanctioned narrative that dominated the country under the authoritarian regimes puts its emphasis on loyalty to South Korea as the only legitimate political entity on the peninsula. What should be noted is that it excludes any North Korean sympathizers in the South as well as the communist North Korean regime from the category of the "true" Korean nation. The rhetoric of exclusion based on a clear dichotomy between self and others according to the strong anti-communistic ideology has been at the core of political conservative narratives of South Korea. In exclusionary discourses, language as well as other symbolic systems is used to define similarities and differences, and to draw clear boundaries between us and them. The most common strategy adopted in doing so is the construction of alleged dangers and threats to "us" (Wodak 2015, p. 89). In the state-sanctioned narrative, not only did the relational identity of the North serve to draw a clear line between the self and the hostile other of Korean communists, but also the very presence of the North is constructed as a threat to South Korea's existence, which enabled the authoritarian regimes to adopt the politics of fear where national security is a top priority. On the other hand, the ethnic nationalism narrative supported by progressives has constructed its own boundary between self and others: the ethnic Korean nation and its people as self; anti-nationalists, that is, pro-Japanese or pro-American collaborators, implicitly point to the upper strata of South Korean society within the boundary of the nation, as hostile others who betrayed the nation and caused the partition. Although its demarcation between self and others is different from that of the state-sanctioned narrative of rightists, the ethnic nationalism narrative also creates new enemies within the nation, and forces loyalty to the ethnic Korean nation and hatred toward a group of alleged anti-nationalists, thus being monumental history. As a result, it fails to provide complex roots of the violent history of South Korea and contributes to intensifying conflicts between competing groups of people who have constructed their national identity based on contentious narratives.

In the following section, discourses of progressives reflected in history textbooks, a literature

from a far-leftist historian, Seo Joong-seok, and other political discourses will be analyzed to examine the way in which national identity of self and the other is constructed in the ethnic nationalism narrative. In doing so, it is aimed to show that the ethnic nationalism narrative presents some features of monumental history, creating a dichotomy of self and other, failing to provide comprehensive explanations about the past and, as a result, provide another source of conflict in the society.

3.4.1 Rhetoric of Exclusion: Political Meaning of Pro-Japanese Collaborators

In the book *Identity/Difference Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*, Connolly (1991) argues that politics pervades the relation of identity to difference. He calls the "relation of identity to difference….the site of two problems of evil" (preface p.4). At the political level, the first problem of evil appears in attempts to protect the purity and certainty of a hegemonic identity by declaring as independent sites of evil those differences that pose the greatest threat to the certainty of the hegemonic identity. The second problem of evil is found in diverse political discourses and tactics through which questions about the hegemonic self-identity are raised and resolved by the construction of an other against which that identity may define itself. In Connolly's view, identity is relational and collective. The identity of an individual is defined through the "collective constituencies with which he or she identifies or is identified by others and it is further specified by comparison to a variety of things he or she is not" (ibid.). Identity, then, always pertains to a set of differences that help it to be and define what it is. An individual needs identity to act and there exists a desire to reduce difference to complete oneself in the pursuit of identity. This is where a paradoxical element in the politics of identity can be found. It is a social paradox that operates in the form of pressure to make space to realize the fullness of self-identity for one constituency by marginalizing, demeaning, or excluding the others who belong to the category of differences. What Connolly calls "the second problem of evil" originates from this very social logic of identity/difference relations. This is the tendency to marginalize or demonize others to purify the self-identity. Strong anti-communistic discourses in the state-sanctioned narrative that present communists as evil can be explained with this demonization of difference to complete the purity and certainty self-identity. The state-sanctioned narrative developed by the authoritarian regimes clearly demonstrates the features of monumental history, presenting out-groups of communists and North Korean followers as illegitimate agents of nation-building, and highlighting the glorious history and qualities of in-groups of anti-communists who are loyal to South Korea, the true representation of the whole nation.

On the other hand, the underlying and ultimate message of the collaboration discourses in the 1990s, which is the backbone of the ethnic nationalism narrative, is essentially critical about the

historical developments of 20th century Korea and it strongly singles out Korea's leading elites from the nation due to their continued tendency to follow the imperialistic powers, Japan and the US. Since the 1990s, the term pro-Japanese collaborators [*ch'inilp'a*] has frequently been referred to as the "original sin" of the South Korean regime who pursued the establishment of a separate state and pointed to the conservative ruling elites, who later became pro-Americans. What lies behind these links is a deeply rooted negative historical consciousness among progressives. In the book, *The Making of Minjung*, Lee Namhee (2007) points out that intellectuals and college students shared the widespread perception of Korea's post-colonial history up to the 1980s as a failure towards modernity (pp. 2-8). In this regard, the issue of collaborators is considered to be the very element that created such continuous failures as dictatorships, delays of democratization, human rights violations and perpetuating the division of the nation. These interpretations that progressive intellectuals and leftists made in the early and mid-1980s came to be manifested in the narrative of collaborators in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The common claim of many progressive/leftist intellectuals in the early 1990s is that pro-Japanese collaboration is the fundamental problematic element in the structure of South Korea that has caused the division of the peninsula and an undemocratic political system in the South. For example, Im Hŏn-yong (2000) contends that post-liberation South Korean politics can be defined by applying the same dualistic framework of collaboration and resistance under colonial rule as the framework of capitalism/anti-imperialism, pro-Americanism/anti-Americanism, pro-regime/anti-regime and patriotism/anti-state (Im Hŏn-yong cited in Song Yeun-ji 2013, p. 63). Seo Joon-seok, one of the leading historians on post-liberation Korean history, emphasizes the evil role of pro-Japanese collaborators in the ultra-right wing dictatorship, claiming that they have strongly supported dictatorship and have constituted an anti-democratic and anti-reunification group in society. As mentioned, in the discourses of collaboration, pro-Japanese collaborators are essentially equivalent to pro-Americans in postcolonial South Korea. Kim Pon-gu (1994), director of the Institute for Research in Antinationalist Activities[*PanminjokMunjeYŏn'guso*], conceives collaborators as a firmly entrenched dominant element of the social structure that has promoted undemocratic elements in society and heavy reliance on foreign powers. For this reason, Kim states that gaining autonomous development both politically and economically is critical to pave the way for unification. In doing so, the imminent task is to be united against the ruling elite and consequently to dispose of those anti-national forces. The narrative that regards pro-Japanese collaborators as the source of all the societal problems, such as inequality and undemocratic factors, the South has faced is evidently found in the progressive regimes' political rhetoric as well as in various policies. For example, the issue of collaboration is still at the core of the current progressive Moon government's campaign, "Cleaning of Accumulated Evils," which aims to clean out the past wrongs of collaboration and

corruption. A conservative historian, Lee Inho (2018), argues that Moon's "clearing of accumulated evils" policy openly targets conservative and rightist ruling elites and intellectuals as figures to be punished.

One of the characteristics of Korean society of the 2000's was sharpened ideological and political confrontation between the right/conservative and the left/progressive. This full-scale competition was unprecedented in South Korean history. The two camps in politics, the media, and civil society created constant opposition and antagonism. On the other hand, nationalism based on anti-imperial sentiment, mostly anti-American by this time, combined with new types of civic movements, such as anti-US candlelight vigils. Moreover, it was also in the 2000s that a socio-political practice, the "clearing of collaborators [*ch'inilp'ach'onsan*]" movement, emerged as a policy of the progressive regimes. At least by the mid-2000s, the collaboration discourse, mingled with ongoing political battles, was reproduced as heavily politicized everyday discourses. More importantly, the movement of clearing up the past wrongdoings, including collaboration, took place on a nationwide scale, rising to become a dominant socio-political phenomenon and giving the ethnic nationalism narrative a hegemonic status.

In March 2004, President Roh Moo-hyun was impeached in the National Assembly on allegations of violating the election law. This unprecedented incident was viewed by many as an unjustifiable display of arrogance by the majority opposition parties of the conservatives, stirring anger among the people and causing them to take to the streets against the impeachment. On March 15th, three days after the impeachment, thirty-six writers announced in The *Hangyeoreh* (2004), a progressive media outlet: "the impeachment reminded us of the assassination of Kim Gu and the May 16 Military Coup. [We] witnessed that the ghost of ch'inilp'a, a remnant of twisted history, has not disappeared. … in order to complete the last page of the 1987 Great Democratic Movement with the Korean people, we will cooperate with the cooperation of every living soul" (March 15, cited in Song Yeun-ji 2013, p. 83-84). In this statement, what is clearly evident is the identification of the current political wrong-doers, specifically conservative parties and conservative media in this context, with pro-Japanese collaborators. In the same vein, historians such as Seo Joong-seok (2007) accused the collaborators of the historical foundation of the right wing, which passed the impeachment of President Roh in the national assembly. According to him, it was Korean reactionaries, collaborators in the colonial era, supporters for Park Chung-hee's dictatorship and also strong opponents to the *Ch'inilp'a* Investigation Law that proposed the impeachment motion (p. 89-106).

The growing influence of collaboration discourse was deeply related to the successive elections of two progressive presidents for the first time in Korean history. President Kim's reconciliatory policy toward North Korea, the first of its kind in South Korean history, made the conservative camp very uncomfortable. In addition, at the beginning of his term, President Roh

clearly declared that his political enemy is the reactionary conservative right wing. Regarding his strategy, it is noted that "by picking up on the specific controversial issues and forming a war front, (Roh) attempts to increase political tension and eventually to make his supporters be mobilized and solidified" (Park Chang-sik 2004).

As in the realm of institutional politics and media, signs of polarization in civil society have gradually become evident since the late 1990s. It was on the 8.15 Independence Day of 2003 that the escalation of confrontation between the two camps in civil society was clearly demonstrated. For the first time since the establishment of South Korea, conservative and progressive camps held separate Independence Day celebrations at various different locations. On the conservative side, the People's Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Kim Jeong-il Alliance (NoNuclear) [*Panhaek, PanKim (Jeong-il) kukminhyŏbŭihoe*], an organization of more than one hundred conservative groups, held a rally which denounced North Korea's nuclear policy and progressive groups opposing the Korea-US military alliance. On the other hand, leftist and progressive organizations held multiple protests with the key themes of anti-(Iraq) War, anti-US military, and peaceful unification without the US's intervention campaigns. This public rally competition lasted until the following March First Movement celebration in the following year of 2004. Each camp organized several meetings under contrasting catchphrases: the coalition of two conservative groups, NoNuclear and the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) [*Han'gukKidokkyoch'ongyŏnhap*], called for opposition to the withdrawal of the US forces in Korea while condemning anti-US and pro-North groups including the Roh administration. These street rallies are marked as the beginning of political activism of conservative civic groups in which Protestant groups started playing a key role. On the other hand, the progressive/leftist groups rallied for peace on the peninsula, cooperation between two Koreas, and anti-(Iraq) war. In 2004, the competition of the two camps on the street was further magnified over such issues as dispatching Korean troops to Iraq.

What is noteworthy is that the collaboration discourse was completely (re)contextualized in the context of ongoing political situations in the Kim and Roh governments. At this time, one's position toward the collaboration issue came to be an indicator of political and ideological inclination, which means that the interpretation of history became highly politicized. President Roh, returning back to office in May 14th after the incident of impeachment, announced his plan of four reform policies: abrogation of the National Security Law; legislation of media reform laws; legislation of special laws for readdressing past wrongs; and revision of private school laws. Particularly with regard to clearing up past wrongdoings, Roh suggested carrying out comprehensive investigations through special committees set up in the National Assembly. This announcement provided the very opportunity for the issues of "clearing up the past wrongdoings [*kwagŏch'ŏnsan*]" along with the collaboration to come to the fore as major on the political agenda in 2004 and 2005. The media

frequently termed the political situation of this period as "the politics of past wrongs [*kwagŏsachŏngguk*]," which means that the past issues functioned as the most urgent tasks, both in politics and civil society, and also shaped other social and political concerns. The politicization of the past indicates that the politically hyper-sensitive collaboration issue is inseparable from political interests and the political context of the present. During the period of the Roh administration, the issues of collaboration and past wrongdoings were institutionalized through the legislation process in the National Assembly as well as through the installation and activities of the Presidential Committee Inspection of Collaborations for Japanese Imperialism (PCIC) to deal with investigating former collaborators and their wrong behavior. Throughout the process, the claim of "clearing up the collaborators [*Ch'inilp'ach'ŏngsan*]", once limited only to dissent discourse in the 1980s, transformed into the dominant historical view of the state. The detailed process of institutionalization of those issues will be further examined in the following chapter.

In sum, as opposed to the state-sanctioned narrative that attempts to confine the opprobrium of collaboration only to those politicians who were directly responsible for the annexation of Korea in 1910, the ethnic nationalism narrative attributes collaboration acts to all those who at some point had been in touch with Japan. Particularly targeted were the upper strata of Korean society in the latter years of the occupation. Indeed, in this narrative, hardly any public figure in the Korean peninsula could escape implication in some form of collaboration in that all aspects of collusion with the Japanese authorities were condemned in the most absolute terms. The underlying political intention of enlarging the field of collaboration has been to undermine the legitimacy of the post-liberation South Korean regime, which politically relied heavily on the landholding and entrepreneurial strata of Korean society as well as on the US (de Ceuster 2002, p. 230).

3.4.2 Another Group of Others: Korean Protestants

The news report of *Hankyoreh*, one of progressive media outlets in South Korea, focused on the close relation between the far-rightists and Christian groups, claiming that one of the Protestant missionary organizations, Esther Prayer Meeting, was the source of fake news against the current progressive/leftist regime of Moon Jae-in (Kim Wan et al. 2018). Historically, the South Korean conservative Protestants were actively engaged in political activities right from the process of nation-building of South Korea. Many of the early Protestants, who lived in the northern part of the Korean peninsula where Christianity enjoyed the first revival under colonial rule, escaped to the South before or during the war when the Korean communists started to exert strong influence in communities of the northern area. Having experienced oppression from communists toward Christianity while living in the North, they have constructed their identity with hatred and fear toward communists, which

excludes communists from the category of self, despite the fact that they are ethnically Koreans. That is, they have developed their own concept of the true Korean nation, where communists cannot exist. This narrative of the early Protestants is perfectly in line with that of conservatives in that both exclude communists from the nation. Chŏng Sŏng-han (2015) calls as a "rejection of co-existence with communists" (p. 24) this specific character of identity that early Korean Christians developed. He claims that this "rejection of co-existence with communists" is the very essence of anti-communism and national identity which Korean Protestantism has developed since the division of the nation. This element of identity is also at the core in political conservatives' state-sanctioned narrative. Therefore, the political ideology of anti-communism is prioritized over ethnicity as the core element that constitutes their narrative identity. This is one of the reasons why the two contentious narratives that are dominating contemporary South Korean society find it difficult to reach a compromise. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, the ethnic concept of the nation is the most important and irreconcilable value, while in the state-sanctioned narrative ideology takes priority over the ethnic notion of the nation and thus refuses to include any Korean communists as self, regardless of their ethnicity.

This section aims to explain that the ethnic nationalism narrative has created another hostile other, that is, a group of conservative Protestants, by analyzing the book *Korean Nationalism Betrayed* (2007), written by Seo Joong-seok, a leading progressive historian and the chairman of the board in the Institute of Korean Historical Studies, who has been very critical of conservatives' interpretation of history. His book has been chosen given that Seo is one of the most known scholars in Korean history and the connection between the conservative strain of Korean Protestant churches and political rightists is closely examined in his book from a critical point of view of progressives. Thus, through an analysis of the book it will be explained how the ethnic nationalism narrative has constructed conservative Protestants as another hostile other within the boundary of the nation, associating them with collaborators.

Seo (2007) asserts that "the pro-Japanese collaborators are generally also pro-US" (p.91), pointing out the fact that both of them, more importantly, were heavily influenced by a West-centered Christian worldview. In the era prior to 1905, the official US policy on Korea and the role of American missionaries, on whom pro-American forces in Korea heavily relied for support and guidance, were not necessarily irreconcilable with the Japanese policy of imperialist aggression in Korea. In this view, the two imperial powers of Japan and the US forged a complementary relationship; the US missionaries presided over the spiritual domain, while the Japanese governed the secular aspects of the lives of the Korean people. The US and Japan enjoyed mutual independence with regard to their strategies and policies in Korea (ibid., p. 91-92). Seo also argues that another common ground between pro-Japanese and pro-US collaborators was that they were mostly the

privileged class and educated overseas, thus generally influenced by a West-centered Christian worldview. He emphasizes that along with the pro-Japanese collaborators, US-educated Korean elites and Christians took part in large numbers in Japan's policy to eradicate the Korean nation, through such campaigns as the forced change of Korean names into Japanese ones, the ban on the use of the Korean language, and the mandatory worship at Shinto shrines. In his view, it is very ironic that Westernized Koreans agreed on those policies of fascist Japan. This is because, according to him, Christians possessed a spirit that was primarily suited to a fascist ruling structure or absolute monarchical rule like many Christians in the West. As revealed in his seemingly rather extreme assertion, it is not very surprising for him that Christians showed affinity for Japan at the time when it seriously threatened the annihilation of the Korean nation (ibid., p. 102). By arguing the close connection of Christians with imperialism in history as well as in nature, it is implicitly indicated that the ruling regimes of South Korea after liberation are connected to groups of pro-Japanese collaborators and Westernized Protestants, associating them with anti-nationalists and traitors to the nation. As is well represented in Seo's writing, the progressive narrative identity openly assumes the close link between pro-Japanese collaborators and Westernized Koreans, that is mostly pro-US Christians, who more importantly, took the privileged positions in South Korea.

In this light, what is critical to note is that the ethnic nationalism narrative also draws a clear line between self and others: the nation and nationalists versus anti-nationalists and traitors to the nation, which includes groups of pro-Japanese, pro-US collaborators, including Westernized Christians and the privileged class of South Korea. This dichotomy is justified by the assertion that the nation is the most important component available for the construction of Korean national identity. The nation is the only pure and absolute value for all Koreans in the ethnic nationalism narrative. According to this narrative, Christians, the majority of whom belong to the conservative strain of churches in South Korea, are categorized as the out-group, which is prone to leaning toward pro-Americanism and thus is easily anti-national. This well explains the highly critical perspective of the progressive media and experts toward conservative churches, Christian leaders, and civic organizations.

According to Chŏng Sŏng-han (2015), after liberation, early Korean Protestants realized that they were facing two immediate assignments: first, the re-establishment of the nation and second, the re-establishment of churches (p. 17). However, in the northern part of the peninsula, the Christian communities were under the monitoring of the Soviet military and Korean communist groups. In contrast, in the southern area Christian groups that showed any left-leaning signs were under the oppression of the US military government. This clearly indicates that in both areas of the peninsula, Christian groups were regarded as political entities. This historical context hints that this would be a prelude to South and North Koreas' Protestant leaders becoming deeply engaged in ideological

battles between the two Koreas and secular politics.

As elaborated earlier, in the 2000s progressive governments started to institutionalize their national identity concept into various policy areas and this institutionalizing process inevitably created strong opposition from conservative politicians and civil societies, among which Christian organizations were one of the most actively mobilized groups in social movements against progressive policy changes. It is this which will be elaborated in the following chapter. The fact that *Hankyoreh*, the media outlet known as the best in representing voices of progressives, claimed that Protestant rightists were the key players in producing fake news against the current Moon government (Kim Wan et al. 2018) evidently demonstrates that the progressives pay close attention to conservative Protestants' political activism and its significant influence in right wing movements in South Korea. Conservative Protestant civic groups that have been very active in participating or organizing street protests since the 2000s, are now more active than at any other time in history in political rightist resistant movements to the progressive regime's various policies, such as the revision of the constitution.

3.5 The Limits of the Ethnic Nationalism Narrative

The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives has greatly contributed to directing South Korean society out of authoritarian and dogmatic narratives on national identity by providing alternative interpretations of history. This is critical, given that it reveals many erased events and silenced voices of the people. It is, however, important to note that the ethnic nationalism of progressives also follows the similar strategy of exclusion that the state-sanctioned narrative took through too simplistic categorization of pro-Japanese collaborators as traitors to the nation, who, it is argued in the ethnic nationalism narrative, later became pro-Americans and ruling elites in South Korean society. In this narrative, failure to administer legal punishment to those traitors in the process of state-building is the original sin of South Korean authoritarian and conservative governments. Those traitors who still enjoy the benefits in the society as the ruling elite are blamed for all the troubles South Korea has faced, including perpetuating the division of the nation. This interpretation of history, thus, fails to function as critical history by presenting all pro-Japanese collaborators as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes. In critical history, the diversity and competing priorities as well as positive and negative aspects between an in-group and out-group are equally presented. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, nationalists and the nation are considered morally pure and superior, ignoring the in-group's (nationalists) own moral faults and failings, while out-groups (pro-Japanese collaborators) are depicted as inherently evil and vicious without considering

historical and social contexts. Therefore, intergroup relations are presented in terms of in-group victimization and out-group aggression, which is typically found in the monumental historical narrative in post-conflict societies. The biases and prejudice are transformed into deep beliefs about the out-group as an essential enemy, thus decreasing any possibility of mutual understanding. In critical history, history education presents not only positive but also negative actions of the in-group, providing critical analysis of political and social foundations and consequences of negative events. Thus, the ethnic nationalism narrative also follows the narrative strategy of monumental history, with clear dichotomy between pro-Japanese collaborators and anti-Japanese (or anti-imperialist) nationalists as well as the political agenda to delegitimize the conservative ruling elites (Yun Hae-dong 2015) and previous authoritarian regimes of South Korea who have a strong possibility of having ancestors from the educated and privileged class, and thus probably pro-Japanese collaborators.

In 2015 when controversies over history textbook revision under the conservative Park Geun-hye administration were heated, Moon Jae-in, the current president of South Korea and at the time the representative of the progressive The New Politics Alliance for Democracy (NPAD), commented that the conservative Saenuri Party's support for the state-issued history textbook self-proved that conservative politicians in the Saenuri Party are the descendants of pro-Japanese collaborators and thus, responsible for the past shameful history of collaboration. They support the single state-issued history textbook in order to justify their collaboration with Japan and dictatorship through its very centralized state-sanctioned narrative (Nam So-hyun 2015). His comment conversely proves that the progressive politicians' interpretation of South Korean modern history is in concert with the ethnic nationalism narrative which emphasizes the close link between political elites of conservatives/rightists and the pro-Japanese collaborators, that is, traitors of the nation. Moon Jae-in (2017) also criticizes in his book *Daehanmingugi mununda* [South Korea asks] the so-called South Korean conservatives as fake given that they actually pursue their own interests based on imperialism (pro-Japanese collaboration), anti-communism and industrialization, not the principles and values of conservatism. Han Hong-gu, a professor in Hanshin University, argues that because there was no process of legal punishment over collaboration in the post-liberation period the pro-Japanese collaborators have been always one of the mainstream and privileged groups in South Korean society and their dominant power was only challenged for a short period during the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations, but now they are back in power (Sim Hae-ri 2015). In this rhetoric, it seems evident that progressives associate conservative politicians with pro-Japanese collaborators. It is also clearly displayed in the statement of President Moon Jae-in on August 15, 2018, National Liberation Day, where he emphasized that "the history of collaboration was not our mainstream history" and "We, Koreans, struggled to achieve our independence and to establish our

own nation with our own power centered around Provisional Government of Republic of Korea in Shanghai" (Kang Tae-hwa 2018). It was the first time that President Moon had openly and publicly mentioned that the mainstream, who should have been removed, were pro-Japanese collaborators, pointing to conservative ruling elites. By explicitly defining the conservative ruling elites as descendants of the pro-Japanese collaborators, thus being replaced, it is revealed that progressives' interpretation of history clearly has political meaning. After a newspaper article analyzed comments of readers on the series of special reports, entitled Collapse of Conservatives [*Posuǔi molak*], it is argued that in readers' comments conservatives are often uniformly framed as pro-Japanese collaborators just in exactly the same way as progressives are framed as "pro-North" or "the commies [*PPalgaengi*]" (Paek Chi-su et al. 2017).

This well supports the argument of this dissertation that the ethnic nationalism narrative also uses a history narrative for its political purpose to exclude others, for them, collaborators who became ruling elites of South Korea, just in the same way that conservatives exclude communists from the category of the nation. Consequently, the two contending narratives in South Korean society intensify their own legitimacy through rhetoric of exclusion and demonization of the hostile others, that is communists in the state-sponsored narrative, and the pro-imperialists or the anti-nationalists, pointing to conservative ruling elites of South Korea in the ethnic nationalism. As a result, both narratives contribute to intensifying the conflicts and fail to provide a critical interpretation of history.

As elaborated in the theoretical chapter, one of the dilemmas post-conflict societies face is making a choice between critical and monumental history, which refer to the most important functions of history in society. While monumental history functions to legitimize the ruling regime and develop loyalty to the state among people by selectively remembering particular events and narratives, critical history does not provide a sense of patriotism or loyalty, but presents the complex roots of violence without promoting loyalty to one particular side and holds all perpetrators or aggressors accountable (Korostelina 2016). The dilemma societies recovering from recent violence face in choosing either monumental history interpretations or critical history is connected to the concept of "collective axiology" (Korostelina 2016, p. 294) that defines boundaries and relations among groups and more importantly, establishes criteria for in-group/out-group membership. That is, a collective axiology is a common system of values that offers moral guidance to in-group members on how to identify and perceive members of in-groups and out-groups, and how to maintain or change relations with them.

There are two variables which characterize the dynamics of collective axiology. The first is the degree of collective generality, which refers to the ways in which in-group members categorize the other, and how they simplify, or not, their defining character (ibid., p. 295). The high level of collective generality that is connected with viewing an out-group as consistent, homogenous and

demonstrating fixed patterns of behavior, is observed in monumental history. In monumental history, an enemy is simply perceived as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes that supports common policies toward other groups. The state-centered nationalism narrative constructed under the authoritarian regimes displays typical characteristics of monumental history. In the state-sanctioned narrative based on strong anti-communist ideology, the image of the out-group, communists (North Korean followers) in the South as well as the communist North Korean regime, is described as rigid, uniform, and homogeneous with their evil intentions to invade the South. It is, however, important to note that the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives also shows a high level of generality and thus has a monumental interpretation of history in that the out-group, that is, anti-nationalists including pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators, as well as ruling elites of South Korea, is perceived as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes, which justifies framing them as traitors to the nation. To have a critical interpretation of history, the ethnic nationalism narrative should perceive the out-group as differentiated and provide complex explanations concerning the descriptions of the actions and motivations of collaborators or ruling elites. For instance, the inventory of collaborators listed by a historian, Im Chong-guk (1929-1989), who defied the mainstream elites and contributed to breaking the political silence surrounding collaboration in the late 1960s, was quite indiscriminate (de Ceuster 2002, p. 225). Basically any Korean who at some time or another had been affiliated with the colonial authorities was listed as a collaborator. Since the mere fact of contact with the colonial authorities was considered enough proof of being categorized as collaborators, his list was full of collaborators' names but failed to shed light on either the personal motivations or the historical and social contexts of those individuals' acts. In addition, for many younger historians than Im, dealing with collaboration was a kind of political activism. Rather than explain, they were eager to judge. In their interpretation, the nation is upheld as an absolute category against which all individual actions are measured, irrespective of historical constraints or personal motivations. Another example of this style is Kim Sam-ung's in his book *100 Collaborators and their 100 texts* [*Ch'inilpa paekin paekmon*] (1996). Just one line, just one sentence in the excerpts of the incriminating article or speech made by a different individual, is suggested to be sufficient evidence to be labeled a collaborator. The problem with such an approach is that the entire historical and personal context is taken away (Kim Do-yŏn 2015). Such an approach not only indicates that each individual is at all times entirely and eternally accountable for his or her deeds, but also isolates an individual from his or her own, as well as the nation's, history. Thus, it asserts that collaboration is something of a highly individual evil act, separated from the history of the Korean people's suffering and pain. In this vein, these studies on collaboration conform to the paradigm of monumental history that describes the others as a uniformly evil single entity as uniformly as the state-sanctioned narrative does.

Of two variables that characterize the dynamics of collective axiology, the second is the axiological balance that includes both positive and negative portrayals in group identities (Korostelina 2016, p. 296). In a low level of axiological balance that is found in monumental history, one's in-group is perceived as morally pure and superior, and the out-group as evil and vicious. In this light, the ethnic nationalism narrative presents a low level of axiological balance, thus being monumental, in which intergroup relations are uniformly illustrated in terms of in-group victimization and out-group aggression. These biases and prejudices are transformed into deep beliefs about the out-group as an essential evil enemy.

The ethnic nationalism narrative is in part critical in that it includes erased memories like the *Jeju* April 3 1948 incident, where innocent civilians were killed by state forces in the name of anti-communism. Also, the critical interpretation of the ethnic nationalism narrative challenges head-on the state-sanctioned myth of South Korea's political ancestry in the anti-Japanese independence struggle. However, rather than breaking the nationalist paradigm of Korean historiography, the revisionist approach of the ethnic nationalism narrative attempted to replace one national myth with another, glorifying the Korean nation and nationalists as pure and absolute. Many publications published by liberal and progressive historians upheld with equal zeal the myth of Korea as the resisting nation, victimized by Japanese colonialism but uncontaminated by it, remaining pure and authentic. This revisionist view, supported by progressives, only performed "another exorcist ritual" (De Ceuster 2002, p. 208), to cleanse the national soul and to be liberated from the failure to banish collaborators. To become critical history, historiography and history education should present not only positive but also negative actions of the in-group. With the notion of the pure and absolute nation, the ethnic nationalism narrative only presents the positive actions of nationalists while providing only the negative actions of anti-nationalists (pro-Japanese collaborators) without offering any personal or historical contexts (Kim Do-yŏn 2015).

By politicizing its own narrative on South Korean history primarily through the rhetoric of exclusion, progressives/leftists have intensified the conflicts in the society rather than using history as an instrument of conflict transformation and reconciliation. The master narrative based on anti-communistic ideology had been strongly politicized as a tool to legitimize authoritarian regimes before the democratization, but the ethnic nationalism master narrative of progressives based on strong belief in ethnic nationalism also created a new concept of self, that is, the pure and absolute "nation [*minjok*]", and a new hostile out-group of anti-nationalists (pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators), who are thus traitors to the nation. More importantly, the South Korean ruling elites, who served for the authoritarian regimes and currently constitute the conservative strain, are described as innately evil and therefore should be excluded from the nation and blamed for all the maladies of the current society, as well as for the division of the nation.

Another limit in the ethnic nationalism narrative, as mentioned above, is that it applies too simplistic a standard for the categorization of collaborators. A historian, Yun Hae-dong, who himself was once involved in research projects on collaboration at The Center for Historical Truth and Justice [*Minchokmuncheyŏnguso*] that was founded to inherit Im Chong-guk's research in 1991, pointed out that the definition of collaboration in most research projects on collaboration is not academic at all (Kim Do-yŏn 2015). He not only emphasizes that framing of collaboration employed by progressive politicians as a political tool divides South Korean society but also, more importantly, points out that history is not a matter of morality. Another historian, Kim Chŏng-in (2014), is also very critical of "collaboration framing." She argues that with the emergence of New Right historiography in the 2000s, when the debates over history textbooks were especially heated, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives was politicized with the collaboration framing that equates collaborators with conservative politicians, and thus describes them as absolute evil. According to her, this strategy of framing is used exactly in the same way conservatives politicize the framing of Pro-North followers [*chongbuk*], which identifies progressives and leftists with North Korean sympathizers, and thus evil enemies to the nation. She argues that although historiography after liberation has emphasized nationalism as the only criterion to assess the history of Korea, there exist other criteria in history through which history can be explained. She further maintains that treating collaborators as innately evil without taking historical and personal contexts into account is ahistorical. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, the failure to punish pro-Japanese collaborators is the original sin and all the social, political, economic problems of South Korea are blamed on those collaborators. In describing the independent movements under Japanese rule, only the nationalist and socialist movements are regarded as morally right because they did not rely on foreign imperial power. In this regard, progressive narrative fails to provide constructive critical and plural explanations of history by employing the rhetoric of exclusion and the simple victimization of the self, just as conservative narrative did. Having plural interpretations of history is very important to develop more collective axiology, and thus to provide critical interpretations of violent or shameful memories.

Yun Hae-dong (2011) points out another problem in one historical view of progressives, called "division historical theory [*pundansahakron*]", in which overcoming the division of the nation and accomplishing unification are set as the ultimate goal of the nation (p.47). Therefore, division is the most important and urgent problem Koreans should overcome. In this light, division historical theory in Korean historiography becomes a political ideology. Only with a full understanding of this political ideology progressives hold can one fully grasp the current Moon government's push toward relieving sanctions even before the North takes concrete action for denuclearization, while other countries such as the US as well as the EU states express their skepticism of sanctions relief before meaningful steps are taken by the North (Pardo 2018).

The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives failed to provide comprehensive understanding of violent South Korean modern and contemporary history although it is partly critical. This is largely because of its dualistic identification between pure "nation" as self and traitors to the nation, that is collaborators, as evil enemy. In addition, the narrative has been politicized by politicians as a tool to delegitimize opponents. Thus, the ethnic nationalism does not contribute to providing a critical interpretation of history and fails to lessen prevalent conflicts in South Korean society and politics. It is often pointed out that it was the engagement policy toward North Korea of the first progressive president, Kim Dae-jung, that initiated severe conflicts between its proponents and opponents and eventually led to a polarization of South Korean society. However, as seen in this chapter, the narrative transformation in South Korean historiography led by progressive historians was a hidden driving force for both narrative transformation and policy changes under the two progressive administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, which will be elaborated in the following chapter.

4. Second Juncture: Progressive Regimes and Identity Politics

The state-sanctioned master narrative that had been constructed under the authoritarian regimes in the process of nation-building faced, with the onset of democratization, the challenge of the ethnic nationalism narrative. It was progressive intellectuals, in particular historians, that led this narrative transformation. The lack of legal justice after liberation made historians feel that it was their mission to "correct" history for the nation. This chapter focuses on the second historical juncture, in which the two successive progressive presidents, Kim Dae-jung (1998-2003) and Roh Moo-hyun (2003-2008), took office. Under the progressive regimes, the ethnic nationalism narrative began to be institutionalized as an official narrative through policy changes from foreign and security policies to domestic policies such as history textbook revision (Shin 2012, p. 304). This was regarded as an identity crisis for the traditional conservative party and its followers as the new narrative sought to transform the core concepts of conservatives' identity. As a result, the identity conflicts became more intense than ever in the 2000s in South Korea. Many observers explain that competition between two political camps largely originated from their ideological difference. That is partly true, because ideology is the most influential factor in national identity formation of South Korea as the nation was divided along ideological lines. However, this research aims to present that conflicts in South Korean politics and society have been more about identity competition between the two camps of conservatives and progressives, which does not mean that it was confrontation only between political parties and politicians but expanded into realms of society such as education, civil society, religion and so on, beyond the political arena of South Korea.

A turning point in the identity politics of progressives was Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy, the engagement policy toward the North (Shin & Burke 2008, p. 289). Motivated by progressive ideology and the strong ethnic nationalism narrative, President Kim instituted this engagement policy to assist North Korea and promote peace on the peninsula, leading to the historic inter-Korean summit in the summer of 2000 in Pyongyang. The summit was of great significance considering that it was the beginning of the transformation of many South Koreans' views of the North from an enemy to a partner, despite its modest tangible outcomes. On the other hand, the Sunshine Policy provoked strong reaction from conservatives in the South. Conservative strains were skeptical that the North would change its hostile attitude and behavior to the South and they demanded greater reciprocity. In their view, the North Korean threat had not disappeared so the pursuit of rapprochement was regarded as unsettling and threatening in terms of national security. The bitter contention between progressives and conservatives on the North Korean issue has been often called the "South-South conflict" within South Korea or "a house divided" (Hahm Chaibong 2005; Shin & Burke 2007).

In the light of national identity, this chapter aims to elaborate on the notion that inner

conflicts in South Korea occur around the two most important concepts in national identity construction: the self, that is, how to view South Korea, whether it is a legitimate political entity representing the whole Korean nation or whether it is blamed for national division heavily relying on the imperial powers; and the significant others, how to identify North Korea and the US. As mentioned, the initial attempts to transform national identity occurred with the policy change toward its northern neighbor from containment to engagement, and then with redefining the relationship with the US. It is often said that North Korean issues were at the very center of changes in the ROK-US relations in the 2000s when the incongruence in identities and interests pervaded ROK-US relations with two North Korean nuclear stand-offs, and the US declared the war on terror. The attempts to redefine the identities of two significant others are deeply connected to transformation of the self identity of South Korea, with domestic policies related to modern and contemporary history, such as "clearing up past wrongdoings" and high-school history textbook revision. This created severe controversies, even called a "history war," between two camps of politicians, intellectuals and civic groups. One of the important underlying ideas of this history war is a question about the legitimacy of South Korea, that is, whether the establishment of South Korea was a lawful and legitimate process of nation-building, or a failure to build one united Korean nation, which well illustrates that conflicts over history are inherently related to the self identification of South Korea. Conflicts over history will be discussed more deeply in the following chapters.

This chapter will firstly examine the policy changes toward two significant others under the two progressive regimes, based on the ethnic nationalism narrative. Subsequently, domestic policy changes such as the installment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Republic of Korea (TRCK), which is deeply related to self identity, will be closely researched.

4.1 National Identity Transformation: Policy Changes toward the Significant Others

Reconciliation with an enemy state is not an easy task in a protracted conflictual relationship, and often creates harsh criticism and opposition within the domestic politics of a reconciling state. The new idea of reconciliation is politically weak as it typically lacks solid domestic support, compared to the old idea of containment that enjoys habitual but robust support. Therefore, in a protracted conflictual relationship, the idea of reconciliation with an enemy state has often to be implanted in politically "barren soil" (Choi Jong Kun 2010). Since the two progressive governments of Kim and Roh, the national debates over how to view North Korea have been heated with intensity and emotion. In order to fully understand the essence of this conflict over the North Korean policy, it needs to be taken into consideration how these debates were related to efforts to (re)construct South

Korean identity, in particular in relation to identity formation of two significant others, the North and the US, and how the division over national identity continues to influence and shape Korean politics and society (Shin & Burke 2008, p. 288).

Suh Jae-jung (2004) claims that during the period of the two progressive governments of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, the country was caught between conflicting identities: the "alliance identity" that sees the US as a friendly provider and the closest ally; and the "nationalist identity" that forms Korean identity against the US. Extreme polarization over the North Korean policy and the alliance with the US is not an issue that can be easily resolved because for Koreans, these issues pertain to the fundamental but contested question of national identity (Shin & Burke 2008). By examining the news media data from 1992 to 2003, Shin and Burke (2008) argue that North Korea and inter-Korean relations have been at the center of identity transformation of South Korea. South Koreans, led by progressives and leftists, have sought to reshape their national identity in the context of changing regional and global orders of the post-Cold War era, and the North lies at the heart of the process. In the Korean context, identity politics involving the North is of great significance due to the rather peculiar circumstance of a nation with a strong sense of ethnic homogeneity being divided into two political entities. Since the early 2000s, the disagreement over the political notion of the nation within South Korea, albeit based on belief in ethnic homogeneity, has come to the surface. Ethnic nationalism and the bitter reality associated with in-group disagreement over national identity must be taken into consideration in order to have a proper understanding of identity politics that involves the relational identity of the North and the US within South Korea.

The North is undoubtedly an important element in South Korea's conception of national identity. The late 1980s brought important structural changes in the South. Internally, it underwent democratization, and externally, witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the post-Cold War context, the power of anti-communism as a unifying political ideology was naturally weakened, and the Korean government pursued a "Northern" policy. However, the Cold War structure and mentality on the peninsula firmly entrenched in the society did remain, and still a number of South Koreans have a negative view regarding the North (Lee Nae-young 2016). Nonetheless, in a democratizing South, the authoritarian state-sanctioned narrative identity based on anti-communism faced serious challenges from a developing civil society, which greatly contributed to diversifying discourses on a number of issues ranging from unification to the US-South Korea alliance. The question of national identity that came to the fore in this context provoked an intense and emotional confrontation between the authoritarian state and the civil society, which was mostly from the progressive side. While the implementation of the Sunshine Policy was a crucial juncture in transforming many South Korean views of the North from an arch enemy to a partner, it provoked strong opposition from

conservatives. This was because in their view, given that the North Korean threat had not disappeared, the pursuit of rapprochement seemed threatening to the existence of the South. Furthermore, the engagement policy, continued by the Roh government, has also caused clashes with the Bush administration's rigid policy stance on North Korea, thus straining US-South Korea relations.

By researching ROK-US relations from 1992 to 2003, Shin Gi-wook (2012) claims that to have a proper understanding of the ways in which South Koreans approach issues related to ROK-US relations it must be first considered that the significance of the issues is extended into a deeper level of national identity beyond the level of analysis of policy and domestic politics (p. 295). To South Korea, the US has been one of the significant others, which has greatly influenced the formation of national identity since the liberation. Shin further argues that the changes in South Korean views toward the US and the North in the 1990s and 2000s must be understood in the context of identity politics, which is a reflection of a larger social change, led by South Korean progressives and leftists, in order to reconstruct South Korea's national identity in the fast changing post-Cold War and post-authoritarian era (ibid., p. 304). South Korean progressives began to identify the northern half as a legitimate partner state to engage with, but not as an arch enemy. In this light, the security alliance with the US, including the US military presence in the territory of South Korea, and the role of the US in inter-Korean relations were increasingly questioned. The intense debate between conservatives and progressives with regard to the North and the ROK-US alliance reflected the two sides' contentious views of South Korean national identity.

4.1.1 Engagement with North Korea

South Korea's comprehensive engagement with the North for the ten years of the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun (1998-2008) administrations not only faced fierce opposition from the conservative section of Korean society but also created strains in the alliance with the US under George W. Bush. Furthermore, it endured harsh criticism in and outside South Korea about how the policy was essentially spoiling and nurturing the regime in the North, and the North Korean nuclear development, which was unacceptable for Americans as well as South Koreans, further strengthened the oppositional views. South Korea's comprehensive engagement policy required attitudinal and cognitive changes within South Korea's public and security expert groups toward its main enemy, which meant change in South Korea's national identity towards the unfriendly regime in the North and the close ally, the US.

The change in the state's identity has to go through a political struggle against the established identity of a state (Choi Jong Kun 2010, p. 118). The process of reconstructing national identity can be contentious and conflict ridden. This is exactly what we have seen in the South with respect to

policy change toward the North, with one group firmly retaining the established identity that regards it as an arch enemy and another group reinterpreting its relationship with it and forging a transformation of identity. The two master narratives, in stark opposition, have hardened over time and the contestation has extended beyond foreign policy into domestic policies with particular regard to self identification. The fact that both groups agree on an ethnic unity of the Korean nation while debating the political notion of the nation ironically makes the political debate especially bitter and emotional, because it creates normative expectations for behavior. As explained in the theoretical chapter, the collective identity that is created in the context of intractable conflicts is intensified with strong societal beliefs on its definition of the self and others, thus, being resistant to change (Chhabra 2016). When it comes to the matter of identity that is consolidated with emotional factors, the conflict does not make it easy to reach political compromise or concession because each party views its belief as an essential for the nation's existence.

Most contentious was the issue of how Seoul should frame North Korea's identity in relation to South Korea. While the comprehensive engagement policy optimistically focused on North Korea as presenting an opportunity for engagement, the opponents argued that North Korea was still a national security threat to South Korea and that the North was unpredictable and unreliable. Officially known as the "Policy of Reconciliation and Cooperation toward North Korea", the Sunshine Policy was announced by Kim Dae-jung when campaigning for the presidency in 1997. Essentially, the Sunshine Policy promised to stop efforts by the ROK to undermine the regime in the North or absorb it, while promoting efforts to improve relations with North Korea and supporting peaceful co-existence rather than a rapid push towards unification. The most tangible outcome of the policy was the *Kaesung* Industrial Park that was being developed as a collaborative economic development with the North. Stark criticisms were constantly raised by the *Hanara* Party (Grand National Party, GNP), which was the main opposition party representing the mainstream conservative forces as well as the majority party in the National Assembly for most of the ten years under progressive administrations. During this period, it constantly argued that South Korea's financial aid to North Korea was a one-sided concession that failed to yield any attitudinal changes from the North that the engagement policy anticipated, but rather, that the North was nurtured and spoiled with aid (Kim Geun-sik 2013, p. 45). Moreover, it denounced the engagement policy as an unbalanced policy that lacked "sticks," thereby failing to deal with the contingency of North Korea's cheating. Critics also argued that the engagement of the North undermined the national security of South Korea, neglecting cognitive preparedness for the North's potential military provocations and national unity (ibid., p. 46).

Despite increasing inter-Korean exchanges, summit meetings, and high-level official talks, the essence of the North Korean identity remained offensive to the critics' perspectives. For instance, the Korean Veterans Association [*Taehanmin'gung Chaehyangguninhoe*], one of the oldest and most

established civic groups, focused its opposition on the Kim and Roh administrations' unidirectional assistance as a virtually one-sided concession to the North. These steps, they said, would only weaken South Korea's opposition in dealing with North Korea (Choi Jong Kun 2010, p. 126). For the critics, North Korea's acceptance of aid and willingness to talk with the progressive regimes means merely a tactical shift, but does not change its fundamentally aggressive goals and strategies. Throughout the ten years of progressive governments, *Chosun ilbo*, one of the most conservative media outlets, maintained a negative tone on the engagement policy (Shin & Burke 2008, p. 297), arguing that the Sunshine Policy proponents were misinterpreting the intention of North Korea, which was essentially to undermine South Korea's system and abuse its goodwill of aid, as was clearly proven in the North's continuation of the nuclear weapons development even with South Korea's continuation of the engagement policy. Hence, the opponents of the Sunshine Policy demanded that the South Korean government maintain its traditional approach to the North, that is, strict reciprocity as a requirement for improving inter-Korean relations. The comprehensive engagement policy, they asserted, only created the illusion that the North Korean regime would change if the South kept handing out things it wanted. To the opponents of the engagement policy, the North's identity as the enemy state enforced strict reciprocity, namely, a bilateral relationship of hostility, which should start with equal and real-time exchanges of give-and-take. Therefore, one-sided handing out to the enemy state was morally wrong in the views of conservatives. North Korea's continuous provocative behavior, such as its nuclear program and naval skirmishes, only bolstered their view with rigid conviction that it was not appropriate to continue with the engagement policy, while it was only worsening the alliance with the US (Choi Jong Kun 2010; Kim Geun-Sik 2013).

The engagement policy thus provoked an ideological confrontation between its opponents and supporters. The new idea of reconciliation toward the enemy state ironically generated politically intense confrontation over South Korea's relational identity with the North. The advocates of the Sunshine Policy had another burden to deal with the South Korean conservatives, who possessed different ideas of national and relational identity (Choi Jang-jip 2017; Choi Jong Kun 2010). From the traditional power politics perspective, South Korea's appropriate rational choice was to continue its containment policy toward North Korea as its enemy given more than 70 years of conflict and national division and more importantly, the North's development of nuclear weapons. Thus, it was essential for the Kim administration to suggest a different explanation for its enforcement of the engagement policy, in particular in the context of the worsening security environment with the North's nuclear tests (Choi Jang-jip 2017). The Kim and Roh administrations, however, pursued their own way based on their beliefs about how their choice of comprehensive engagement could better guarantee peace on the Korean peninsula and the ultimate goal of unification. This should have been accompanied by a political process of reformation or transformation of national identity, which

requires much effort and time.

Kim Dae-jung, on his election as the first president of a progressive party, framed the national interest of South Korea as peaceful coexistence with North Korea, which traditionally presumed absorbing the North's regime. The Kim administration believed that the Cold War power confrontation was to blame for Korea's division. In order to meet the newly defined national interest, it was a necessary step to transform the identity of North Korea from an enemy to be contained as a potential partner for cooperation. Furthermore, the Kim and Roh administrations chose to think of North Korea's nuclear program not as a source of threat to South Korea, but as a defensive strategy to cope with the US's hardline policy toward the North (Kim Hong Nack 2006, p.52). Thus it was a matter for diplomacy, namely, for cooperative solutions in such multilateral settings as the Four Party and Six Party talks (Choi Jong Kun, p. 129). This is because identifying North Korea's nuclear program as an imminent threat would lead to military measures, such as a surgical strike, and this was not acceptable for either administration, for which war deterrence on the Korean peninsula was an underlying principle of engagement with the North.

It was President Roh who expressed this attitudinal shift toward the North more directly and rigidly. Despite North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile test, the Roh government did not perceive it as threatening. Thus, whereas Japan punished North Korea with unilateral economic sanctions, South Korea continued its engagement policy through a ministerial meeting with the North. Regardless of the ongoing situations in the North and the internal and external criticisms, the stance of both progressive governments remained firm in terms of reframing North Korea's identity as a partner for cooperation. With this newly introduced identity of North Korea, comprehensive engagement took center stage in the South's domestic politics and resulted in resetting a collective identity within South Korea. As mentioned, the Roh administration was even clearer and firmer than President Kim in reconstructing the North Korean identity as a partner state. Accordingly, in 2004, for the first time in South Korean history since the end of the Korean War, the Roh administration did not clarify North Korea as an enemy state in its defense white paper (ibid., p. 130), which is something that has generated another intense controversy between the two political camps since then. The reformation of North Korean identity became an inseparable part of the identity dynamics in South Korea's domestic and foreign policy choice.

The Kim and the Roh administrations emphasized the importance of political and economic engagement as a tool for escaping the vicious circle of the security dilemma. Both administrations argued that North Korea might have been forced to choose military options once caught in spirals of crisis, and that engaging North Korea and directing it to cooperation with the rest of the world would eventually improve prospects for peace across the Korean peninsula. Therefore, South Korea's engagement policy carried with it a "flexible dualism", that is, the separation of politics and

economics, as opposed to previous governments' priority toward politics and its linkage to the economy (Moon Chung-in 1999, p. 39).

In order to protect the integrity of the new idea, President Kim installed a vanguard of Sunshine Policy promoters throughout his government, using the National Intelligence Service for communicating with the North, and mobilizing the unification ministry and his ruling Democratic Party for dealing with the South Korean public as well as the opponents. The policy was essentially coordinated by the president's closest aside, Lim Dong-won, who was twice appointed minister of national unification. Also, during Kim's tenure, two scholars, Moon Chung-in and Lee Jong-seok, played the role of so-called "Sunshine missionaries", conducting domestic and international campaigns to persuade audiences. Later, these men continued to played critical roles in the Roh administration, to sustain and strengthen the engagement policy (Choi Jong Kun 2010, p. 133). The Sunshine proponents formed a cohesive group, not only working closely with each other but also networking with middle-level technocrats in the government. Both administrations engaged in an incremental public campaign to persuade the public of the virtues of engaging with the North, which was a challenging task as the North Korean government was perceived by much of the public as an inhumane enemy that could not be trusted. Public opinion was almost equally split when the engagement policy had not yet been fully enforced, according to the data compiled by Choi Jong Kun (2010), indicating support for engagement accounting for 55 percent, while the opposition numbered 44 percent, in 1998. However, after the first inter-Korean summit, public support for the Sunshine Policy dramatically increased to 87.7 percent (p. 135-36).

Identity does not automatically change. For the transformation of identity, it is inevitable to go through a process of political collision and negotiations between old and new identities. Reconciliation in particular of an intractable conflictual relationship, as a new idea that requires a fundamental change in identity, has to persuade the public in reference to why such a policy shift can yield a better future than the traditional policy of containment. Promoters of a new identity must then be prepared for fierce discursive battles with the group that holds the traditional identity. It seems, therefore, unavoidable that the two progressive administrations that promoted the Sunshine Policy based on a new identity had to fight with conservative camps. In South Korea, which faces a nuclear threat from the North that is allegedly developed to fight against the South and the US, the road to reconciliation can be even more difficult to achieve than in any other nation. In this light, national identity that was constructed in relation to the North is intrinsically linked with the security of South Korea, which makes the relational identity transformation of the North even harder to achieve, consequently intensifying conflicts between groups that hold different identity conceptions toward the North within South Korean society.

4.1.2 North Korea's Nuclear Threat and Identity Politics of the Roh Moo-hyun Government

The continuation of the Sunshine Policy depended on the view that providing financial aid and promoting inter-Korean cooperation would eventually enhance North Korean dependence on the outside world, create a sense of security, and thereby modify its behavior. The engagement policy was labeled a "Policy for Peace and Prosperity" in the Roh administration, emphasizing international cooperation based on Korean initiatives. However, the Roh government had to face a great challenge from the beginning of his term because it was not long after the outbreak of the so-called second North Korean nuclear crisis in October 2002 that the Roh administration was inaugurated. It was announced by the Bush administration that North Korea had breached the 1994 Geneva Agreement, developing a uranium enrichment program. Consequently, the US stopped provision of heavy oil shipments to North Korea. In response, North Korea lifted its nuclear freeze and declared its withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003. In dealing with the nuclear issue, the Roh government insisted on a peaceful resolution, while opposing any sanctions against North Korea. In November 2004, in his speech in Los Angeles, Roh criticized the Bush administration's hardline stance toward Pyongyang, while expressing his view that North Korea's attempt to develop nuclear weapons was understandable considering its perception of the threat from the US (Min Im-dong 2004). Even in May 2005, when North Korea declared its possession of nuclear weapons, inter-Korean economic cooperation continued without any military action or economic sanction taken. The Roh administration preferred stable management of the situation to strict military or economic responses. From a realist point of view, balancing measures that should naturally have been taken in the face of an obvious threat were missing in the response of President Roh.

There could be many possible explanations behind this series of non-responses. At least before the 2006 nuclear test, external factors including multilateral diplomacy options like the Six Party Talks seemed to be a more efficient way to solve the issue without raising dangers of military conflicts on the peninsula considering that intelligence assessment of the North Korean nuclear capability indicated that the North's capability had yet to reach the point of possessing nuclear weapons in such a short time frame, thus buying more time for the international community to pursue a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Although intelligence assessments acknowledged that North Korea was increasing its nuclear materials, in order to make nuclear detonators, many tests of high-explosives and related data were still required, which would delay the completion of the nuclear project. Furthermore, it was expected that it would take such a long time for North Korea to make nuclear weapons small enough to launch on missiles. To the surprise of the world, however, only three years after North Korea began reprocessing, it was discovered that it had gone ahead with its

first nuclear test, the detonation of a nuclear device. Critics claimed later that the Six-Party Talks designed for North Korea's nuclear disarmament ironically served to delay necessary responses to North Korea's nuclear threat. The Six-Party Talks accomplished some achievements, such as February 13 Agreement 2007, in which the North promised to shut down and seal the *Yongbyon* nuclear facility and in return five other parties were to provide emergency energy assistance to the North among other positive steps to increase mutual trust. However, the repeated stop-go nature of the talks resulted in North Korea buying time to enhance its nuclear capabilities.

Identity politics of the Roh government can be clearly found in its responses to the North Korean nuclear test in 2006, which was the most significant phase in the course of its nuclear program. A nuclear test is a mandatory step in becoming a nuclear state and the strategic situation is completely altered after a nuclear test. The Roh administration also viewed North Korea's nuclear test as the red line that could not be tolerated. The following official statement after the nuclear test, stated that the "[South Korean] Government will resolutely respond to the situation in accordance with the principle that it will not tolerate North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006). It seemed inevitable to call for stringent diplomatic measures and a new round of wide-ranging sanctions authorized by the United Nations (UN). The most extreme demands asked for the invocation of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which provides for mandatory sanctions or even as a last resort military action to ensure compliance with Security Council resolutions in the case of "threats to international peace and security." At this critical juncture, the Prime Minister of South Korea, Han Myung-sook issued a statement that clarified that the ROK would not support any UN resolution containing military measures against the North in retaliation for its nuclear test, mentioning "there should never be war on the Korean peninsula" (The Guardian 2006). Her statement clearly illustrates the characteristics of the Roh administration's policy toward the North. The Roh government and its proponents contended that North Korea's nuclear weapons program was defensive in nature and designed to cope with America's hostile policy toward the North. Thus, even if the North developed nuclear weapons or long-range ballistic missiles, they were not designed to be used against the South. This highly optimistic perspective of the progressive camp in the South over the North's intention behind the nuclear project was well displayed in other policies of the Roh administration. For instance, a designation that defines the North as the "main" enemy of the ROK was deleted from the South Korean Defense White Paper in 2005.

The controversy over Roh's non-response to the North's nuclear project is in fact a reflection of the two contrasting images of North Korea, representing the complex nature of inter-Korean relations. Kim Sung-bae (2012) argues that debate about how to respond to North Korea's nuclear test might be termed an "identity war" (p. 345), which pertains to contending perspectives in the South regarding how to identify the North. If we understand that progressives' national identity

conception is constructed based on the ethnic nationalism narrative that prioritizes the concept of the one ethnic Korean nation, including the North as the most important value, the Roh government's mild reaction can be understood. For instance, after the 2006 nuclear test occurred, the presidential website criticized Japan for overreacting to the incident instead of denouncing Pyongyang's provocation (Ryu Chŏng-min 2006). Furthermore, a planned inter-Korean ministerial meeting was held under the Roh administration, just a week after the North's missile test firings despite the opposition party's strong demand to postpone high-level talks with the North in the aftermath of the missile launches (Kim Hong Nack 2006, pp. 48-49). The opposition party and some conservative media outlets insisted that the South had nurtured the North, pouring money into its regime, and the second nuclear crisis together with the disclosure of a secret payment of $ 500 million by the Kim administration to the North weakened domestic and international support for the engagement policy of President Roh.

However, President Roh's staff attempted to justify his "strategic silence" on the grounds that the missile test-firings were actually a political ploy rather than a security threat. Also, Roh's mild reaction is based on the assumption not only that the engagement policy would eventually help the North to open up and reform, but also that the nuclear project was defensive in nature and it was not designed to be used against the South. Furthermore, the former president, Kim Dae-jung argued that North Korea's nuclear policy was the result of the failure of US policy toward the North, but not due to the failure of the Sunshine Policy toward the North (Chŏng Dae-ha 2006). These assumptions, based on progressives' national identity conception, were unlikely to share common ground with opponents who saw the North as an arch enemy, thus causing an identity battle.

In the event, there were no concrete measures taken in terms of inter-Korean relations under President Roh as a balancing act to the North's nuclear project. South Korea only joined in sanctions against the North imposed by the UN Security Council. This was because the Roh administration interpreted the sanctions by UN resolution 1718 as mostly unrelated to South Korea, except for the luxury goods embargo and some other articles. The only meaningful move in the Roh government after North Korea's nuclear test was to vote for the UN human rights resolution on North Korea in November of the same year. However, this may have been a result of a political consideration to support Ban Ki-moon's election as UN Secretary General rather than a policy shift. The Roh government abstained from the same resolution in the following year on the grounds that it would unnecessarily provoke North Korea (Kim Sung-bae 2012, p. 347).

How did the Roh administration define its national interests in facing North Korea's first nuclear test? From a realist perspective, it was a critical security threat and proper balancing measures had to be taken within all possible means. However, there was only a very restricted response in reality. This is because, particularly in the course of South Korea's policy toward North Korea, there

was a tendency to put priority on identity logic more than on rationality under President Roh. Therefore, the policy choice Roh made was the result of identity politics that caused heated debates over how to identify North Korea in South Korean society.

4.1.3 Distancing from the US

More importantly, the progressive policies of the two administrations, in particular, the Roh administration, were not in line with those of the Bush administration, which was focused on the war on terror, in which the North was defined as one of the terrorist evil states, and had doubt about the efficiency of South Korean and Clinton administration's engagement. While the identity of the North in South Korea and the policy toward the North were significantly changing, American conceptions of North Korea were firmly fixed, seeing it as a threat (Shin Gi-wook 2012, p. 304). The identity of the North is inherently related to the security of South Korea and the change in inter-Korean relations naturally affects US-ROK relations. With transformation in views on the North, South Koreans thus became engaged in intense debates over the nature of their relationship with the US, including the military alliance. As many experts on Korean affairs have argued, during this period South Korea became caught between two conflicting narratives regarding its national identity: the "state-centered nationalism" narrative of conservatives (as termed in this research), or "alliance" identity (Suh Jae-jung 2004), which holds the traditional view of the US as a key ally and partner in national security; and the "ethnic nationalism" narrative of progressives, or "nationalist" identity (ibid.), which pits Korean identity against the US. This debate over the identity of the nation and the significant others became bitter and emotional, hindering rational discussion, largely due to the unique circumstance the South faces, that is, the dilemma between the strong belief in the ethnic homogeneity and the reality of a long-term political partition, and to the fact that the gap between these conflicting identities has widened. Under the two conservative governments that successively took office after two progressive regimes, the intensity of identity politics was not alleviated. On the contrary, the progressive camp in politics and civil society continued to contend with the conservative Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye governments on almost every key issue related to the US-ROK alliance as well as inter-Korean relations. The controversy and subsequent debates over the sinking of the South Korean naval ship *Cheonanham*, as well as the issue of launching the THAAD missile defense system, clearly illustrates the persistent division and confrontation between progressives and conservatives in South Korea.

In his most striking articulation of Korea's future role in a speech on March 22, 2005, President Roh announced that Korea would pursue the role of a balancer, not only on the Korean peninsula, but throughout Northeast Asia. This new vision of Korea aimed to resolve the conflict

between such major states in Northeast Asia as China, Japan and Russia while maintaining a military alliance with the US, and drew negative responses mainly from the US and Japan. They were not comfortable about the idea that Korea under the Roh administration would be distancing itself from the security alliance with the US and Japan and moving closer to China. The engagement policy toward the North under President Roh can also be understood as part of a role as balancer in the region. For Roh, integration and normalization with North Korea and resolution of the North Korean nuclear crisis are the foundations for a more assertive and constructive role for Korea throughout Asia. Roh's plan came to a standstill repeatedly under virulent attacks from the American Right. For instance, Daniel Kennelly argued that "The current government in Seoul is the most anti-American in the short history of the Republic of Korea. It is a left-wing administration that has fanned public sentiment against US troops," in the American Enterprise Magazine entitled "Time for an Amicable Divorce with South Korea" (cited in Pastreich 2005, p. 11). The Roh administration was consistently portrayed as an unreliable ally which undermined American security concerns, regardless of the real intention of President Roh, that is, whether he in fact aimed to distance himself from the US or not. Even the commitment of South Korea to the invasion of Iraq, made in spite of the public opinion that opposed it, did not receive much recognition from the Bush administration.

Anti-American sentiments and slogans swept South Korea during its 2002 presidential campaign. While these movements were not new for the country, they had a more important meaning than at other times, considering that, for the first time, they had a crucial impact on its alliance with the United States. When the second North Korean nuclear crisis had just occurred, presidential candidate Roh Moo-hyun declared to make the engagement policy with the North a success, which was clearly incongruent with the George W. Bush administration's desire to isolate and sanction Pyongyang. In the past, such a threat from the North would have made the South rely on its alliance with the US for national security. In addition, just before the 2002 election, a massive wave of anti-American sentiment had swept the South in response to the handling of a US military vehicle accident that killed two Korean schoolgirls. As progressives and nationalists that emerged as a new political power sought to reassess the US role in inter-Korean relations and unification, the strong alliance with the US was being questioned and became a subject of intense debate within the South. This is closely related to the new narrative of progressives, in which they perceive the US as one of the imperial powers that pursue their own interests on the peninsula, while the North is treated as a poor sibling in need of assistance and a partner to engage with based on the strong notion of ethnic nationalism.

The alliance between South Korea and the US was formed in the 1950s in the context of the Cold War to counterbalance the power superiority of the North over the South. In the post-Cold War era, the alliance still remains alive and to many in South Korea, it looks like the natural order of

things. However, South Korea in the 2000s under the Roh administration became highly critical of, in particular, the US military presence in the territory of South Korea. Just around the presidential election in 2002, hundreds of thousands of its citizens took to the streets to protest the acquittal of two American soldiers. Former human rights lawyer Roh Moo-hyun, who had advocated the withdrawal of US troops, won the presidential election in the wave of anti-Americanism. The combination of the rise of anti-American protests with the election of an allegedly anti-American president produced the perception that South Korea had been distancing itself from America. This raised the assumption that the strong ROK-US alliance was falling apart and a national narrative identity transformation was happening in South Korea. Nevertheless, during his presidency, Roh was actually not able to say "no" to America in many cases. For instance, when the US demanded the South to send troops to Iraq, Roh accepted this despite strong domestic opposition to it, even from his strong supporters as well as from his opponents.

South Korea's relations with two significant others, North Korea and the US, are intrinsically linked to each other as well as the issue of security. That is, South Korea's changing view on North Korea is related to ROK-US relations, in which the military alliance is the most important part. Thus, the growing anti-American sentiment in the 2000s is inseparable from the increasing pro-North sentiment in South Korea. Progressives who define national identity through ethnic nationalism naturally have a tendency to be pro-North and anti-America. In contrast, it is natural that conservatives who prioritize the founding values of South Korea, such as liberal democracy and a free economic system, to the ethnic notion of nation become prone to being anti-North and pro-America (Kim Keun-sik 2013, p. 48).

In the past, the North Korean threats were securitized by authoritarian regimes to solidify their authority and to raise people's loyalty to the state, South Korea. They were later framed as competition between "security through strong alliance with the US" vs "absence of security" by the conservative camp in the age of progressive regimes. On the other hand, the progressive strain utilized the frame of "nationalists" vs "anti-nationalists" related to the North Korean threats. In this context, the so-called "South-South conflict" has been further intensified (ibid., p. 53). The successive progressive regimes of Kim and Roh in the 2000s tried to officially change the view on the North from the enemy to a partner for cooperation, which raised strong criticism from conservatives who maintained the traditional view on the North. For instance, conflicts over how to define the North are well presented in the controversy related to the term "*chuchŏk* [the main enemy]" in the guide to military education of the Korean Ministry of National Defense. The controversy started in 2000 under the first progressive regime of Kim Dae-jung, and then, during the period from 2001 to 2004, the guide was not issued at all. However, in 2004 the Roh government decided to delete the term, the main enemy, which had been used from 1995. Instead, the expression was toned

down to "existing military threat of North Korea" and "direct and serious threat of North Korea," in the 2006 guide. Once again, under the conservative government of Lee Myung-bak, who took office after President Roh, the term was changed to "the enemy of South Korea" in the 2010 guide (Lee Yong-su 2017). The term *chuchŏk* has thus been used as a yardstick to identify a candidate's ideological leaning in presidential elections.

In order to adequately understand the ways in which South Korea approaches issues related to US-ROK as well as inter-Korean relations, the deeper questions of national identity that extends beyond foreign policy and domestic politics must be taken into consideration. Accordingly, the anti-American sentiment in South Korean society since the 2000s must be explained in the context of identity politics. The US has been a significant other, shaping South Korea's national identity in the post-liberation era. Shin Gi-wook (2012) argues that through analysis of US and Korean media coverage, the evolution of South Korean views on US-ROK relations from 1992 to 2003 reflected a larger societal shift led by progressives, to redefine relational South Korean national identity related to the US and the North.

The progressive regimes that attempted views on the significant others also tended to transform the self-identity. This has resulted in intense controversy over South Korea's past, even called a "history war", which will be elaborated in the following section.

4.2 National Identity Transformation: Reconstruction of the Self

The progressive regime of Roh Moo-hyun not only attempted to establish new relations with the significant others of North Korea and the US, but also paid much attention to its innovation to rebuild the meaning of the self, the most important component, in the construction of national identity. This intrinsically pertains to the interpretation of South Korea's past, that is, how to justify the process of nation-building after liberation and how to deal with wrongdoings of the past regimes, including failure to bring legal justice over pro-Japanese collaborators. The resettlement of the past history, in particular relating to the colonial rule by Japan and the military government, was pursued right after the inauguration of the Roh administration. This was part of the movement to strike at those people with vested interests who formed the ruling class under the military dictatorship and to advance reform. The issue concerning pro-Japanese collaborators was at the core among other issues related to the redefinition of history.

History Committees that were established under President Roh within the National Intelligence Service, police, and military, etc., investigated the histories of their departments. On May 3, 2005, the bill for "the Basic Law for Truth and Reconciliation", the so-called "History Law",

was passed by the National Assembly. This was one of the four reform bills submitted by the ruling Uri Party to the National Assembly in 2004. The History Law extensively covered major incidents during the past 100-year period from the conclusion of the *Eulsa* Treaty of 1905, the Japan-Korea protectorate treaty, until the incidents in the 1990s. The incidents to be investigated under the law included those involving death, injury, or disappearance caused by the unjustified exercise of state authority and human rights violations. The original bill was prepared on the initiative of the Uri Party, and the Grand National Party (GNP), the opposition party, opposed the bill during the National Assembly session, held in autumn 2004. Although some members of the Uri party rebelled against the bill, it was eventually passed with the consensus of the GNP members after several revisions were applied to the proposal according to the GNP's request (Cho Se-yŏl 2004, p. 196). The reason for the rebellion by some members of the Uri party and the GNP's shift to approval was that not only the military government, but also the left wing was included as a target of the investigation.

On May 31, 2004, the "Committee for Investigating the Conduct of Pro-Japan Collaborators during the Colonial Period" was established for the purpose of reinvestigating pro-Japan collaborators during the colonial period. The investigation covered the period from the start of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, an event which led to colonization, to Japan's defeat in WWII and liberation from Japan in 1945. Killing or abusing the anti-Japan and pro-independence activists and actively collaborating with Japan in the war of aggression as a second lieutenant or higher rank in the Japanese troops were considered pro-Japanese activities. According to this definition, the late, former president Park Chung-hee, the former lieutenant of the Japanese troops and father of Chairwoman Park Geun-hye of the GNP at that time and later the president from 2013 to 2017, was also categorized as a collaborator (Pak Hae-kyŏng 2004).

While the ideological conflicts of the Cold War impeded Koreans' efforts to uncover the truth about their past, South Korea, with democratization and the progressive regimes, began addressing the intentionally erased memories. This effort reached a milestone in 2005 when the South Korean government enacted a special law, the Framework Act, which established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea (TRCK) (Kim Dong-choon 2010, p. 526). This was, however, not the first attempt made by the South Korean government to pursue historical justice. The Special Investigation Committee (SIC), which had been established in September 1948 by the Special Act on Punishing Anti-National Conduct, was South Korea's first attempt to bring former Japanese collaborators to justice but was annulled by the Rhee Syngman regime in 1951. After this first try, South Korea made several attempts to rectify history. For instance, there was a trial of police officials who were suspected of ordering the shooting of demonstrators in April 1960 when President Rhee's twenty-year-old dictatorship encountered strong student resistance. Kim Dong-choon (2010) argues that "the TCRK can be considered a crystallization of Korea's unwavering efforts to confront

the injustices in its past" (p. 526).

During his presidency, President Roh Moo-hyun was plagued by the difficulty of drawing support from the establishment in general and the bureaucracy in particular. This was, in part, a result of his aggressive tackling of such sensitive topics as collaboration under Japanese occupation and human rights violations under authoritarian regimes. No official acknowledgement had been made for decades regarding the mass killing of civilians, called the *Jeju* April 3 incident, in which South Korean state forces massacred more than 20,000 residents of *Jeju* in response to an uprising by communist insurgents on 3 April, 1948. It was President Roh, who visited *Jeju* on October 21, 2003, who first officially acknowledged and announced "As the head of state, I sincerely apologize for the wrongdoings of the past state authority" (Hwang Ch'un-hwa 2018). This, as the first official statement by an incumbent, was only the beginning of Roh's campaign for truth. The search for the truth of history extended to the bitterly contested and deeply painful colonial period. Collaboration, as in any colonial society, ran deep, especially among the elites. Hence, tremendous controversy was evoked with the establishment of the commission. The search for truth was not limited to the colonial period but it tried to cover all past injustice and wrongdoings from colonial to authoritarian regimes. Among new regulations and institutions regarding the issue that were installed under the Roh government, of importance was the TRCK, which will be discussed in the following section. A variety of policies to clear up historical injustice can be understood as part of progressives' efforts to transform the master narrative on national identity, in particular, regarding modern and contemporary South Korean history according to their perspective.

4.2.1 Clearing up Past Wrongdoings and Truth Commissions

The existence of communist North Korea and the perpetuating state of confrontation with it have had a great impact on South Korean politics. South Koreans before democratization were indoctrinated with anti-communist ideology by the state. In doing so, the state installed legal means such as the National Security Law to protect the state from the communists' ideological invasion. The threat of communism was often exploited to justify human rights violations by the state power. Although this Cold-War politics has been profoundly weakened in the post-democratization era, it is still alive in South Korea, as seen in the presence of the National Security Law and conservatives' and rightists' strong support for it. Considering this context, it was quite surprising that TRCK was installed to redress the past wrongdoings, such as pro-Japanese collaboration and human rights abuse by the authoritarian regimes, in the face of strong opposition from the conservative camp. In the general election of 2004, the progressive Uri Party gained a majority of seats in the National Assembly and the political environment in 2004 marked a critical juncture in South Korea's history

of dealing with unresolved past issues. The policy of clearing up the past wrongs and injustices had already begun under the Kim Dae-jung administration when it passed a law to establish the Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths of the Republic of Korea (PTCSD) in 2000. The establishment of the Commission was a stepping stone toward truth and reconciliation under two progressive regimes.

The name "Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea" was taken from South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). A truth commission is an official government body temporarily installed to investigate a past history of human rights violations. Established according to "the Framework Act on Clearing Up Past Incidents for Truth and Reconciliation," the main task of TRCK was to deal with a history burdened with colonial legacies, mass killings, unresolved political incidents, and human rights abuse that had occurred since 1945. What should be noted here is the fact that the Framework Act did not aim to pursue legal punishment in the course of the settlement process but to emphasize truth-confirmation, identity transformation of victims and reconciliation between victims and perpetrators (Kim Dong-choon, p. 544). In South Korea, even until the 2000s, the state allowed only one kind of war-related memory and narrative, based on the Manichean Cold-War scheme of good South Korea and its allies, and evil North Korea and its allies. Political democratization provided a grand opening to reveal the truth of silenced past events as proclaimed in the Framework Act, particularly related to specific issues of collaboration, mass killings around the Korean War, and the suspicious deaths of the 1980s (ibid., p. 543).

Before the establishment of TRCK in 2005, the *Jeju* Commission under Kim Dae-jung was established in 2000 to investigate the *Jeju* April 3 incident and restore the dignity of victims and their family members. Between 1948 and 1954, a communist-led uprising on *Jeju* Island in Korea and the subsequent counter-insurgency campaign by the new anti-communist government of Rhee resulted in an estimated 15,000 deaths (*Jeju* Commission 2003, p. 369). After investigation, the commission offered seven recommendations: 1) the issuance of an apology; 2) the declaration of a memorial day; 3) the use of the report to educate students and the public; 4) the establishment of a memorial park; 5) the provision of essential living expenses to bereaved families; 6) support for excavations of mass graves; and 7) continuous support for further investigation and commemoration projects (Kim Hun Joon 2013). As of 2013, the government started to implement all of these recommendations. Immediately after the release of the report in 2003, President Roh Moo-hyun made an apology to the victims and families. This is of profound significance in that it marked the first apology issued by a head of state in South Korea regarding human rights abuse by state forces. In addition, it is noteworthy that since then the narrative of the incident in government documents and history textbooks has completely changed. The outcomes of the truth commission have initiated transformation of the official narrative. Most textbooks that had described the event as a communist

rebellion now began to provide a more detailed explanation of human rights violations in the incident. Also, a minimum level of subsidy was also selectively given to the victims and their families who had suffered from economic hardship and physical and mental illness. Both victims and activists who saw the limitations of the projects, however, pushed for a major revision of the law in 2007 to include further commemoration activities, specifically through establishment of a permanent foundation. As a result, the *Jeju* Foundation was created to further promote peace and human rights by maintaining the museum and memorial park, and conducting additional investigations. The commission also launched a long-term excavation project in 2006 to discover mass graves and find the remains of victims. By 2013, eight out of 151 mass murder sites had been discovered, and the remains of over 400 victims had been found (ibid.). The activities of the *Jeju* commission are generally assessed as a success.

In case of the TRCK, within the first four months, it received more than two thousand investigation applications, 80 percent of which were related to civilian massacre cases before and during the Korean War (Jeon Seung-Hee 2010, p. 626). The TRCK also made recommendations for individual cases. Overall implementation of these recommendations has been reported to be quite successful given that according to the TRCK's final report (2010), 361 out of 855 recommendations (42 %) were implemented. However, when it comes to the quality of the implementation, it should be noted that almost half of the implemented recommendations involved measures that required very little effort, such as placing the TRCK's report in government offices (177 cases), or supporting and participating in memorial services (55 cases). The TRCK also proposed that the government apologize for 179 individual cases and by 2013 only 52 apologies had been issued (Kim Hun Joon 2013). Such apologies that were mostly issued by local police chiefs and low-profile military commanders were, in fact, difficult to be acknowledged as apologies in a strict sense, because they were the mere expression of officials' regrets or condolences while delivering a public speech at a memorial service.

Although the establishment of the TRCK has paved a way toward truth and justice in the erased past incidents in South Korea, it has exposed limitations, largely because it was installed as a result of the political compromises between conservatives and progressives and thus essentially had structural restrictions, which will be elaborated in the last part of this chapter.

4.2.2 Conflicting Narratives over History of the War and Colonial Period

Before heading toward discussions over the limits of the TRCK, I will examine in this section another contribution that the policy of clearing up the past has brought to the society, specifically in providing alternative narratives of the controversial past of South Korea, thus eventually leading

toward gradual narrative identity transformation. The establishment of the TRCK in 2005, despite its limits, marks a turning point in the history of South Korean efforts to reinterpret the truth of issues like collaboration, the Korean war, and human rights violations that had been selectively remembered and forgotten. Among those issues, how the hegemonic narrative over the war and related violence exerted by the state forces has been challenged with the changing political context in South Korea will be closely discussed here, since debates over pro-Japanese collaborators were already introduced in chapter 3.

The authoritarian regimes of South Korea shaped the official narrative on the war through such legal measures as the Anticommunism Law, the National Security Law, and the Emergence Measures. As it is stated in the purpose of the TCRK, the Commission was indeed mandated, targeting those past regimes in order to "foster national legitimacy and reconcile the past for the sake of the national unity by honoring those who had participated in anti-Japanese movements and exposing the truth through investigation of incidents regarding human rights abuses, violence, and massacre occurring since Japanese rule to the present time, specifically during the nation's authoritarian regimes" (National Archives of Korea 2008). Hence, the TCRK opened a crucial space for the nation's forgotten pasts, presenting us with the challenge to understand the complexity of colonialities, postcolonialities, and the US intervention that all intertwined in Korea. One of the historical significances of TRCK lies in its success in bringing back to the surface the silenced voices that complicate the hegemonic memory of the Korean War such as the "June 25 war [*yugio*]", which refers to the official starting date of the war, 25 June in 1950.

Em (1993) categorizes the major historiographic positions in South Korea in relation to the interpretations of the Korean War and division into five groups: 1) the orthodox-international view; 2) the liberal-international view; 3) the critical-domestic view; 4) critical-interactive view; 5) the heterodox-international view. The first view is the official narrative, in which the Korean War is only blamed on Kim Il Sung and his colleagues, who were the mere Soviet puppets and thus, the division is to be a Soviet product. The second, the liberal-international view, suggests that although the division was caused by international forces in the context of the Cold War, both the US and Soviet Union were responsible for the division. In the third view, the critical-domestic view, the Korean people are partly responsible for the war and division, while continuing to criticize the superpowers that took advantage of Korea's internal conflicts between rightists and leftists. As Em argues, although domestic problems such as class conflict and political differences within South Korea are acknowledged in this narrative, the Korean people must be described as victims when it comes to the issue of the war and division. This view is very well in line with student protestors in the democratization movement. The fourth, the critical-interactive view that corresponds to *pokhapron* in Korean, explains that the Korean War was a civil war with a complex constellation of actors for

which both the international powers and Koreans should be blamed. Cumings (1981), whose argument strongly supports the view of *pokhapron*, maintains that the Korean War was a civil and revolutionary act that emerged from conflicts inherent in the complicated mixture of class, politics, and ideology in post-liberation Korea. This view enjoyed strong support from scholars as opposed to its lesser popularity among politicians. Finally, the fifth view, what Em terms the heterodox international view, refers to what is most commonly known as *chuch'eron* in Korean historiography. In *chuch'eron*, the Korean War as a civil war is denied but all the responsibilities for the division and the war are laid on America. In this perspective, the division would never have taken place without American support of right-wing nationalists, many of whom have been labeled pro-Japanese, or Japanese collaborators. This perspective was a favorite view among student organizations.

In South Korea, the Korean War is commonly called *yugio*, which literally refers to the date 25 June [1950] when the war officially began. In the term *yugio* the official narrative over the war, that is, the first orthodox international view in Em's categorization, is well revealed. Through the term *yugio* the nature of the Korean War is simplified out of a complex history, and thus the war is placed in the boundary of the state-sanctioned narrative and much more conducive to policing by anti-communist patriotism (Suh Jae-jung 2010, p. 504). The hegemonic narrative of the war in South Korea has been constructed around the officially sanctioned date of the war's beginning, *yugio*. Therefore, in South Korea, the war is understood within the framing of the *yugio*, which has served to highlight South Korea's state-sanctioned meaning of the war. This framing, in which North Korea is understood as the aggressor and the South as the victim, constructs the dualistic perception, as monumental history frequently does. This date of June 25 remains firmly fixed in the South Korean national narrative. In the official memory, North Korea is represented as the violator who broke the peace on the peninsula and the perpetrator who exerted extreme violence against Koreans. This official story is further combined with a memory of the US as a self-sacrificing savior who rescued South Korea from a communist invasion. On the other hand, South Korea is typically described as having been caught up in the war, without knowing about and preparing for the well-planned attack by the North Korean communist military with the support of the Soviet Union. The South Korean state is thus represented as an innocent and helpless victim in the *yugio* narrative (ibid., p. 507). The yugio narrative ignores the social context and political factors of the war, only to emphasize the timing and the North's action on the day of 25 June, 1950, as the most salient feature that defines the whole nature of the war. It thus deprives the war of the meanings and domestic historical context of postcoloniality, division, and national liberation, as well as an international Cold War context. The war is, as a result, reduced to nothing but the beginning of the evil communists' violent actions on the Korean peninsula. The central storyline of the *yugio* narrative is that the victim South Korea is saved from the evil North's aggression by bringing in the US as the leader of UN efforts. As a result,

the *yugio* narrative is well-combined with these three themes of the South as a victim, the North as the aggressor, and the US as a savior into an epic battle between good and evil. Likewise, in the *yugio* narrative, various memories of the war are erased and alternative understandings are discouraged. In the 2000s, however, the *yugio* narrative has also faced direct challenge. It is now in violent confrontation with counter-hegemonic alternative discourses that narrate the war from different perspectives. For instance, in alternative discourses, the Korean War is depicted as a civil war that began as soon as, or even before, the division in 1945, or as a postcolonial conflict. More importantly, those discourses have attempted to view the US role in the war and the South Korean society after liberation from different perspectives.

South Korea, like other states, and particularly before political democratization, produced an official narrative that is uniform and homogenizing, hoping to raise loyalty to the state and unity of the people. The voices of individuals and groups whose experiences that diverge from the sanctioned master narrative of the Korean War, thereby jeopardizing the hegemonic status of the official memory, have been silenced because they could harm the integrity of the official memory. However, the contesting accounts of the war gradually emerged throughout the process of democratization and this new beginning coincided with the establishment of TRCK. For instance, the mass killings related to the National Guidance Alliance (NGA) [*Kungminbodo yŏnmaeng*] that had been little known now came to be widely accepted as true and tragic history to the public. The state power detained tens of thousands of civilians and killed many of them in provinces such as Chungcheong and North Gyeongsang and on Jeju Island before the North's attack. In 1949, former communists and their sympathizers were forced to join the NGA so that they could be monitored by the state. By the end of the year, its membership had grown to about 300,000, many of whom were former political prisoners (Suh Jae-Jung 2010, p. 509). It is now a well-known fact that among members of NGA, there were innocent civilians who were signed up under threat and others who joined in response to offers of food because local officials were under pressure to meet their quotas (Choi Tae Yook 2014, pp. 250-52). The military and the police killed as many as 2993 members of NGA before the war as a preventative measure to protect South Korea from the ideological invasion of communism without considering whether they were genuinely communists or not. The so-called Jeju April 3 incident was one of this kind. In April 1948, a mass uprising began on Jeju Island, with hundreds of partisan forces active in the mountain areas, opposing the general election that they viewed as intended to legitimize Korea's division (ibid., p. 191). Korean military, police, and para-military forces mobilized to subdue the rebellion, and an estimated 15,000 of the 150,000 inhabitants were killed on the island alone (*Jeju* Commission 2003). Another tragedy, commonly called the Yŏsun (Yeosun) incident, happened in Yeosu and Suncheon in October 1948 where some units of the rebellion revolted and more than 3,200 civilians were confirmed to have been killed (Choi Tae Yook 2014, 155). Another happened in

November of the same year when the military executed a suppression campaign in South Gyeongsang province. The TRCK's report verified that a total of 12 incidents broke out at this time in South Jeolla, South and North Gyeongsang provinces, resulting in 1,090 deaths (TRCK 2010), but some argue the number of deaths could have been higher than 2,480 (Sun Jae-jung 2010, p. 510). These incidents spread throughout the South, especially in mountain areas where the opposition to the South Korean government turned to the hands of guerrillas, many of whom were persecuted by the Korean Army before the beginning of the war (Kim Dong-choon 2010, p. 541).

One of the primary reasons why the dominant *yugio* narrative came to be challenged is that the victims of state violence and their families have persistently told their stories (ibid., p. 531). In the case where a single narrative favored by the state suppresses all alternative voices, the presence of individuals who survived violent events or witnessed them is regarded as an existential threat to the hegemonic narrative. Thus, the very fact that these individuals survived massive civilian killings provides a high possibility of a potent counter narrative. Although the authoritarian regimes attempted to oppress the public sphere with legal measures and its security apparatus, survivors and their families, who managed to find unexpected forms and places for their stories to stay alive and be heard, have helped to construct counter discourses that eventually give rise to alternative understandings of the past and the present. The counter-public spheres grew rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s together with Korea's democratization in South Korea and the rise of progressive and leftist politicians. This forced the state to begin to accept the presence of the alternative narratives. The establishment of TRCK was a culmination of the process of democratizing the discourses regarding the war (Suh Jae-Jung 2010, p. 511).

The Korean War was not only about the competition between the two Koreas for the legitimacy to govern the whole nation, but also about a violent confrontation of conflicting ideas regarding how to interpret the colonial pasts and how to rebuild the postcolonial Korea. Hence, it is significant to notice that controversy over the Korean War is a battle in regard to how to remember the colonial past. When Korea was liberated from Japan, it was unclear what kind of new order should be pursued in an independent Korea. Competing projects of politicians and activists who had wished for Korea's independence ranged from socialist and communist to nationalist, republican and more. In addition, in rebuilding the Korean nation such domestic circumstances were interwoven with the two emerging superpowers of the US and the Soviet Union, which complicated the whole nation-building process of post-liberation Korea.

In this light, alternative perspectives on the war and the division have emerged as seen in Em's analysis of various views. These views do not exactly correspond to any specific time frame. For instance, the official narrative, the orthodox view in Em's terms, which was popular in the 1950s has persisted to this day. The critical-interactive view, commonly known as *pokhapron* in Korea,

emerged in the 1980s and has coexisted with other narratives. The rise of more liberal views such as the liberal-international view and the heterodox-international view, called *chuch'eron*, paralleled the rise of the student movement in the 1980s. Each of these historiographic positions clearly needs far more detailed explanation than can be undertaken here, and the boundaries between the perspectives are not as clear as Em's classification suggests. However, this categorization of historiography helps us to realize multiple narratives over the war and the division. More importantly, the diversifying historical narratives have helped eventually (re)construct the official narrative of the nation, as it is professional historians who write history books, which in turn, significantly affect social and political construction of historical narrative. The state official narrative of the war, which prescribes that the North should be blamed for the war and division, has been changed in the history textbooks in South Korea with political democratization and subsequent open debates and discourses, which will be closely studied in chapter 6.

4.2.3 Limits of Truth and Reconciliation Committee, Republic of Korea (TRCK)

The TRCK was born with such inherent limitations because the Framework Act itself was created as a result of political compromise between conservatives and progressives in the National Assembly in May 2005. The TRCK defined "its goal as reconciliation through truth" (Jeon Seung-Hee 2010, p. 627), but from the very beginning its ability to achieve this goal was called into question. On one side, the traditional political powers in South Korea attacked the TRCK project as a politically motivated tool of revenge, while on the other side, survivors and families of victims expressed doubts about its ability to reach its goal.

The work of the TRCK, however, has its meaning in that it raised fundamental questions about who is the holder of the truth in South Korean society. Although the state power exerted its violence on the civilians and perpetrated mass killings, the families of victims have, in reality, no choice but to appeal to the same state for grievance settlement. Thus, appealing to the state for settlement has ironically often resulted in strengthening the power of a state as the governor of the truth and the distributor of apologies and restoration. This is further complicated by the process of the Commission in order to confirm truth. Because the final decision within the Commission was made by a majority vote, the members of the Commission, the political tendency of the government, and the nature of the state have profound influence on the nature of the Commission's determination (Kim Dong-choon 2010, p. 548). Many of the TRCK's recommendations and accomplishments were reversed and the TRCK itself was terminated in 2010 by the conservative government of Lee Myung-bak, which reveals the vulnerability of the Commission and its fundamental conception, that is, speaking truth to the power of the state. The TCRK's instability also reveals the structural dilemma

that the redress movement faced when the commission needed to deal with wrongdoings committed by the state. In the case of South Korea especially, considering that most of the alleged past wrongdoings were committed by authoritarian regimes or conservative ruling elites, the policy of clearing up past wrongdoings under progressive regimes has been regarded as a political threat to conservatives and thus resulted in strong opposition from conservative politicians and civic organizations, reducing its original and fundamental objectives into something political with a hidden agenda to harm the legitimacy of conservatives. This consequently leads us to the deeper question of whether the conservative regimes can investigate their own past wrongdoings and punish themselves. Hence, one of the challenges the TRCK faced was to keep a balance between functioning as a neutral entity, established by the state to pursue an objective truth independent of any demands by civil society, and being part of a larger redress movement, led by victims and their families and designed to challenge the status quo (Suh Jae-jung 2010, p. 522).

Furthermore, its challenge was complicated by its essential binary framework of "victims versus perpetrators", within which it carried out its tasks. The TRCK was given power to prove whether the claims of injury and damage filed by victims was true and valid, and it focused on investigating whether the self-declared victims did in fact sustain the injury and damage from the perpetrators of violence. According to its binary framework, two groups of people's positions were completely overturned: one group of people from security threats to victims; the other from protectors and fighters of national values to perpetrators (ibid.). At the same time, in this framework, the complicated positions of victims and the nature of the contestation between the two groups were essentially simplified or erased. Hence, nationalists, liberals, socialists, and communists were all categorized into one group of victims while the personal contexts of their aspirations and motives, such as personal revenge or recovering property, were not taken into consideration in determining anyone's status as a victim. Thus, the task of the TRCK essentially included the danger of deleting the historical and personal contexts of victims from history.

The limitation of TRCK also stems from the fact that the TRCK's work was fundamentally dependent on the changing political context. The TRCK started its work under the progressive Roh Moo-hyun administration which fully supported the commission's activities. However, it was to see its hasty ending under the conservative Lee Myung-bak administration that essentially disagreed with the commission's core values (Kim Dong-choon 2012, pp. 202-04). This became evident when state officials under the Lee government became uncooperative with TRCK requests along with its significant budget cut. Eventually, although the TRCK had the right to request an extension of its mandate for up to two more years, its new president appointed by President Lee Myung-bak requested only a two-month extension and hurriedly closed down the project of the commission (Kim Hun Joon 2013).

It is also pointed out that there were two fundamental limits of the TRCK's activities, one internal and the other external (ibid.). Firstly, the internal limit is placed in the fact that while truth commissions are created to investigate the truth, there are different notions of truth: factual or forensic; personal or narrative; social or dialogue; and healing or restorative truth. The TRCK aimed to focus on the factual or forensic truth of individual cases, unlike the *Jeju* Commission that attempted to create a comprehensive and historical truth in addition to the individual truths of particular cases. The *Jeju* Commission's final report thus had constructed a single historical narrative to tell to society, while in the TRCK report on individual cases, the master narrative was missing. For the TRCK, every truth existed as a set of individual facts, failing to form a comprehensive narrative that could link the individual cases. The external factor that limited the TRCK's work could be found once again in comparison with the *Jeju* case, in which local advocacy networks and civil society participation were the most important factors in the process of facilitating favorable domestic and international conditions. The two and a half years that was given to the *Jeju* commission was not a sufficient amount of time to investigate the half-century old incident where an estimated 15,000 to 30,000 civilians were killed, but this was made possible with strong local support. Efforts of local activists, as well as victims themselves and their families, remained strong not only before and during the investigation process of the truth commission process but also even after the release of the commission's final report. This struggle and support empowered local activists and politicians to further demand the effective implementation of the commission's recommendations. This external support from local communities and activists was absent in the case of the TRCK (ibid.).

The last limitation pointed out in some articles (Suh Jae-jung 2010; Jeon Seung-hee 2010) is whether the TRCK's work can result in reconciliation when, in particular, the policy of clearing up the past is highly politicized. This limit is closely related to the vulnerability of the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives that is explained in chapter 3, that is, whether the master narrative of progressives can contribute to conflict transformation and reconciliation. The TRCK's binary framework of victims versus perpetrators or truth versus cover-ups, which is also at the core of the ethnic nationalism narrative, has empowered the victims to be the bearers of the truth, while dividing society and separating victims from perpetrators. As a result, the binary framework of the TRCK might unintentionally promote the intensification of conflict, only providing different definitions of victims and perpetrators from that of the authoritarian regimes, but still dividing the society according to this dualistic framework.

5. Third Juncture: Emergence of the New Right and History War

The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives started to be institutionalized under the two progressive regimes, initially in foreign policies toward the significant others of the North and the US, and later in domestic policies in relation to the concept of self identity, that is, how to interpret South Korea's birth and development. The policy changes in foreign policy mean that the two progressive Korean governments of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun attempted to set new relations with those significant others based on their own interpretation of Korean identity. Such revitalized thinking about national identity necessarily included reevaluation of South Korea's important relationships with North Korea and the US. Consequently, identity plays an increasingly important role in shaping Korea's relations with these nations and policies regarding them. Furthermore, progressive regimes sought to "correct" history through such policies as "clearing up the past wrongdoings" and the consequent establishment of truth commissions. This chapter deals with the second historical juncture of the emergence of the New Right movement from the conservative camp that emerged around 2004, with the feeling of crisis raised by progressives' policy and narrative transformation. Strong opposition of the New Right supporters toward the narrative transformation and policy change ignited intense debates, the so-called "history war," in South Korea concerning how to view the country's modern and contemporary history.

In the context of constructivists, collective identity has significance in international politics, since it informs not only what states do and should be, but also how states interpret other states' intentions and actions. The collective identity of states is, therefore, closely linked to foreign and security policies. According to Schweller (2004), cited by Sjöstedt (2013), transforming an issue into a threat image "is a subjective one that is only partly determined by objective acts" (p.144) and this is clearly in line with the claims of securitization theory, where security is regarded as a speech act. That is, securitization needs to be understood as an inter-subjective process: threat perceptions cannot be objectively measured. This becomes clear if we look at different attitudes between conservatives and progressives toward the North Korean nuclear threat: the former, who see the North as the enemy, argue for taking into consideration harder measures like sanctions or military options; the latter, who identify North Korea as a partner for co-existence, prefer to have open dialogues and cooperation with it. Likewise, narratives on national identity become socially constructed and serve as a source of ontological security for a national collective (Son Sarah 2015, p. 48).

The great shift in world politics, the end of the Cold War, along with the domestic zeal for democratization, greatly disrupted the political landscape in Korea, wherein the legitimacy of traditional ruling conservatives was significantly undermined as left-wing and progressive forces began to exercise a political voice greater than ever imagined before. As elaborated in the former

chapter, with two progressive administrations' adoption of new policies, the conservative strain and its supporters felt threatened by inter-Korean dialogues and cooperation, the historical reevaluation of the US, and, more importantly, the reassessment of the birth of South Korea, all of which led to casting doubts on the legitimacy of South Korea as a "true" representation of the whole Korean nation that authoritarian regimes had claimed beforehand. In this regard, the political activism of conservative civil groups that emerged in the 2000s was a kind of reactionary movement in the face of social and political challenges threatening the long-standing conservative hegemony in Korean society (Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Ryu Dae-young 2004; Eom Han-jin 2004). One of the important features of conservatives' political activism in the 2000s is that it was the civic organizations, not formal political institutions, which came to the forefront (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p. 12). Politically conservative civic groups, who had not needed to be politically active before because they had enjoyed privileges under the protection of authoritarian regimes, came out to take to the streets to raise their voices and to protect their own interests and identity. Conservatism that experienced the loss of its hegemonic status in institutional politics under the first progressive regime of Kim Dae-jung in the late 1990s was now forced to become a resistance ideology in the 2000s. This political reversal has made conservatives go through self-reflective reforms in line with the democratic political context (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p.11). Thus, the political activism of conservatives can be read as a sign of conservatives' fear and unease (Lee Nami 2002, p. 37), with the collapse of their core identity based on anti-communism.

Another point to be noted is that some conservative Protestant organizations have taken an active role in conservatives' political activism since the 2000s. During the ideological chaos after the liberation, most Korean Christians found that Christianity and Marxism could not coexist. Then the Korean War greatly intensified the anti-communist and pro-American sentiment of the Korean Christians. Since then, the pro-American, anti-communist sentiment has been generally shared by the entire Korean church. Under the authoritarian regimes, South Korean conservative churches were in general apolitical or submissive to power. Ryu Dae-young (2004) argues that the reason some evangelical right groups came to the forefront of rightist upsurges in the 2000s is that its leaders found a "power vacuum" in Korean society, which was created by the tug-of-war between the cold-war-period hegemonic conservative groups and the new, reform-oriented progressive camps. This active involvement of Protestants in conservative political activism is also deeply related to the anti-Protestant nature of the ethnic nationalism narrative that views conservative Protestants as pro-US and anti-nationalist (Seo Joong-seok 2007).

Amid such political and societal shifts, the so-called "New Right" emerged. Briefly defined, the New Right was a conservative political movement motivated by the necessity to reinvent conservatism for a democratic context. The locus of this movement's political platform was the free

market, that is, neoliberal economic policy. It was when traditional conservatism faced crisis that scholars who led the movement of the New Right began to reinterpret Korea's past (Macrae 2016, p. 329-30). With the emergence of the New Right movement and its effort to turn South Korean history away from the allegedly left-leaning narrative of progressives, the state-sanctioned master narrative which had dominated the society before democratization now has evolved into the state-centered nationalism narrative, whose ideological foundation is based on neoliberalism (Macrae 2016) and South Korea-centered nationalism (Yun Hae-dong 2012), which is similar to patriotism toward South Korea as a political entity while based on the ethnic notion of the nation.

In the following section, two important factors in the right wing movement in the 2000s will be introduced: firstly 1) conservative Protestants who played a leading role in the political activism of conservatives/rightists; and then 2) the New Right movement that explosively emerged around 2004. The role of evangelical rightists in those activities has profound impacts on rightists' political activism. The New Right movement strived to respond to the collapse of their identity based on anti-communism, which urged conservatives to present a rational, more appealing image in accordance with democratic values. In order to accomplish this task, the New Right began by presenting fresh conceptions of modern Korean history as well as pursuing neoliberalism as its core principle. Finally, the features and limits of the state-centered nationalism narrative that was reshaped with the emergence of conservative civic groups' political activism in the 2000s, as a reaction to the progressives' identity transformation, will be closely examined.

5.1 Resistance of Conservatives

Policy changes under the progressive regimes as seen in the former chapter made proponents of conservatism realize the urgent threat to their interests and identity. It was conservative civic groups that were actively engaged in political activities such as street protests in the 2000s and in particular, among those groups, conservative Protestant organizations took the central position in the new conservatives' political activism of the 2000s (Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Kang In-chŏl 2006; Ryu Dae-young 2004; Eom Han-jin 2004). Kang In-cheol (2006) argues that active engagement of evangelical churches in political activities encouraged and inspired political conservatives who were struggling with their crisis, caused by failing to win the two successive elections in 1997 and 2002 (pp. 26-32).

The political activism of conservatives in the 2000s was a kind of reactionary movement to resist policy changes under the progressive regimes, and related to the key concepts of their national identity formation: self identity, that is, how to view the birth and development of South Korea; and

the two significant others, which means reformation of relations with North Korea and the US. Also, it was a reaction to a new form of street protest, candlelight vigil, which has been frequently employed since the 2000s by progressive civic groups and civilians where the anti-American and anti-conservative sentiments prevailed. As a result, the rightist and conservative civic groups also started to actively mobilize their supporters to street protests to express their political opinions in the face of a threat to their identity. It is noteworthy that civic organizations took active roles in these, rather than formal political institutions. Among those civic groups, it was the evangelical Protestants that revitalized conservative civic groups' political engagement. In the following section, the significant role of street protest in South Korean politics will be first introduced. Then the political activism of conservative civic groups to resist to reforms led by progressives and the role of Protestants in conservative political activism will be researched. A close examination of the New Right movement that focused on the controversy over interpretations of South Korean history will then follow. Lastly, the characteristics and limits of the state-centered nationalism that derived from the pre-existing state-sanctioned narrative will be elaborated on.

5.1.1 Street Protests in South Korea

South Korea is a special case when it comes to street protest. It was political protest that had always propelled South Korea's democratization. Through the mass uprising in April 1960, South Koreans ended the autocratic rule of Rhee Syngman. In June 1987, another mass mobilization eventually forced the authoritarian rulers to concede democratic reforms. On the other hand, street protest became the new norm in the democratic space of South Korea. The strategies of street protests in South Korea were developed over decades, in often painful and dangerous circumstances. In the l980s, such harsh countermeasures as tear gas and torture were employed by the state forces. Political activists and student movement leaders expressed their dissent to the state authority through protests over a wide range of causes, from press freedom, trade policies, farmers' and laborers' rights, and toward the US military presence. However, it is lay people, civic organizations and even opposition political parties and lawmakers who have taken to the streets since the 2000s in a nonviolent and peaceful way in protest at government policies. Observing the pervasiveness of protest in South Korea in 2008, an Al Jazeera reporter came to the conclusion that "protest has become part of [South Korean] culture" (cited in Kim Sun-chul 2017). Through analysis of the causes that prompted the mobilization for street protests during the 1990s and 2000s against US military bases in the South, it is argued that "the protest movement actually became quite powerful" in South Korea (Lahiri 2017). Those experiences of street protests shaped the recent massive candlelight protests over the issue of President Park's impeachment in 2016 and 2017.

The advent of the candlelight vigil as a new form of protest in 2002 signified important changes distinct from earlier forms of protest. In the past, a protest scene in South Korea was filled with violent clashes and the exchange of tear gas between protesters and riot police. Violent protests persisted into the 1990s, well after South Korea's democratic transition, but the emergence of the candlelight protest offered a new platform that enabled protesters to express their seriousness of intent through peaceful means. Specifically, the 2016-17 candlelight protests to impeach President Park Geun-hye were remarkable in their absence of violence, despite the high political tension and massive number of protesters gathered. On the one hand, this had to do with greater tolerance on the part of the police and favorable court rulings that opened up new marching routes previously unavailable to the protesters. But it also had much to do with the adept handling of the rallies and marches by the organizers. Combined with unprecedented levels of frustration and anger among South Koreans, the outcome was explosive. Week after week, the coalition of more than 1500 civic organizations successfully mobilized millions of South Koreans on the streets in dozens of cities and channeled their anger into a powerful political message. Eventually, the candlelight protests pushed initially reluctant lawmakers to cast their vote for the impeachment of the president in the National Assembly, marking one of the most significant events in South Korea's political history.

While the success of the anti-Park candlelight protest illuminates the growth and maturity of civil society in South Korea, it brings attention to the weakness of its party system and institutional politics as a mechanism for political mediation. In South Korea, a typical party is built around a single leader at the center, without a strong party base grounded in grassroots demands or interests. Political scientists call Korea's parties "cadre parties," meaning elite driven rather than mass-oriented, "electoral-professional parties," focused on winning office rather than enacting platforms, and "catchall parties," not reflecting the interests of any particular class or group (Shin & Moon 2017, p. 120). In this context, it is civil society organizations that do the work of aggregating interests and addressing demands, which are typically the roles of parties in countries where parties are stronger. In the absence of stable political parties with which to communicate political agendas and develop a shared identity, civil society organizations often bypass the mediation of political parties when it comes to promoting new agendas or resisting policies. Consequently, direct action such as street protest is frequently used as a tool to mobilize the public and to attract the decision makers' attention. There are some signs that other democratic processes are developing alongside protest tactics, such as a campaign to set up a website to help lay people contact elected officials. But for the most part, South Koreans, distrust their leaders and institutions, which explains the reason why they rely so heavily on protest above all other forms of democratic action. South Korean political parties have been characterized by their extreme fluidity, which involves frequent splits, mergers and name changes. As Katherine Moon concludes, "If governance structures were working properly then

citizens normally would be channeling their concerns through institutional processes such as reaching out to their elected leaders, and going to the courts. Spilling out into the street is a sign of political dysfunction" (Lahiri 2017). Furthermore, street protest culture means that civic groups and social activists play a key role in South Korean politics through constructing public discourses and mobilizing the people to action.

In this regard, conservative civic groups came to the fore of conservatives' political activism in the 2000s and since then have utilized street protest as a tool to resist policy changes and the narrative transformation of progressives. It is interesting that street protest was a favored instrument of progressives/leftists who were against the authoritarian regimes before the democratization. Now, it has been adopted as an instrument to express the resistance of conservatives who have lost their dominance in politics and society.

5.1.2 Political Activism of Conservative Civil Society

Rye Dae-young (2004) points out that political activism of conservative civic groups came to fore in the context of the end of the Cold War and the democratization of South Korea, which resulted from weakening anti-communism and strengthening anti-Americanism, which were regarded as threats to core values of conservative national identity. Therefore, conservatives who felt insecure with the engagement policy with the North and the reevaluation of relations with the US under the two progressive regimes of Kim and Roh could not but resist these progressives' attempts to reshape the national identity. After democratization, political activities of progressive civil society were explosively intensified, especially in such cases as candlelight protests, which ironically ignited conservative civic groups' political engagement. In this light, the political activism of conservatives was a reactionary movement as well as an imitation of progressives' political activism.

The use of candlelight as a specific form of street protest in South Korea can be traced back to 2002 when two teenage girls were killed by US armored vehicles on military training maneuvers. Thousands gathered in *Gwanghwamun* Square to commemorate the victims. The candlelight protest was then picked up by activist groups and turned into a symbol of the movement against the perceived injustice. Ever since 2002, mass demonstrations in South Korea have taken the form of candlelight vigil and there have been three more cases of mass candlelight protests: 2004 against the impeachment of President Roh Moo-hyun; 2008 ignited by the sudden resumption of the importation of US beef products; 2016-17 to call for Park's impeachment.

What this research points out is that although it had been largely ignored until thousands of people gathered in the counter-candlelight, so-called '*Taegukgi*', protests of 2016 and 2017 to support President Park, there have existed reactionary protests organized by conservative Protestant

organizations together with rightist civic groups whenever candlelight protests happen, and these have occurred since the first candlelight vigils in 2002. The 2002 candlelight protests called for the revision of an agreement between South Korea and the US, commonly called the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), concerning the treatment of US forces in South Korea, punishment of the US soldiers responsible and the official apology from the US government, none of which have ever been realized. It was the upsurge of anti-American sentiment and discourses in the candlelight vigil in 2002 that ignited a kind of reactionary movement, the counter-candlelight protests. The strong alliance with the US along with anti-communism has been at the core of national identity of most conservatives, and anti-Americanism expressed through candlelight vigils made them feel a sense of their own national identity crisis. As a reaction to this, rightist groups with strong support from Protestants successfully held street protests, such as the "Anti-Nuclear, Anti-Kim (Jong Il) and Unification 3.1 National Convention for Unification (Anti-Nuclear/Anti-Kim)," on March 1, 2003, the "Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Kim 6.25 National Convention for Strong Alliance with the US" on June 21, 2003 and "The 55th anniversary of National Foundation Day, Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Kim 8.15 National Convention" on August 15, 2003. What ignited this series of mass gatherings of rightists was the "Peace Prayer Meeting for Our State and Nation" on January 11 and 19, 2003, organized by the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) and the Korea Christian Leaders Association where Korean and American National flags were being waved to signify strong ties between the two (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p. 13). In a rightist monthly magazine, *Wŏlgan Chosun*, it was reported that mega churches provided financial support for the "Anti-Nuclear/Anti-Kim" protest, as well as mobilizing church members to the event (Cho Gab-je 2003). Cho Gab-je (2003) claims in his article, issued right after the "Anti-Nuclear/Anti-Kim" street protest, that current conflicts in South Korea are a matter of whether you are on the side of South Korea or Kim Jong-il in the North, freedom or dictatorship, and patriots or turncoats, rather than a matter of whether you are one of the conservatives or progressives, and rightists or leftists. Cho Gab-je (2017) also maintains that *Taegukgi* protests stem from the "Anti-Nuclear and Anti-Kim (Jong Il) Unification 3.1 National Convention for Unification (Anti-Nuclear/Anti-Kim)" protest in 2003. Protestant leaders and organizations emerged as key players in organizing street protests of conservatives through this series of mass gatherings in 2003, when the political conservatives lost their mobilizing power with the failure of presidential elections in 1997 and 2002, which will be further discussed in a later section. Political activism of conservatives did not emerge overnight. A series of conservatives' mass gatherings in 2003 was a reaction to a series of policy changes that happened under the Kim Dae-jung government, such as in relations with North Korea and the US. Those conservatives who came out to the streets in 2003 were those who strongly felt the need to protect their core values of anti-communism and pro-Americanism (Ryu Dae-young 2004, p. 60).

This political activism of conservatives was further intensified under another progressive regime of Roh Moo-hyun. On March 12, 2004, the National Assembly voted to impeach President Roh Moo-hyun for breaching an election law, and he was forced into two months of political limbo. The impeachment came about because the conservative opposition, which at the time dominated South Korea's parliament, argued the president had contravened the country's voting rules by openly supporting the *Uri* party in the run-up to assembly elections. This drove thousands of people onto the streets in protest. Some 170 people, mainly from "*Nosamo*", the official Roh Moo-hyun camp support group, gathered to urge South Korean lawmakers to nullify the impeachment discussion, five days before the motion of impeachment was to be put to a vote. On the day the impeachment motion was passed, about 12,000 people protested near the National Assembly, declaring that Roh's impeachment was invalid. The number of people who gathered to rally reached 70,000 on the following day (Kim Mi-young 2004). Weekly rallies reached their peak on March 20, when at least 200,000 people took to the streets in over 50 cities across the country, according to the rally organizer (Kim Da-sol 2016). In a survey by the *Yonhap* News agency, of 1,018 South Koreans on March 12, 7 out of 10 said they felt the vote to impeach was improper. About a month later, voters punished conservative parliamentary candidates with a victory for the *Uri* party in the general elections on April 15, 2004 (*Joongang Ilbo* 2004). The *Uri* party won control of the National Assembly, tripling their seats to 152 to take a majority, thanks to voters' fury against the impeachment. In May, the Constitutional Court overturned the verdict, saying Roh had violated the law, but not gravely enough to warrant his removal from the presidency. There was a series of counter-candlelight protests organized by 369 conservative civic groups, supporting the impeachment and accusing the media of manipulating the public survey (*Yonhap* News 2004). While conservative Christian organizations did not actively participate in counter-candlelight over the issue of the Roh's impeachment, the CCK together with over 300 other rightist civic groups actively convened protests or mass prayer meetings whenever necessary to oppose policies of the Roh government. For instance, a mass street protest was held at the Seoul City Hall square on October 4, 2004, called "10.4 National Convention to protect National Security Law", where more than 100,000 people were mobilized (Cho Ho-jin & Kim Ji-eŭn 2004). Korean national flags along with American National flags were waved and prominent Protestant ministers participated. For conservatives, the presence of National Security Law has its importance to protect their ideology and identity from the threats of communists and North Korea. A minister of *Kŭmran* church, one of megachurches in Seoul, Kim Hong-do, claimed in the protest that the current society of South Korea was full of secret agents for North Korea and that Protestant churches should take a leading role in driving out those followers of North Korea and communists from South Korean society (Baek Chan-hong 2009). As seen in these cases, Protestant churches have actively raised their voices regarding the issue related to the core value of national

identity they hold.

Not only do Protestant churches take to the streets to protest against progressive regimes over the issues related to anti-communism or pro-Americanism, but they have also actively organized mass street protests over issues related to their interests. When the Roh administration pursued the revision of the Private School Act in 2004, conservative churches together with conservative politicians strongly expressed their opposition to the revision through street protests as well as lobbying. This was because around 80 percent of private schools in South Korea are run by Christian organizations. The already bad relations between Protestant churches and President Roh Moo-hyun worsened with the issue of the Private School Act revision. It was even argued later that Korean Protestant churches were the main political enemy of progressive President Roh Moo-hyun (ibid.).

In the summer of 2008, once again, a series of candlelight protests took place in major South Korean cities in response to the Lee Myung-bak government's decision to resume US beef importation. The ban on US beef imports had been placed in 2003 after the discovery of mad cow disease in the United States. The new deal by the Lee government included the removal of the regulation that limited imports of beef from cattle under 30 months old, which were believed to increase the risk of mad cow disease. Triggered by this public health concern, the candlelight protests continued for more than 3 months. The number of protest participants reached 120,000 on 5 June, 200,000 on 6 June, and the rally held on 10 June climaxed with one million people (Lee Keehyeung 2017). Despite the known risks, the Korean government justified its decision by claiming that resumption of the US beef market was the country's best path to economic growth. Korea's approval of beef imports was, indeed, given for the purpose of an expanded trade agreement with the US. Korea's desire for the Republic of Korea and the United States Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was accompanied by US insistence on resuming the beef imports. Tension mounted between the candlelight protesters' value of health safety and the government's value of economic growth. Lee's government was paralyzed by protesters' outpourings of anti-regime sentiment. Once again, it was conservative Protestants that started to hold a series of mass prayer meetings as a reaction to the 2008 candlelight protests. Conservative Protestants felt a strong sense of crisis largely due to anti-(conservative) regime/anti-American sentiments and discourses which prevailed in the protests. In the "Special Prayer Meeting for Unity of the Nation" organized by the CCK, the retired minister, David Yonngi Cho (Cho Yong-ki) of the world's largest Yoido Full Gospel Church, had the main speech, making accusations of false rumors about mad cow disease as an evil plot by Satan (Cho Hye-jin 2008). Furthermore, he argued that false rumors that caused people to have "mad-cow disease phobia" were also an attempt to drive a wedge between South Korea and the US. The Protestant groups organized more mass prayer meetings in August and expressed appreciation for Bush's visit to Korea, saying that we should be thankful to God who sends us America in the time of

a crisis (Lee So-hŭn 2008). The US president George W. Bush mentioned as a response that Korean churches had always prayed for the nation whenever it faced a crisis. There were other smaller prayer meetings held in several megachurches in Seoul. Likewise, Protestant churches utilized mass prayer meetings as a chance to fight against candlelight protests in 2008 which raised critical voices against America. As seen in counter-candlelight protests in 2002 and 2008, anti-US sentiment shown in candlelight protests intensified conservatives' and Protestant churches' strong reactions and feelings of crisis.

The 2016-17 candlelight protest over the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye was distinctive in many ways. Beginning in October 2016, South Koreans began gathering weekly to protest against President Park Geun-hye after the news reports that she had been unduly influenced by a close confidante. In December 2016, days after a massive gathering in the capital's *Gwanhwamun* Square, the South Korean National Assembly voted to impeach Park. Specifically, the candlelight protests in 2016 and 2017 were remarkable in the absence of violence considering the massive number of people who gathered. The weekly candlelight protests were organized by "Emergency Action for Park's Resignation", a coalition of more than 1500 civic organizations. In the past, the work of large coalitions was often disrupted by fierce infighting among competing groups. To avoid discord, the anti-Park coalition set rules for decision-making based on the lowest common denominator among participant organizations. Combined with unprecedented levels of frustration and anger among South Koreans, the outcome was explosive. Week after week, the coalition successfully mobilized millions of South Koreans on the streets of dozens of cities and channeled their anger into a powerful political message. Eventually, the candlelight protests pushed reluctant lawmakers to cast their vote to impeach the president in the National Assembly, marking one of the most significant events in South Korea's political history.

On the other hand, the bigger the anti-Park candlelight protests grew, the more people also gathered in pro-Park protests, commonly called "*Taegukgi* [the South Korean national flag] rallies". Waving the national flags along with the US stars and stripes, and shouting military-style slogans, tens of thousands of supporters of the arrested former president Park rallied. Gathering in streets near Seoul City Hall, Park's supporters, many of them in their 60s or older, shouted for the release of President Park and the dismissal of the National Assembly, and roared in approval when organizers of *Taegukgi* rallies accused Park's political rivals of being leftist North Korea sympathizers and turncoats. The beginning of the 2016-17 *Taegukgi* protest as a counter-candlelight movement also took the form of a Protestant mass prayer meeting. Yang Dong-an, a right-wing journalist and researcher, explains that the beginning of the *Taegukgi* protests in 2016 was the "Mizpah National Prayer Meeting" on 6 November, organized by a Christian coalition group, "National Prayer Association", whose actual leader was Lee Yong-hee, the leader of the Esther Prayer Movement

(*Chinchŏng Bangsong* 2017). Soon after that, a Protestant new-right organization, called the "New Korea Movement" led by a minister, Seo Kyung-seok, first held pro-Park protests on November 10, 2016. These two separate counter-candlelight mass protests organized by conservative Christian groups sparked so-called *Taegukgi* rallies, which were organized by political rightist groups including "*Parksamo*", Park's supporters' group, together with Christian groups, having the first *Taegukgi* rallies on 19 November. Since then, Christian groups have joined the *Taegukgi* protests while they also have organized their own separate counter-candlelight protests in the form of mass prayer meetings.

Political activism of conservatives ignited as a reaction to the strong political activism of progressives, such as candlelight protests. This led to the emergence of the "New Right" movement, under which conservative intellectuals, religious leaders and civic organizations were actively united.

5.1.3 Protestant Churches in Conservative Political Activism

Although some media as well as religious studies started to emphasize the political activism of conservative civil society since the 2000s, as well as the role of the Protestants in right-wing movements, it has not received much attention from political science compared to candlelight protest. However, more critical analysis should be paid to emerging conservative political activism because even though the traditional conservative political party has lost its hegemony in formal politics, there are still many who ascribe to conservative ideology and identity through which they see all societal and political issues. For instance, at the time of writing the expectation of peaceful coexistence of the two Koreas on the peninsula is higher than ever, with inter-Korean summits along with the historical encounters of American and North Korean leaders at the DPRK-US summits. However, some of the public still hold a pessimistic view over the idea that the North will abandon their nuclear program for a peaceful aim, and are skeptical about the current Moon administration's effort to lift sanctions even before the denuclearization processes are initiated by the North. According to a survey in 2017 about North Korean policy to relieve inter-Korean tension, 60% of conservatives prioritize the sanctions, while about 80 % of progressive Democratic party supporters prefer diplomatic options (Yu Chŏng-in 2017). Also, regarding the question of who is the most important partner for the South in the case of the security crisis on the peninsula, among those who identified as progressives, slightly fewer than half (48.4%) chose Donald Trump while 20% regarded Kim Chung-Un as the most important. This is in sharp contrast with the outcome that among conservatives, 8 out of 10 (77.8 %) chose Trump as the most important partner to discuss the security concerns, and only 5.2%, chose Kim. As can be seen, regarding the two significant others of the North and the US, as well as security concerns, Korean society is extremely divided based on different understandings of national identity.

Therefore, the understanding of political activism of conservative civic organizations has its important meaning in order to fully grasp the divided nature of South Korean society over the national identity conception.

As elaborated in the previous chapter, in the 2000s progressive governments started to institutionalize their national identity concept into various policy areas. This created strong opposition from conservative politicians and civil societies, among which Christian groups were one of the most active players. *Hankyoreh*, the progressive media outlet, recently claimed that Protestant rightists were at the center of producing fake news against the current Moon government, which well illustrates that the progressives pay sharp attention to conservative Protestants as a key player in the right-wing movement (Kim wan et al. 2018). The Christian civic groups who have been very active in participating or organizing street protests such as the counter-candlelight protest since the 2000s, are now taking the more significant role in political rightist resistance to the progressive regimes' various policies, such as the change of constitution. Thus, in the following section the growing importance of the role of evangelical conservatives in conservative political activism will be discussed in more depth.

Since 9/11 in 2001, religion has acquired or perhaps reacquired a new salience in International Politics that it lacked before. According to Inboden (2008), religion was a major factor in the early Cold War in America (p.ix). American churches helped define America's understanding of itself and its place in the world. That is, Christianity affected the formation of American national identity (ibid., p.1). And this was also true for many South Korean elites who tried to shape the national identity of a newly built state in the context of the Cold War under the great influence of the US. Many American political leaders believed that their nation had a divine calling to oppose the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and to reshape the world according to the divine design (ibid., p. 4). This mission arose in general because they perceived communism to be inherently evil, and particularly because of communism's dogmatic atheism. Americans found it even more ominous that not only were communists attempting to remove religious faith in their own state, but also they were seeking to spread their atheistic materialism around the world. This was, for many Americans, cause to fight. In addition, religion functioned as an instrument in America's Cold War effort. The American government tried to use religion as a tool for both internally strengthening anti-communism at home and externally undermining communism abroad. Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, along with many other political and religious leaders, constantly reminded Americans of the centrality of religious faith in their national heritage, of the connection between faith in God and human rights and freedoms, of the special responsibility to which God had called America, and of communism's atheism and hostility to religion. Woodrow Wilson, who claimed that sometimes peace would have to be pushed aside to protect and promote freedom, made his famous statement to "make the world

safe for democracy" at the Congress on April 2, 1917, calling the nation to war (ibid., p. 12). His message also sought to bring together the principles of peace and freedom: "We shall fight for … a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world at last free" (ibid.). George Kennan, an American diplomat, developed the strategic doctrine of "containment", which defined American foreign policy throughout the Cold War. For Kennan and many other American leaders, religious faith served as a stark dividing line between the spiritual United States and the atheist USSR, and helped draw the very clear boundary between self and the other who should be contained (ibid., p. 17-18). American Protestantism itself during the Cold War era experienced profound debates to define its own identity, asking questions like who they were, who spoke for them, what they stood for and what they stood against. During this process of self identification, American Protestantism found itself in need of transformation in response to changes within domestic American culture, in which pluralism was gaining hegemony, as well as in the world, where the evil enemy of communism threatened religious faith. This transformation of American Protestantism in the context of the Cold War severely affected the mindset of early Korean Christian elites as well as political elites, particularly those who had been educated in the west at that time. They sought to establish South Korea as a liberal democratic state following the model of the US. As Inboden argues, without the theological context the Cold War cannot be understood (ibid., p. 19).

South Korea is a secular state as stipulated in its constitution. Although it has witnessed the revitalization of conservative churches' political activism since the 2000s, Protestants' political engagement is actually nothing new in Korea. Whether they be conservative or progressive strains, Christian groups have been regarded as political and social entities from the very beginning. Bae Dŏk-man asserts that Korean Protestant churches have never been separated from politics in its history (cited in Cho Hae-jin 2016). Also, the critical role of Protestants in South Korean politics and society is highlighted by Korean scholars (Kim Dong-choon 2015; Kang In-Cheol 1993; Yun Chŏng-ran 2015). Kim Dong-choon asserts that South Korea is a country established by *wŏlnamcha* [North Korean defectors] (cited in Lee Dae-hee 2015), those who escaped from the north to the south between 1945 and 1953. Particularly, many of those early defectors were Christian elites that faced oppression from communists in the north after liberation. It is, furthermore, claimed that the conflicting structure of South Korean society was framed by battles between Protestantism and communism (Kim Dong-choon 2015). After the Korean War, the ideological conflicts between rightists and leftists permeated all levels of Korean society and these conflicts have been well discovered in recent protests over the former conservative president Park's impeachment: candlelight protests that began to call for her to step down, and the *Taegukgi* rally to support Park, where a large crowd of Park's supporters denounced Park's political rivals as leftist North Korean sympathizers.

The conservative narrative, which simply categorizes political opponents as communists and defines them as threats to South Korean security, is based on the clear distinction between "good self" and "evil communist." However, as argued in the chapter 3, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives is also based on the clear dichotomy between nationalists as good self and anti-nationalists (pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators, including most of the current Christian and ruling elites) as evil others. Based on this formation of self and other, it assumes that current conservatives who have enjoyed privileges since the establishment of South Korea are descendants of those pro-Japanese collaborators, and so they are anti-nationalists and traitors to the nation and have no legitimate right to enjoy those political and social powers in Korean society. *Kyunghyang Sinmun* analyzes that the reason why conservatives stick to the idea that South Korea was established in 1948, when there was the UN-monitored first election on the Korean peninsula, is to erase the history of their past wrong-doings as pro-Japanese collaborators by focusing on South Korea's history only after 1948 (Song Hyŏn-sook 2015). The fact that both narratives are based on the dualism between "good self" and "evil enemy", although the definitions of self and others are very different, is well illustrated in the argument of Kim Yong-sam (2015) that the history textbook is the battlefield between two frames: the North Korean follower [*chongbuk*] frame of rightists and the pro-Japanese collaborator [*ch'inilpa*] frame of leftists.

The close relations between the conservative strain of Protestant churches and political conservatives have been often criticized by progressive intellectuals and politicians. For instance, Seo Joong-seok (2007), a leading progressive historian, maintains that "the pro-Japanese collaborators are generally also pro-US" (p.91), heavily influenced by a west-centered Christian worldview. As seen in chapter 3, the progressive narrative identity assumes pro-Japanese collaborators and Westernized Koreans (mostly pro-US and Christian) were strongly connected. It is important to note that by arguing for the connection of those people in history, Seo emphasizes that the current conservative ruling elites are closely related to those pro-Japanese collaborators and Westernized Koreans, describing them as anti-nationalists and traitors to the nation. This perspective clearly shows the fact that the ethnic nationalism narrative constructed by progressive/leftist historians is also based on the clear dichotomy between the nation and nationalists as the self, and pro-Japanese, pro-US collaborators (including Christians) and the privileged class as anti-nationalists, traitors and therefore, the hostile other. This dichotomy is justified by asserting that the nation is the only value available for all Koreans which is true and absolute. According to this narrative, it seems evident that Christians, the majority of whom belong to the conservative strain of churches in South Korea, are categorized as those who are highly likely to be pro-American, and thus anti-national.

A. Early History of Korean Protestant Churches and Their Engagement with Politics

To fully understand how the Protestants have emerged as a strong political force in current South Korea, the history of Korean Protestant churches that shaped Korean churches' distinctive features should be taken into consideration.

Early Korean churches clearly showed an intellectual and nationalist tendency, and were a progressive element of the time. Anti-communism, however, started to be strengthened among early evangelicals with the influx of socialism and communism in the 1920s, which was fundamentally anti-religious, and thus an anti-Christian movement in Korea. Chŏng Sŏng-han (2015) argues that after liberation, early Korean Protestants realized that they were facing two urgent assignments: first, the re-establishment of the nation, and second, of the church (p. 17). In the northern part of the peninsula, the Christian communities were under the monitoring force of the Soviet military and oppression from communists. In the southern area, Christian groups that showed any signs of left-leaning tendency or activities were oppressed by the US military government. This historical context signifies that in both areas of the peninsula, Protestant groups were treated as political entities. South and North Koreas' Protestant leaders have, indeed, become deeply engaged in ideological battles as well as secular politics in the two Koreas. Anti-communism among Christians was further intensified by experiencing direct encounters and conflicts with communists after liberation and during the Korean War. Particularly, in the northern area of the peninsula, called *Sŏbuk* [north west] that refers to most of the area of the current North Korean territory of *Pyongan, Hwanhae, Hamkyong* provinces, and where Christianity was strongest on the Korean peninsula at the time (Yun Chŏng-ran 2015, p.15), churches experienced violent conflicts with socialists and communists who started dominating the area right after liberation. Thus, many Christian leaders and elites in northern provinces had to flee to the south. In the south, they were actively involved in anti-communist activities and also enthusiastically supported the US military government and Rhee Syngman's idea to build the Korean nation as a liberal anti-communist state (ibid., pp. 217-240).

After the liberation from Japan in 1945, church growth accelerated. This was achieved in a pro-Western and pro-Christian atmosphere created by secular political forces. Following the Korean War, along with rapid economic growth and urbanization in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the churches continued to grow in numbers and in influence. As Pak Chŏng-sin (2003) argues, the growth of Protestantism in Korea has been a historical phenomenon greatly affected by the church's involvement, whether positively or negatively, in a series of changes and developments in society and in the politics of South Korea (p. 200). Indeed, religion cannot be isolated from social and political trends in society. The Protestants are also a living, breathing organism consisting of individuals who live in history and experience everyday events. Martin Marty, a theologian and church historian, argued as early in 1930 that Korea "was well on its way to being the most

Christianized nation in Asia" (cited in ibid., p.3). As predicted, South Korea, indeed, saw the incredible growth of the Protestant church with its political and economic developments in the post-war era.

The relationship between the Protestant church community and Korean politics has often been studied from the perspective of the former's theological and doctrinal orientation. However, Pak Chŏng-shin (2003) claims that although theology has influenced the Korean church's political behavior, theology has primarily functioned rather to justify and reinforce Protestant Christians' political positions and activities (p. 201). The church's growth indicated the explosively growth in the number of its followers as well as enlargement of its influence in Korea. In the process of its growth, the Protestant church became institutionalized and a church hierarchy and a leadership were formed and institutionalized. This religious leadership with its immense material and human resources came to exercise a vast influence beyond the Protestant church society. Protestantism in Korea developed from being an unaccepted Western religion one century ago to now being an accepted and further flourishing one. The more Protestant denominations became institutionalized and the more influence church leaders exerted in society and politics, the more factions and groupings within the religious community emerged and the more division, conflict, and rivalry were observed. As church members, particularly clerical and lay leaders, secured their positions socially and economically, the church lost its character of resistance against established society and power, while conforming to the authorities and the status quo. Korean Protestant Christianity went through a dramatic transformation, from being a revolutionary religion, seeking to replace Confucianism and opposing early Japanese colonial rule, to an established religion in line with the status quo in late colonial Korea, and obviously later in South Korea. The first converts to the new religion from the West were, in general, the poor and oppressed or business owners who were socially discriminated against in the Confucian society, along with some young ruling elites [*yangban*] who had difficulty in taking positions in central politics (Yun Chŏng-ran 2015, pp. 32-35). At the beginning, therefore, the outlook of this small group of Christians was one of resistance toward the Confucian establishment. The early Protestant church was indeed the leading force for social and political reforms in Korea. During the early Japanese colonial period, the religion grew rapidly to become the largest organized community for colonized Koreans, as many frustrated Koreans joined seeking spiritual solace or an organizational base for nationalist activity. During this period the church functioned as a social and political community of Koreans, and the Japanese colonial government considered the religious community a center for anti-Japanese activities. In short, the more the colonial government suppressed the Protestant church, the more Koreans joined it, and the more influence it had on Koreans. Church leaders thus emerged as community, regional, and national leaders.

During the period between its introduction and the outbreak of the March First Movement in 1919, the Protestant church's position was unique in Korean society. It had been the largest center of progressive reform activities in late Confucian Korea. And the religious community was the only institution allowed to function even when all other political and social organizations and activities were banned, and thus served as a forum for political discussion, a political training ground, and a place to exchange political information in early colonial Korea (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 4-5). The Protestant communities that Koreans utilized for the purpose of their social and political activities naturally became the center of Korean social and political independent movements, including the March First Movement. Church leaders also eagerly supported nationalists who used the religious community as a base for their activities. However, Protestants' involvement in resistance movements turned into more individual and moderate forms during the late colonial period, although individual Protestants continued to participate in a variety of nationalist activities to bring about the end of Japanese rule. This shift occurred in the organizational and ideological relationship between the Protestant church and Korean nationalists after the March First Movement of 1919 (ibid., p. 5). Right after the March First Movement of 1919, the Japanese colonial government adopted a more conciliatory approach. During the period of this so-called "cultural rule," Koreans formed thousands of small social and political organizations outside the religious communities. Naturally, the church's role as the center of nationalist activity was greatly diminished, and the church was no longer the sole center of nationalist endeavors.

Another interesting historical phenomenon is that Christians came to assume leadership positions in politics and society immediately after the 1945 liberation from Japan. Yŏ Un-hyŏng, Kim Ku, Kim Kyu-sik, Hŏ Hŏn, Rhee Syngman, and other prominent leaders in the South, and Cho Man-sik, Hyŏn Chun-hyŏk, Kang Yang-uk, Yun Ha-yŏng, and others in the North were church leaders who emerged as national leaders (ibid., p. 202). Liberation and division brought a great change to Protestantism in South Korea. Protestant Christianity now became a religion approved of and shared by the United States and the government of Rhee Syngman, who himself was a Christian. In terms of Christians' influence in the newly built South Korean society and politics, it is noteworthy that Christians accounted for some 40 % of political leadership positions, which is significant considering that Christians only constituted about 0.5 % of the South Korean population at the time of post-liberation (Kang In-cheol 2009, p. 176). Christian ceremonies were widely adopted in public functions, Christmas became a national holiday, and a chaplain system was established in the military (ibid., p. 178). Thus, many historians believe that all the signs in post-liberation South Korea pointed to the beginning of "a Christian era" (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 6).

At his inauguration as the first president of the Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948, Rhee Syngman took an oath of office with his hand on the Bible, unprecedented in Korean history. At the

opening ceremony of the National Assembly, Rhee asked the audience to rise and had Assemblyman Yi Yun-yŏng, a Christian minister, lead a prayer of thanks. This was also unprecedented, and not even part of the printed program (ibid., p. 173-74). Christian ministers and lay members assumed influential positions in politics and society in the Rhee era. For instance, President Rhee was a church elder, and Vice-President Han T'ae-yŏng and Yi Yung-yŏng, acting prime minister during the early years of the republic, were ministers. Christian ministers and lay leaders accounted for 21 % of the first National Assembly, 25% of the second, and around 20% of the third and the fourth under the Rhee administration (Kang In-cheol 2009, p. 177).

Although such circumstances as the US occupation and the emergence of Rhee Syngman helped Christians to consolidate their leadership position in society, Christians had already become a dominant political force in Korea by the time of the liberation from Japan. Christianity was the most organized religion and the most powerful social force although the number of followers was still low compared to the whole population in that there was simply no other group comparable in organization and number to the Christian church immediately after the liberation (Kang In-cheol 1992). All other groups, such as those of businessmen, bureaucrats, policemen, soldiers, and even politicians, had been disorganized under the colonial rule or in the process of regrouping after liberation. Church leaders had better education, more experience in politics and administration, and nationwide organizational networks at the time. There were 5,497 churches on the peninsula with congregations totaling 450,000 in 1944 (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 176). These assets gave the Christians a formidable potential for political activity and mobilization, especially during the early years in the post-liberation era.

The formation of two separate regimes in 1948 and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 provided churches in the south with opportunities to strengthen their social and political power, and helped them develop a symbiotic relationship with the Rhee Syngman regime. The persecution of Christians in the north was turned to the Rhee regime's advantage, creating in the south an atmosphere in which anti-communism was upheld as a patriotic ideology. This atmosphere was strengthened by the numerous refugees from the north, most of whom were Christians, and some of whom were converted after settling down in the south. These North Korean Christian refugees helped Rhee eliminate leftist elements and leftists from the society (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003; Kim Dong-choon 2015; Kang In-cheol 1992; Yun Chŏng-ran 2015).

The Protestant church therefore supported Rhee's effort to establish an anti-communist ideology (Kang In-cheol 2005). In Rhee's address before a conference of Presbyterian churches in the US in 1948, he warned American church leaders that the Soviet-trained Red Army would destroy both the spiritual and intellectual enlightenment that Americans had achieved in Korea. This was a time when anti-communist hysteria was sweeping the US, which was immediately reflected in South

Korea. The Korean Protestant church, because of its long connection with the US and the tremendous amount of relief money and goods obtained therefrom, performed a valuable service for Rhee by enhancing the cause of anti-communism to the point of equating it with the Christian mission. By appointing many Christians who had escaped from the north, for example, as mentioned, Christian minister Yi Yun-yŏng appointed as Rhee's first prime minister, Rhee not only obtained the church's support but also used it to consolidate his anti-communist policy (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 177).

Church-government cooperation was not limited only to the development of an anti-communist ideology. During the twelve-year rule of Syngman Rhee, the Protestant community also mobilized its resources for his regime, particularly during elections. In the presidential election of 1952, the Korean Protestant church, including all denominations and affiliated organizations, formed the Korean Church Committee for Election [*Han'guk Kidokkyo sŏn'gŏ taech'aek wiwŏnhoe*], which campaigned for Rhee and his followers (Kang In-cheol 2009, p. 183). The churches' support had a significant meaning at a time when it was almost the only grassroots political movement for the presidential election. In contrast to the political parties, the religious community, which had been the center of social, educational, religious, cultural, and even political activities under colonial rule, was able to bring tremendous political strength for Rhee and his followers. Defining the election as a religious battle of "Christian versus anti-Christians," church leaders led all Christians not only to vote for Rhee but also to campaign actively for him as if it were a religious mission God had given them (*Kidok Kongbo* 1952). On August 3, 1952, just two days before the election, some 3,500 churches across the country simultaneously held special prayer meetings for the election (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 179). To Christians, the election was religious as well as political and the Protestant community gave its full support to Rhee. During the years of church-government cooperation, the religious community gained many new converts and affiliates, particularly among the upper strata of society such as professionals, businessmen, and politicians. Many of these people joined the church with secular considerations rather than religious. Many ministers had already started to play a role as social and political leaders and became part of the upper stratum of society. The church and its upper class tended to prefer the social and political status quo and thus to conform with and support the government. The Protestant church offered its undivided support to Rhee by justifying his government and its stand on communism as given by God. The church in turn enjoyed particular favors and benefits (ibid., p. 179-80).

Under President Park Chung-hee, while some Christians leaders, mostly from liberal churches, were brave enough to raise their voices against the dictatorial government, the majority of Christians followed the easy way of supporting the regime or being apolitical. The political stance of the majority of church members was one of political inaction during Park's rule. The church also continued to make a case for anti-communism. The communists were the real enemy of Christ, and

so to uphold a government that combated communism was to do the will of God (Kang In-cheol 2005, p. 48-50). The political inaction of the majority of Korean Christians was actually a political position that, actively or passively, supported the regime, of which a very small group of liberal Christians was highly critical (Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 184).

Theology performed a critical role in Korea during the church's growth from a very small group to a large community, and from an outcast and alienated group to a community of socially and economically established individuals. Fundamentalist theology functioned politically and positively for the Korean reform movement in the late nineteenth century, for it was adopted by those Koreans who wished to change the existing Confucian social order. Under colonial rule, the fundamentalist theology worked as a political theology inspiring those Korean Christians who wished to break out from Japanese colonial rule. As mentioned earlier, after liberation, Christians however, ceased to criticize social and political injustice at the hands of South Korean governments. They even justified the authoritarian regimes with the theology of the separation of the church from secular politics. Fundamentalist church leaders taught that Christians should devote themselves exclusively to the work of evangelism, saving souls, and not politics, which is a matter of this world. They first called for the separation of the church from the state, but later they further argued that Christians should obey the secular powers as all authorities were ordained by God. In particular, Christians who had migrated from the north tended to justify the anti-communist regimes in the south as religious missions, arguing that communism oppresses Christianity and hence that fighting communism is a mission all Christians should accomplish. The Korean Protestant church thus became an anti-communist one (Kang In-cheol 2005, p. 48-49). The apolitical "pure faith movement" in late colonial Korea and later in South Korea, according to Pak Chŏng-sin (2003), was not a purely religious movement based on an evangelical theological and doctrinal orientation, but a religious justification for the transformed social position and accompanying class interests of certain Protestants (p. 204).

A Korean social theorist, Pak Yŏng-sin (1987), describes religious and intellectual professionals in the Protestant church as "those who climbed up the social ladder" (cited in Pak Chŏng-sin 2003, p. 205) by joining the ever-growing church, receiving modern education and new political training offered by the church, and participating in social and political activity. He also points out that once Protestants climbed to the top of the social hierarchy, they formed "a group of authoritarian and hierarchical leaders." The Protestant church, which used to be a community of "eccentric Christians [*yesu chaeng'i*]", who sought to redesign the social order, now became a group of "ordinary people" who had lost energy for social and political reforms under the leadership of economically and socially well-established religious and intellectual professionals (ibid.).

With change in the church's social composition and its institutionalization, however, a liberal strain in churches emerged as an important social force to promote human rights, democratization,

and social justice in the mid-1960s, and their activism became significant in the 1970s and 1980s (Kang In-cheol 2009, p. 188). The development of liberal Christian activism was a significant change in a Christian community that otherwise remained pro-government or apolitical. Liberal church leaders raised a voice against the government for the first time since liberation. They began to gain strength within the church as young Christians joined them, and consolidated their position by absorbing political forces outside the church that were critical of the authoritarian regimes. Anti-regime activists, made up of university students, intellectuals, laborers, and farmers who needed a leadership and organizational foundations, gathered around liberal Christian leaders and organizations. Churches provided some protection for those activists and helped them continue their political activity against the government by using the church's organization. As a result, Christian political activism emerged as one of the core anti-government forces by the 1970s. The whole Korean church community did not, however, support this activism. Because church members, especially clerical and lay leaders, were well established in society, they were not happy about liberal political activism against the government, which they saw as having the potential to destroy social and political stability. In addition, the growth of Protestantism and resultant internal structural change influenced the church's political behavior. In the process of growth in numbers and in influence, there naturally appeared factions and groupings within the church, resulting in more than one hundred denominations and groupings. Hence, the Korean Protestant church could not produce unified social and political action, and liberal political activists in the 1970s and 1980s not only failed to receive unified support from the religious community, but also faced a negative reaction from rival denominations and the majority of conservative Christians.

Even after democratization in South Korea, the proportion of high profile Protestant government officials was higher than any in other religion. And in the 18th national assembly from 2008 to 2012, Protestant lawmakers accounted for about 40 % and in the 20th from 2016, 31% (Pan Do-hŏn 2011). A high proportion of Protestant government officials and lawmakers does not necessarily lead to the strong influence of Protestant churches in politics. Kang In-cheol (2009), however, points out that although a high proportion of Protestant politicians in administrative or legal institutions does not essentially guarantee the great influence of churches in society, it is true that the higher the number of Protestant politicians in important societal and political positions, the higher the possibility of churches' strong impact on political society, considering that there are many religious subgroups within the governments and the National Assembly, and that those subgroups have represented the interests of religious groups, and that Protestant subgroups are the largest among other religions (p. 181). Furthermore, the electoral system that has had increasing importance after democratization makes politicians more dependent on religious institutions, which have a great mobilizing force (ibid., p. 185). Also, the voting and campaign strategy that was favored by church

leaders under the Rhee government reemerged in the elections of 1992 and 2007 when the two candidates who were elders of megachurches in Seoul represented the conservative party. The conservative churches publicly supported the candidate Lee Myung-bak under the catchphrase of "making the elder president" (ibid.) in the election of 2007. Accordingly, in reality, Korean Protestant churches have never been separated from politics. More importantly, since the late 1990s, the social visibility of conservative churches' political activism has significantly increased, while progressive churches have shown a weakening influence in politics with democratization, which will be examined in the following section.

B. Evangelical Right's Political Activism since the 2000s

Kang In-cheol (2009) defines four strategies of political participation by the Korean Protestant Churches: (1) political party strategy, which means that religious leaders are involved in political society by organizing their own parties; (2) strategy of securing influence on political society, that is, church leaders exert influence on policies through Christian politicians; (3) voting and campaign strategy; and (4) social movement strategy, such as street protests, which belongs to a broad concept of politics (p.165). Securing influence on political society strategy has long been the churches' most favored political choice. Voting and campaign strategy was also preferred by the Protestant leaders during the period of the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1970s and 1980s, some liberal Protestants focused on social movement strategy and their significant contribution to the democratization movement is a well-known fact in South Korea. Responding to electoral politics with democratization since the late 1980s, Korean churches' activities concerning election campaigns were remarkably revitalized. Since the 1990s, conservative Protestant groups, who had been reluctant to engage in overt political participation, began to plunge into the political arena. Conservative Protestant groups, represented by the Christian Council of Korea (CCK), adopted a social movement strategy in the 1990s and they have developed very active political activism in the 2000s, including political party strategy (ibid., pp.165-166).

As seen in Kang's analysis, Korean Protestant churches, either progressive or conservative, have been engaged in politics in various ways since the establishment of South Korea. It is, however, the conservative strain that has been politically very active since the 2000s. The presence of Protestant civic groups has been frequently observed in street protests by political conservatives. The political activism of the conservative Protestant church that remained either apolitical or in support of the authoritarian regimes before democratization, has reemerged in society since the 2000s. Conservatives and rightists started to clamor for their political opinions against the policy changes in the latter part of Kim Dae-jung administration. They must have felt uncomfortable and threatened

by the developments exemplified by inter-Korean dialogues and the historical reevaluation of the US. Christian conservatism, commonly identified with "evangelicalism," embraces a wide variety of theological convictions ranging from fundamentalism to the evangelical left. Here, what is called the evangelical right is a particularly conservative segment of Korean evangelicalism. Also, Korean evangelical rights see America as a chosen nation to fight against communists, which is in line with the idea of the Religious Right in the US (Ryu Dae-young 2004, p. 70-71). Evangelical rightists who hold anti-communism and pro-Americanism at the core of their collective identity came to realize that South Korean society was heading in a direction against their identity. When evangelicals realize society is taking a wrong turn they feel obliged to change its direction to the right way on their own terms. But, as Ryu Dae-young (2004) points out, people are not actively engaged in political activism due only to a sense of crisis (p. 73). It was always influential leaders that encouraged and motivated people to take action, mostly reactionary action to protect their hegemony and identity in the society. He further analyzes that the emergence of evangelical rightists' political activism in the 2000s was because there existed a "power vacuum" that was created in the context of reformative progressives taking office but who could not yet exert an influence strong enough to transform the whole society because traditional reactionary conservatives still held control over politics, bureaucracy, media and capital (ibid.).

Eom (2003) tries to understand conservative civic organizations' active engagement in politics and the crucial role played by Protestant churches in the context of a broader global trend, that is, the return of the extreme right-wing since the 1980s. In this light, he argues that the revival of the extreme right is a new social phenomenon in South Korea, but still at the very early stage of development, not yet reaching the status of a meaningful political actor. The conservative civic groups' political activism retains an element of system-conserving efforts in the face of social challenges threatening long-standing right-wing hegemony in Korean society. The politicization of conservative civic organizations in the 2000s was closely connected to the multiple crises Protestant churches faced. Firstly, they were losing their followers as well as suffering from the weakening of public trust within South Korean society (Kang In-cheol 2009, pp. 194-95). In addition, under the two progressive regimes, along with democratization, they also witnessed the weakening anti-communism and strengthening anti-Americanism that threatened the core values of national identity they hold. These crises led to the strong political activism of conservative churches. Klandermans (2004) identified three fundamental motives for participating in social movements more generally: 1) instrumentality, a desire to change something in society or politics; 2) identity, that is, a desire to engage with others of a similar view or belong to a community; and 3) ideology that refers to a desire to express support for a particular political, cultural or religious point of view (cited in Richards 2017, p. 99). This analysis can well explain the motives that generate strong political activism of Korean

evangelical conservatives. When they experienced political and societal changes under the progressive regimes, they believed that South Korean society was heading in the wrong direction, as well as in the exact opposite direction from the ideology and identity they espouse. This feeling of crisis intensified their desires to change this political direction and to express their opposition to the progressives' ethnic nationalist identity and ideology, as well as strong support for the conservative narrative. Furthermore, the desire to be united with others who share a similar view was strengthened in the face of crisis among evangelical and political conservatives.

5.2 The New Right Movement and the State-Centered Nationalism Narrative

Progressive politicians emerged as a dominating political force in South Korean formal politics in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. This environment fostered a more participatory democracy, manifested by the strengthened voice of non-governmental organizations. Under the progressive regime of Roh Moo-hyun, some conservatives, who were also dissatisfied with the traditional conservative party that was associated with many political corruptions during the authoritarian rule as well as with economic failure in the late 1990s, formed an alternative conservative option, the so-called "New Right" movement. The New Right is a political movement created out of the bitter division among conservatives, urging conservatives to present a rational, more appealing image in accordance with democratic values. Mostly middle-aged intellectuals, the members of the New Right formed non-governmental organizations in order to increase their voice in society and balance Korea's increasingly left-leaning ideology.

The New Right movement emerged from several factors. First, as the traditional Cold War regime came under threat, there were inner conflicts among conservatives who were struggling to adapt to a rapidly shifting political landscape, the emergence of leftists and progressives in political power, and the dissolving battle lines of the Cold War, as well as progressive reforms advanced after democratization (Macrae 2016, p.354). The New Right rose with the aim of presenting conservatives with a rational image more in line with the demands of a democratic political environment. The character of this political movement was distinctive from that of Cold War conservatism given that it was led by intellectuals. The movement challenged left-leaning historiography that is highly critical of the birth of South Korea, the former dictatorship and the significant influence of America on the Korean peninsula (ibid.). As opposed to the historical view of leftist nationalists, the historiography of the New Right thus highlights the development of capitalism under colonial rule, and celebrates the fast economic development made possible by President Park Chung-hee. This manner of historiography was reflective of the neoliberal idea equating capitalism and civilization, and it is in

this context that the New Right also focuses on the positive legacy of Rhee Syngman.

5.2.1 Ideological Foundation of the New Right

The basic ideology of the New Right consists of both its opposition to the progressive party and innovative departure from the traditional conservative party's stance. The most meaningful differences from the latter are pointed out as the New Right's emphasis on civil liberties and flexibility concerning humanitarian aid to North Korea (Han Yuna 2007; Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Macrae 2016). The ideological foundation of the New Right is not democracy but neoliberalism, the promotion of individual freedom in both the civil and economic sectors of society (Macrae 2016). Also, the New Right began by presenting fresh interpretations of modern Korean history, including positive reappraisals of Rhee Syngman. Macrae (2016) argues that portrayals of Rhee as "Korea's founding father" are related to the impact of the end of the Cold War on historical scholarship (p. 328). The end of the Cold War is thought of as the "victory of capitalism." The principles and institutions of capitalism have thus been disseminated around the world without restraint in the post-Cold War era and, inevitably, this has affected the way many view the past.

The New Right movement started with the foundation of the Liberty Union [*Chayujuŭi yŏndae*] on November 23, 2004. In its statement of foundation which clearly elaborates the ideological foundation of the New Right movement, it is declared that "the ideological values of liberal democracy and free market economy system and the legitimacy of the establishment of South Korea has been put in danger and the national identity has been damaged since the progressive regimes started to doubt and question them" (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p. 18). Also, this statement suggests 10 reformative strategies, among which what needs to be focused on is the second clause, in which it is argued that the market driven economy must be pursued in South Korea, and the seventh and eighth clauses, where a new perspective for North Korean human rights issues is suggested (ibid., p. 19). The New Right recognizes the North as a separate country while maintaining a vocal opposition to North Korea's totalitarian regime and gross violations of human rights (Han Yuna 2007, p.9). Another key organization of the New Right movement is the Text Forum [*Kyokwasŏ Forum*]' that was founded in January 2005, which was followed by the foundations of other organizations such as the National Association of the New Right [*New Right Chŏnguk yŏnhap*](ibid.). Many other conservative organizations including evangelical groups have also joined the movement.

Kang Chŏng-in (2008) points out three factors that ignited the New Right movement: 1) the feeling of crisis raised by losing two presidential elections in 1997 and 2002; 2) the dissatisfaction over the traditional conservative party, the Grand National Party (GNP), which failed to react to policy changes under the progressive president, Roh Moo-hyun; and 3) the low approval rate for

progressive President Roh at the time, which was perceived as a golden opportunity to reunite conservatives (ibid., pp. 20-21). The New Right movement is based on three key ideological concepts: first neoliberalism that pursues a big market, small government approach (Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Macrae 2016); second, a different approach to North Korean human rights from the traditional conservatism (Han Yuna 2007); and lastly, reappraisals of South Korea's history (Macrae 2016; Yun Hae-dong 2012), which was a reaction to Roh's policy of "clearing of past wrong-doings", such as the establishment of truth commissions.

Key figures of the Liberty Union were not traditional conservatives but mostly converts from leftists to rightists (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p. 22). They harshly criticized the Roh government as "pro-North leftist." Pro-North refers to the engagement policy that prioritizes cooperation with a dictator, Kim Jong-il, while remaining silent over human rights violations in the North. At the same time, their criticism aimed to target many of the high officials in the Roh government who used to be North Korea's "*Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*]" during the democratization movement period (ibid.). Calling the Roh regime leftist is partly due to its economy policy that emphasizes distribution and welfare (ibid., pp. 22-23). The New Right share the belief that the leftist Roh government's anti-US policies are damaging to national security. It, however, draws a fine line between old and new right by claiming to have a more open and rational approach. This means that the New Right opposed the government market regulations, which is preferred by "old rightists" (Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Macrae 2016). Also, these new conservatives' emphasis on human rights has prompted them to turn away from the hard line stance of the traditional conservative party regarding North Korea when it comes to the humanitarian aid toward the North (Kang Chŏng-in 2008, p. 24). While traditional conservatives refuse to recognize North Korea and hope for the collapse of the North Korean regime, new conservatives argue that they want to see change in the North and hope that it becomes a normal state, improving human rights conditions.

5.2.2. Reassessment of History

The foundation of the New Right organization, Text Forum, in 2005, marked the beginning of New Right's historiography. One of the distinctive features of the Text Forum is that it was initiated with the critical mind of the left-leaning narrative in history textbooks, and thus aimed to "correct" the historical view in "school textbooks". It is significant to note that the emphasis of the Text Forum activities has been solely placed on narrative transformation of school textbooks, which indicates that not only did it recognize the power that the narrative in history textbooks held and its profound influence on society, but also that it would promote social activities to gain back narrative power through revisions of school textbooks (Yun Hae-dong 2012, p. 230). The New Right movement's

perception of history has gone through many critical stages since its foundation: the first stage, which pertains to the period leading up to the publication of the *Alternative Textbook, Korean Modern History*, in 2008; the second, which has to do with the establishment of the Association for Contemporary Korean History in 2011 (ibid., p. 227); the third, in which the private publishing company *Kyohak* Textbook, which contains the New Right's perspective on history, was authorized by the government; the fourth, which is related to the conservative Park Geun-hye administration's policy change toward the single state-issued textbook; and the last, in which the current progressive Moon Jae-in government decided to abolish the state-issued textbook policy in 2017 and issued the new guidelines for history textbooks that raised strong opposition from conservatives in 2018. During the first stage, the New Right movement focused its efforts on criticizing the historical perception of existing academia and privately published and government authorized history textbooks as uniformly left-leaning. Since the second stage, the focus has shifted toward publishing supplementary curriculum materials and being involved in political activism to promote the revision of the standard history curriculum, which has resulted in publishing right-leaning textbooks in the third and fourth stages.

The historical view of the *Alternative Textbook* issued by the Text Forum relies on three pairs of corresponding ideas: modernization as the backbone of colonial modernity; South Korea-centrism based on the ethnic notion of the nation; and exclusionism of the North based on civilization theory (ibid., p. 237). These ideas are well observed in the narratives of two rightist textbooks that were published later: the *Kyohak* textbook, and the state-issued [*kukchŏng*] textbook under President Park. With the publication of the rightist textbooks, there have been sharp conflicts in South Korean historiography over how to understand South Korea's past and its core values like liberal democracy. The conflict ultimately comes down to the issue of how to define the national identity of South Korea (ibid., p. 228).

Because a revisionist historical narrative, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, has been associated with leftist politics and gained currency since the 1980s, conservative historians have become increasingly annoyed by this trend of historiography that gives nationalist credentials to North Korea and attempts to delegitimize the legitimacy to South Korea (Em 2013, p. 155). The New Right accepted scholarship that was based on postcolonial theory because it refuses to describe the colonial period as a dualistic battle between a colonizing Japan that was racist and exploitative and a resisting and enduring Korean people, or nation [*minjung* or *minjok*]. With this perspective, the New Right has become critical about nationalism in general, and nationalist historiography of the 1980s in particular, which harshly attacks the legitimacy of South Korea (ibid., 156).

In line with the effort made by the Text Forum, the book, *Reconstruction of Korean History Before and After Liberation* [*Haebang chŏnhusa ŭi chaeinsik*], edited by four historians, was

published in February 2006. Its title reminds us of the book, *Korean History Before and After Liberation* [*Haebang chŏnhusa ŭi insik*], in which leftist-nationalist historiography is clearly elaborated and which achieved near hegemonic status in politics and among the public in the post-democratization era. As we can guess from the title, the leftist understanding of history is clearly the target of *Reconstruction of Korean History Before and After Liberation* (Pak T'ae-gun 2007, p. 287)*,* including a number of essays that presented evidence as well as compelling narratives on a range of issues from a rightist historical perspective. Criticism of *Reconstruction of Korean History Before and After Liberation* over the leftist-nationalist historiography focuses largely on two ideas: nationalism during the colonial era; and communism in the post-liberation period under the US military government (ibid., p. 288). Some essays challenged the book *Korean History Before and After Liberation* and its leftist-nationalist historiography much more directly. Regarding land reform about which leftist historians are very critical, for example, Chang Si-won argues that South Korea's land reform succeeded in transforming peasants into independent farmers and so helped put an end to categorization of social status. On one of the most important issues regarding the national identity of South Korea, the creation of separate states, Yi Chong-sik's article, originally published in 1998, presented evidence that it was the Soviet Union that was committed to establishing a separate state as early as October 1945 (Em 2013, p. 156-57).

In addition, it is claimed in *Reconstruction of Korean History Before and After Liberation* that during the Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations, with the shift of political discourse, historians who questioned leftist-nationalist narratives experienced a backlash, just as in the past when the anti-communist authoritarian regimes conducted a witch-hunt against their dissenters (Pak Tae-gun 2007, p. 289; Em 2013, p. 157), referring to the policy of "clearing up the past", which led to the establishment of the twenty or so Truth Commissions since the year 2000. For conservatives and rightists, these investigations into the past were conducted in order to consolidate leftist hegemony and undermine South Korea's legitimacy through a one-sided attack on anti-communist conservatives in South Korea because conservatives were much more likely to have had family members who had collaborated with Japanese imperialists as well as close personal ties to authoritarian regimes of the past (Em 2013, p. 157).

An Pyong-chik (2006) summarizes the core ideas of the New Right as follows: first, the anti-North-Koreanism, which was a modified form of anti-communism, arguing that it is a self-destructive way to follow the North's self-reliance [*juche*] ideology and that South Korea should promote cooperation with other democratic states, eventually to achieve freedom and prosperity; and secondly, modernization along with a liberal market economy. On the other hand, Yun Hae-dong (2012) claims the historical narrative of the New Right can be called "ahistorical history," considering that it aimed to achieve a pure form of modernity by making a clean separation from

tradition and barbarism (p. 228). Harsh criticism has arisen against the historical perspective of the New Right from many scholars in history studies and progressive civil society, which will be introduced in the last section of this chapter.

5.2.3 The New Right's Historical View and Alternative Textbook

The self-assigned mission of the New Right was to present a "correct" representation of the past, with the aim of eliminating the "reactionary" image associated with conservatives and organizing a political counterattack against the emerging left. This effort resulted in the publication of the so-called *Alternative Textbook* by the Text Forum, which is a condensation of the historical view of the New Right. In order to accomplish the goals of the New Right, the most important and urgent consideration was the need to present the legitimacy of the ROK itself in the face of left-wing revisionist historical scholarship criticizing the process by which South Korea had come to be established. A view of leftist-nationalist historiography has gained in popularity to challenge the one-sided, anti-communist historical perspective that had constituted the dominant narrative of the Cold War period. Thus, among the tasks presented to conservatives by the era of democratization, the establishment of a new discourse on modern Korean history was the most imminent and significant mission. It was in this context that narratives that reassessed the achievements of Park Chung-hee, the legitimacy of the two Koreas, and the legacy of Japanese rule began to emerge. It was also in this context that reappraisals of Rhee Syngman as a founding father gained popularity and importance among the New Right supporters.

Right after its foundation, the Text Forum focused on criticizing the descriptions of modern and contemporary history in privately published and government-authorized high school textbooks. Above all, it argues that most problematic in those history textbooks is that they deny the legitimate birth of South Korea (Son Ho-chŏl 2006, p. 218), while intentionally ignoring the systematic problems of the North Korean regime, which should be blamed for the division of the nation. In addition, it is claimed that those textbooks highlight only the negative aspects of economic development and industrialization of South Korea. In the New Right's eyes, the narratives of those textbooks intentionally overstate the degree of dictatorship of past authoritarian regimes and ignore the fact that those regimes were in an institutional and developmental process toward democracy (Yun Hae-dong 2012, p. 235). The New Right's effort to redirect the narratives of history textbooks had come to see its outcome, the "*Alternative Textbook: Korean Modern and Contemporary History (Alternative Textbook)*," which was published in 2008 by the Text Forum. In its preface, it is stated that the textbook is based on four principles; positivism; universal civilization; respect for international rules; and South Korea-centralism, in which liberal democracy and free market system

are the fundamental principles. Yun Hae-dong (2012), however, points out that positivism as a historical term refers to the narration of history based on facts without historians' subjective intervention, and positivism as the first-mentioned principle in the preface of the New Right's textbook already collides with three other principles that inherently include the subjective value system of historians. That is, the basis of positivism, that history must be described in accordance with facts without a person's subjective interpretation, is already violated (ibid., 236-37).

The New Right movement failed to evolve into an institutional political entity. Even though key figures of the New Right movement tried to start up new parties, they failed to gain support from the public in the elections. However, the New Right has significance largely because of its effort to re-establish an ideological foundation and to provide legitimacy for conservatives through reshaping the historical narrative. This has profound impacts on political activism of conservative civic groups and individual activists, which will be further discussed in the chapter 7, based on the in-depth interviews I conducted in 2017 and 2018.

5.2.4 The State-centered Nationalism Narrative

Despite strong criticism, the *Alternative Textbook* and the New Right's historical view contributed to reforming the state-sanctioned narrative dominant during the Cold War era and resulted in the construction of "the state-centered nationalism narrative", which I term thus in this research largely due to its emphasis on South Korea-centralism. This revitalized and revised narrative of conservatives hopes to separate themselves from the "old right" and to transform the reactionary image of conservatism toward being more rational and reasonable in the democratized social environment. In the following section, the key concepts of the state-centered nationalism narrative will be briefly introduced and a more in-depth analysis will be provided in the following sixth chapter by comparatively analyzing history textbook narratives.

A. Modernization

In the state-centered nationalism narrative over modern and contemporary South Korean history, modernization and civilization are seen as the backbone of colonial modernity. This view overemphasizes economic development and modernization during colonial rule. It is possible because the colonial period is assessed through the lens of the market system in this narrative. In the same vein, it also overstates economic development in the post-liberation era and celebrates the modernization process of South Korea. This colonial modernization theory regards colonial modernity as the foundation of South Korea's development because it rendered possible the

explosive economic growth during the Park Chung-hee era, which, on the contrary, has been the target of criticism by progressive and leftist intellectuals. Modernization theory was initially developed with its clear political aim of supporting the foreign policy and ideology of America after WWII (Yun Hae-dong 2012, p. 247). According to the theory, strong political leadership is necessary for the third world to have a settled political environment and military security. In addition, modernization theory places its emphasis on colonial modernity as the positive aspect of civilization (ibid., p. 248). In the New Right's historical perspective, the uppermost goal of the nation is set to establish a modernized (or civilized) state, and the free market system is treated as an instrument to achieve the ultimate goal of modernization (Pak Tae-guk 2007, pp. 290-91). In this regard, the notion of modernization in the state-centered nationalism narrative is essentially in line with the New Right's ideological principles underlying it, that is, neoliberalism, which was disseminated around the world in the post-Cold War period (Macrae 2016, p. 347).

B. South Korea Centralism

Another distinctive feature of the New Right's historical perspective was "South Korea centralism" (Yun Hae-dong 2012, p. 239), which is the most crucial principle of the state-centered nationalism narrative. According to the universal standard of civilization, one of the important values of the rightist historical views is that the North is considered uncivilized and is thus excluded from the boundary of the "true" Korean nation. South Korea is naturally placed at the center of civilization of the Korean nation. This South-Korea centralism leads to conservatives' distinctive understanding of nationalism. For them, the national history and nationalism of Korea is purified and completed by excluding uncivilized North Korea from the category of the nation. In this regard, it can be argued that the conservative narrative identity is also based on nationalism, which does however, collide with the concept of ethnic nationalism that the progressives' narrative is based on. Nationalism of the New Right is, therefore, paradoxical in two ways: 1) it excludes the North Korean regime from the nation as it is unable to be civilized, but it includes North Korean people as fellow brothers who need to be saved from the oppression of the illegitimate and uncivilized Kim family's dictatorship; and 2) nationalism of rightists defines as self only those Koreans who follow the founding values of South Korea, such as liberal democracy and the free market system, while still relying on the ethnic notion of the nation. Pak Tae-gun (2007) points out that one of the key principles of the New Right's historical perspective is its strong emphasis on loyalty to the state of South Korea, not to the Korean nation. He criticizes that it is very ironic that the New Right puts great emphasis on the modern state while disregarding the ethnic notion of the nation as a pre-modern way of thinking, which is actually deemed as one of the most significant components of a modern state (pp. 292-93).

In the state-centered nationalism narrative, the South Korean government is naturally the only lawful and legitimate political entity on the peninsula, rejecting the idea that two separate states, both legal, were established in 1948. This is closely connected to reappraisals of Rhee Syngman as a founding father of South Korea, the only lawful Korean nation. There was overall emphasis on the need to reassess Rhee's actions vis-à-vis the end of the Cold War among rightists. As Bang Sang-hun (1995) wrote, "today, considering our history in light of the collapse of communism in establishing a liberal state, in overcoming the hardships of war and in protecting the nation, Rhee's foresight is all the more significant" (cited in Macre 2016, p. 332). This narrative sets out to claim that currently the North is a failed state, while the South has been successful, so legitimacy must be placed on the South only. According to this logic, the Park Chung-hee regime is also praised largely due to its successful outcome regarding modernization and economic development. This approach, however, overestimates the positive sides of those regimes and is too simplified a history, disregarding negative aspects such as human rights violations. More importantly, it is pointed out that the New Right's historical view neglects the historical legitimacy of the North based on the present outcome of past events in order to emphasize the legitimacy of the South (Son Ho-chol 2006, p. 219; Yun Hae-dong 2012, p. 253). That is, it distorts the past events to overcome the political crisis conservatives face at present, thus history is being politicized. In this light, Yun Hae-dong (2012) calls the historical perspective of the New Right "ahistorical history" (p. 253). In addition, the New Right seeks to find the legitimacy of South Korea as a modern, civilized and legitimate state by severing its history from uncivilized traditional pre-modern Korea. This narrative can serve the aim of justifying its exclusion of the North, a state but not people, from Korean modern and contemporary history as the North Korean regime and Korean communists are an uncivilized and unlawful group of people that have illegally occupied part of Korean territory and kidnapped innocent fellow Korean people.

C. Rhetoric of Exclusion: "Anti-South"

As mentioned, the state-centered nationalism of conservatives has been developed with the New Right's effort to build a new kind of conservatism with a strong and reasonable ideological foundation in the context of democratized society within South Korea, as well as weakening anti-communism in the world in the post-Cold War era. Hence, it intrinsically has a great political meaning and role. As Song Du-yul (1995) suggests, conflicts between the North and South, framed as a fight between communism and anti-communism, later emerged as an "anti-North" frame in line with South Korea centralism of the New Right's narrative. While classifying dissidents within the South as pro-North that was a common strategy under authoritarian regimes is still quite easily found in discourses of conservative politicians and their supporters, a new rhetoric of exclusion, which

takes a frame of being "anti-South," has emerged in the New Right discourses. Anti-South generally refers to those who deny the legitimacy of the South Korean government as the only lawful political entity on the peninsula, while sympathizing with the North. The term anti-South was first used in the book, *Pandaesei ŭi pimil, kŭ ilgŭrŏchin ch'osang* [The secret of anti-South, its distorted portrait], published in 2009 under the conservative Lee Myung-bak administration with the support of the National Intelligence Service (O Dong-sŏk 2017). It is argued in the book that leftists seek to damage the rightist regime through such acts as mobilizing anti-government and anti-American candlelight protests, and in doing so they attempt to unite anti-conservative forces and ultimately aim to establish a leftist regime in the South (Hyundae Sasang yŏnguhŏi 2009, p. 187). In this narrative, those anti-conservative forces are identified with anti-South groups who refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of South Korea. This shows that the issue of legitimacy took the central position in the historical narrative of the New Right, as commonly found in discourses of South Korea centralism. The former spokesman of the Blue House, Yun Chang-jung, recently called the three progressive presidents, Kim Dae-jung, Roh Moo-hyun and the current Moon Jae-in, "anti-South" on 6 June, 2018 at the ceremony for Memorial Day (Chang Wŏn-yong 2018). Likewise, anti-South framing is a new rhetoric of othering adopted by conservatives to exclude progressives and political dissidents.

A conservative lawmaker, Cheon Hee-kyeong, argued that, regarding the history textbook controversy, history textbooks are the last bastion for anti-South forces who hope to underestimate the successes of the South and only overstate its past regimes' wrongdoings in privately published textbooks (Lee hyŏn-ju et al. 2015). As seen in this statement, historical views of the past of South Korea are dependent on one's political tendency in current Korean society, and vice versa. According to conservatives' rhetoric, whoever agrees with the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives is now classified as anti-South forces. This anti-South rhetoric has been adopted since the New Right's attempt to reassess South Korean modern history. Anti-South rhetoric also pertains to distinctive definition of the nation in the New Right discourses, in which the North Korean regime and its followers are excluded from the nation, as they are uncivilized so cannot be included in the civilized modern nation, that is, South Korea. Thus, the concept of the New Right's nationalism is similar to patriotism toward the state of South Korea, not to the ethnic nation of Korea which progressives strongly believe in.

5.3 Limits of the State-centered Nationalism Narrative

Although it has received harsh criticism from progressive and leftist intellectuals and politicians, and although the New Right movement has failed to evolve into an institutional political power, the New Right's historical view has gained popularity among conservatives who have wanted to renew conservatism. As the key concepts of the state-centered nationalism narrative were introduced in an earlier section, in the following section, its limits will be discussed despite some having already been mentioned.

5.3.1 History for a Political Aim

Son Ho-chŏl (2006) points out the lack of facticity in the New Right's historiography as the main problem in the analysis of discourses over the history of two leading scholars from both political strains: the conservative, Lee Inho, and the progressive, Paek Nak-chŏng. According to Son, the New Right argues that in the leftist-nationalist historiography of Paek, South Korea is described as a state that should not have been born and its establishment is a shameful history to be overcome. However, Son not only maintains Paek has never made such a claim, but also criticizes Lee's arguments as a distorted interpretation of historical fact. For instance, Lee claims that the failure of having the presidential election on the whole peninsula under the UN's monitoring in 1948 was due to the Soviet Union's refusal to hold the election in the northern part of the peninsula that was controlled by the Soviets. He is also critical of Lee's comment that if the Chinese Army had not joined the Korean War, unification would have been achieved (Son ho-chŏl 2006, p. 218). First of all, even if the election had happened on the whole peninsula, there would have been no guarantee that a united Korea would have been established as a capitalist and liberal democratic country, largely because socialism was the most popular ideology at the time throughout the whole nation. Also Lee's claim that the division would never have happened without the Chinese Army's involvement in the Korean War follows the exactly same logic of *juche* ideology followers (pro-North), who claim that unification would have been possible without the US's engagement in the Korean War (ibid.).

It is claimed that this kind of interpretation, lack of facticity, was due to the feeling of crisis the New Right had that if they lost the game in the history war, the national identity of South Korea would be denied as a result (Kang Chŏng-in 2008; Son Ho-chŏl 2006; Yun Hae-dong 2012). The New Right attempted to gain the legitimacy of a state based on the present time, which should be interpreted in the context of the past. That is, the legitimacy of the North should be acknowledged based on the fact that in the post-liberation era the North was better at reforming the society through such policies as punishing collaborators and initiating land reform, and it was closer to the socialist

system that more of the public preferred at the time (Son Ho-chŏl 2006, p. 219-20). However, as Son points out, this legitimacy at the time of the foundation does not naturally guarantee the legitimacy of the present, because the system of the North is now failed (ibid.). The New Right assumes that acknowledging the legitimacy of the North at the time of its foundation means denying the legitimacy of current South Korea. This led to a distorted historical narrative of the New Right that wants to argue for the legitimacy of South Korea as a lawful political entity, relying on the fact that the South is now successful as a state, unlike the North. Again, it follows the same way of *juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*], who argue that the North is the only legitimate state on the peninsula, rather than the South, largely because the North was closer to the political system the masses wanted and better at carrying out policies such as a land reform in the past, that is, at the time of liberation. More significantly, the New Right tends to interpret history arbitrarily with the aim of overcoming its political crisis. Thus, history is utilized as a political tool by the New Right to justify its own arguments.

5.3.2 Framing of Pro-North and Anti-South

Son Ho-chŏl (2006) in part agrees with the criticism over the duplicity of progressives who have been very critical about human rights violations of authoritarian regimes but have been silent about the North Korean human rights issue (p. 221). He, however, raises a critical voice over pro-North followers' framing of traditional conservatives that puts whoever is critical of South Korean governments into the category of pro-North. Son claims that South Korean intellectuals and progressives criticize the government because the South is their country, not the North. In addition, he explains that the reason why progressives refrain from criticism of the North is partly due to the high possibility that the criticism of the North is abused by South Korean regimes to justify their injustice and wrongdoings (p. 222).

Like the state-sanctioned narrative based on strong anti-communist ideology under authoritarian regimes, the state-centered nationalism narrative of the New Right employs the rhetoric of exclusion with a political aim, classifying political opponents and dissidents as too simplistic a category of pro-North, or recently, anti-South forces, and excluding them from its own concept of the nation. Thus, patriotism and nationalism of conservatives are defined primarily through vigilance against internal betrayal by pro-North and anti-South groups, vindicated by every aggressive move taken by North Korea.

5.3.3 Neoliberalism in Historical Interpretation

As mentioned, the New Right historical interpretation heavily relies on modernization theory, which is intrinsically in line with neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is not only a term to define economic policy, favoring a market free from any intervention of government, but also an ideological system that prioritizes the market over all other values and unconditionally supports the capitalist system (Mudge 2008, p. 706). Hence, neoliberalism in historiography has its significant meaning in that "the logic of the market" is applied to all aspects of social life, not just to economic issues (Braedley and Luxton 2010, p. 8). This strong influence of neoliberalism is often observed in the state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives in which historical events are assessed by the standard of economic development. The process through which neoliberalism took hold in Korean history is clearly portrayed in Pak Tae-gun's (2012) statement, "succeeding the idea of enlightenment [*kaehwa*] of the 19th century, the remodeling [*kaejo*] of the first half of the 20th century and the modernization [*kŭndaehwa*] of the second half, globalization [*segyehwa*] had now come to prominence" (p. 519). While international environments enlarged the dissemination of neoliberalism, the political circumstances in Korea in the post-Cold War era were ready to accept it. The post-Cold War context required a new ideology appropriate to this new context and neoliberalism was to be that, allowing for a space in which one could emphasize freedom, appropriate to the new democratic domestic context.

Thus, in the historical view of the New Right, ideas of capitalism and civilization come to be combined. In this light, historical figures like Presidents Rhee Syngman and Park Chung-hee have been reassessed and praised because they led South Korean society into modernity and civilization, along with their contributions to economic development. For President Rhee, more focus of the New Right historians is put on his action that laid the foundations for economic development beginning in the 1960s. Lee Sang-hun (2011) states that "Rhee clearly identified liberal democracy and a market economy as the fundamental basis of the Republic of Korea" (p. 36). Along with this positive assessment of Rhee who instilled the spirit of capitalism in the South Korean people, rightist historians focus on Rhee's practical contributions to economic growth, such as price stabilization, education reforms, and the procurement of US aid. Among those, much attention is paid to Rhee's land reform, which is in sharp contrast to progressives' and leftists' positive evaluation of the North's land reform. Yu Yŏng-ik (2006) especially praises Rhee's land reform which resulted in the dissolution of the old system of land ownership dominated by the landlord class (p. 549).

Thus, each historical case is judged on the basis of economic development in the state-centered nationalism narrative, while explaining the negative aspects like human rights abuse of laborers as part of the evolving process toward economic development, or as the inevitable sacrifice

for the great cause of modernization and civilization. In a historical perspective based on a neoliberal ideology, history is essentially assessed through the lens of the market economy. Thus, the New Right's historical perspective put aside other factors like the immorality of capitalists and ruling elites, and human rights violations which past authoritarian regimes committed during the process of economic development.

6. Conflict over Self Identity: History War

The two successive progressive regimes (1998-2008) sought to transform the national identity, initially of the significant others, through policy changes toward North Korea and the US, as seen in chapter 4, which contributed to intensifying inner conflicts in the South. Under the progressive administrations, the engagement policy toward the North was adopted and the strong alliance with the US was weakened with prevailing anti-Americanism in the society. This was an attempt to set a different perspective over how to view those significant others, which greatly influenced the national identity conception of South Korea. Furthermore, the policy campaign, "clearing up the past wrongdoings," was adopted and subsequently related regulations and institutions such as the truth commissions were installed to investigate wrongdoings and injustice in the past. These policies of the progressives created strong opposition and resistance from the conservative strain of society, which led to the emergence of the New Right movement in the 2000s, as elaborated in chapter 5. This chapter focuses on controversy over the birth and development of South Korea, currently one of the most controversial issues in South Korean politics and society, which pertains to how to interpret the past of South Korea. Controversy over history, the so-called "history war", took place simultaneously with the third historical juncture, the emergence of the New Right movement, discussed in chapter 5. Considering the importance of how to perceive history of a state in the formation of national identity, debates over South Korean modern and contemporary history are separately elaborated in this chapter.

The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives has been gradually adopted as an official narrative since 2003, with a policy change of history textbooks from the single state-issued text to privately published textbooks authorized by the government. With this change, the master narrative over national history and identity has been transformed, more in line with the ethnic nationalism narrative. Since 2005, when the Text Forum, the New Right organization, was founded conservative intellectuals and politicians who felt a threat from the prevailing progressives', allegedly left-leaning, narrative adopted first in the textbooks and accepted in the society, have consistently raised criticism of the historical views of those textbooks. The controversy reached its peak in 2015 when the former conservative president Park Geun-hye sought to re-adopt the policy of the single state-issued history textbook to be used in all schools, which was later abolished in 2017 under the current President Moon Jae-in. However, debates over how to perceive South Korean history are still ongoing, including other issues related to modern and contemporary South Korean history, such as controversy over enacting National Foundation Day.

History in South Korea has been utilized as a key instrument to foster patriotism, national unity, and devotion to the cause of modernization and as a source of moral education, naturally

leading to the establishment of the highly centralized education system. It has also played a significant role in legitimizing the political system and ruling regime, and even in justifying the existence of the state itself, that is, the representation of South Korea in opposition to the North as the one true Korea. In this light, it seemed natural that the South Korean government maintained an absolute monopoly on history production, not only appointing government agencies under the Minister of Education (MOE) to write and distribute textbooks, but also establishing special government committees to oversee historical matters and controlling historical narratives through official and unofficial forms of censorship (Jones 2011, p. 209). This, however, does not necessarily mean that history curricula and textbooks have remained the same since liberation in South Korea. They have been repeatedly modified to reflect changing political, ideological, economic and social conditions, while state control has remained as a guideline and, at each time of reform, it was the MOE that took the leading role and determined the direction and degree of curricular change.

This began to change, like other policy areas, toward the decentralization of education or abandonment of the state's monopolies on textbooks in favor of more plural, and/or commercial systems. As in many societies, changes in South Korea have often reactively occurred as a response to evolving political, economic and social circumstances, both domestically and internationally. South Korea has experienced rapid transformation from a poor to a wealthy state, and from authoritarian rule to democracy. Reform has thus been consciously decided by the authorities, seeking to upgrade education systems and cultivate human capital to meet the goals of continued economic growth, and to make its country more competitive in the international arena. At the same time, education reform has been deeply related to the rise of civil society, to which it has both contributed and of which it has, in turn, been a result. Education in South Korea has thus been reformed both from above and, partly, from below to reflect changing government administrations, political and economic systems, and relations between the state and its people. It was the seventh curriculum (1997), which was drafted during Kim Young Sam's presidency and implemented from 2000, that reconfirmed the commitment toward textbook pluralism. Against this background, three types of textbooks are permitted to be used in schools: type I textbooks [*kukchŏng*] that are produced by the MOE/KICE (Korean Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation); type II textbooks [*kŏmchŏng*] that are published by private publishers and authorized by the KICE; and type III texts [*kŏminchŏng*] referring to approved texts from among existing publications that the KICE regards as useful supplementary materials or suitable for use in case no type I or II texts already exist for a given subject. The high school history textbooks that have provoked controversies and tensions between two camps in political and civil societies belong to type II and only eight different Korean history textbooks authorized are currently used, among which one textbook from *Kyohaksa* is generally deemed as based on the historical view of conservatives.

History textbook revision is an inherently contested and selective process conducted and influenced by "real people with real interests" (Apple 1993, p. 46). The revision process entails negotiations and deliberations, which may provoke tensions that are at the core of struggles for recognition and legitimacy. Especially in societies emerging from violent conflict, history textbook revision faces particular challenges. The contentions regarding the selection of textbook content are compounded by a meta-conflict that is typically evident in the existence of contested narratives of victimization. Parties involved in conflict may have competing narratives regarding such issues as the cause of conflict, the number and identity of the victims, actors' roles and responsibilities, and the motivations, legitimacy and implications of their actions. Contentious narratives may also display sharp contrast as to the terminology they use to define violent events, each presenting implications and meanings. Terminology for the same event can range from "liberation" to "aggression", "invasion" to "occupation", and from "killings" and "massacre" to "genocide." Bar-Tal (2007) summarizes this difficulty by suggesting that "over the years, groups involved in conflict selectively form collective memories about the conflict. On the one hand, they focus mainly on the other side's responsibility for the outbreak and continuation of the conflict and its misdeeds, violence and atrocities; on the other hand, they concentrate on their own self-justification, self-righteousness, glorification, and victimization" (p. 78). In such contexts, the lack of consensus on the shared but divisive past is often deemed as an obstacle to reconciliation. Confronting and teaching the violent past and its various controversies are commonly feared largely due to the possibility of destabilization of the fragile and temporary peace that tends to characterize post-conflict societies.

In the following section, the development of history textbook controversies since the 2000s will be firstly introduced. Two high school history textbooks will then be analyzed to compare historical narratives adopted in these: the *Kumsung* history textbook (2018) that is criticized by rightists as the most left-leaning; and the state-issued textbook (2017) under President Park that is blamed by leftists for being far-right. And two other textbooks, *Miraen* (5th Ed., 2018) and *Visang* (5th Ed., 2018), which ranked the first and second in the market share in 2014 will be used as references when necessary, both of which are also considered to be generally left-leaning. In the last section of the chapter, the limits of those history textbooks will be discussed, focusing on the fact that although textbook pluralization was adopted for high school history, narratives in textbooks have failed to provide the complex roots of the past violent events and wrongdoings, creating another dichotomy between self and others and provoking intense debates over how to teach history to the younger generation. Lastly, based on the concept of the "transformative model of post-conflict textbook work" (Bentrovato 2017, p. 54), the history textbook revision process in South Korea will be assessed to identify what creates such strong controversy.

6.1 National Identity Transformation: How to Identify the Self, South Korea

Han Hong-gu (2009) argues that the policy that caused the most extreme conflict between President Roh Moo-hyun and conservative forces was a policy of "clearing up the past wrongdoings" despite the fact that other policies of Roh, such as economic policy that was in line with neoliberalism, were not, indeed, contradictory with those of the conservatives. This well illustrates that the reason why the New Right emerged out of traditional conservatives under the Roh administration is deeply linked to the representation of South Korean history and its connection with national identity. The present is constructed by the past, and the past by the present. That is, the present is shaped by how people remember past events and place meanings on those. Thus, defining who we are today is heavily dependent on what and how to remember, which becomes, in turn, a battlefield of defining what is the present and how to view current events. The representation of the past, furthermore, relates to how to plan and construct the future of a nation. Hence, history is intrinsically related to decision making around the policies for the nation's present and future. The policy regarding past injustice and wrongdoings under the two progressive regimes made conservatives realize the importance of history. Since then, the representation of history has become the site of struggles where two contending master narratives on history of South Korea collide head-on with each other.

In terms of history education, there is no doubt that textbooks have transmitted the official historical view that different societies have of their past. One of the well-known social functions of history education is the production and propagation of an accurate account of the past. Indeed, every country has generated a number of official narratives of the past in different historical times and socio-political situations. Thus, the teaching of history has been a matter of great concern for every modern society. For instance, Tulviste and Wertsch (1994) have analyzed how the two types of history, "official history" and "unofficial histories," were produced and consumed in post-Soviet Estonia. On the one hand, the official history has been spread through the teaching of history in school, textbooks being one of the most efficient tools. In contrast, unofficial histories have been produced by informal education, such as through oral tradition, religious institutions or underground literature (cited in Carretero et al. 2002, p. 653). In this dissertation, the research focus is more on the official narrative and its transformation but unofficial histories have also great significance as a critical factor that can promote the transformation of the official narrative.

The ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives as an official history adopted in textbooks with textbook pluralization has not only greatly influenced South Koreans' change of viewpoint on the two significant others, North Korea and the US, but also on the self, that is, whether the birth of South Korea should be regarded as a legitimate and lawful process of modern nation-building, or as a failure to establish one united nation on the peninsula, resulting in division of the nation. The state-

sanctioned narrative of national identity that had been dominant before democratization was constructed with the aim of uniting the people under the political system of South Korea during the process of nation building, so the focus was put on the legitimacy of South Korea as the only lawful political entity on the peninsula, thus regarding the North as an illegal entity. On the other hand, as explained in former chapters, in the ethnic nationalism narrative which emerged as a strong alternative, the blame for the division lies on ruling elites of South Korea who actively pursued the establishment of a separate state in the south only for the sake of their own interests with the strong backing of the US military government. For ethnic nationalists, the South Korean government and ruling elites are illegitimate and illegal forces that stole the chance of building one united nation that all the people [*minjung*] had hoped for. As a result, it was the people that suffered from the tragedy of the national division. High school history textbook revision provided a great chance for the ethnic nationalism narrative to be institutionalized as an official narrative.

In the following section, how the progressive regimes have successfully transformed the narrative regarding self identity will be discussed in order to see the official narrative transformation from the state-sanctioned to the ethnic nationalism narrative, which consequently resulted in history war of South Korea by examining history textbook controversies and other debates in the society related to how to view South Korea's modern and contemporary history.

6.1.1 History Textbook Controversy

Although most of the changes in education in South Korea have been initiated at the central government level and the reforms have been of a largely top-down nature, the campaign of teachers' unions and other civil society groups that emerged since the mid-1980s have also played a significant role in motivating educational reform (Jones 2011, p. 211), along with the progressive regime's firm determination for reforms in a variety of areas in society. Curriculum and textbook production, which had remained quite centralized started to undergo some reforms, beginning in 1981 with the fourth curriculum also known as the third revision, when the MOE assigned curriculum production to a subsidiary agency, the Korean Education Development Institute (KEDI), and tentatively drafted a blueprint of a system of limited textbook pluralism. It is, however, only since the sixth in 1993 and in particular, the seventh curriculum in 1997, that textbook pluralism has been more actively promoted (ibid.). The seventh curriculum, drafted during Kim Young Sam's presidency and implemented from 2000, has strongly reconfirmed the commitment to adopt a policy of textbook pluralism. It is the Korean Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), established in 1998, that administers a multilayered textbook system for the MOE.

In 2003, to encourage diversity in historical views, the progressive government changed the

policy on history textbooks from the single state-issued textbook to the authorization system. As a result, six privately published history textbooks for high school use were initially approved at that time. Ever since then, some of those textbooks have drawn criticism from conservatives, sharpening the larger debate in South Korea over how to appraise modern and contemporary history (Choe Sang-hun 2008). The narrative change over specific historical events was observed in those six authorized textbooks (Jones 2011, pp. 213). For example, the process of democratization is particularly emphasized, with a glorious democratic tradition invoked from the March First Movement in 1919 through to the present. In this light, any opponents of democracy are heavily criticized. Rhee Syngman, for example, who was formerly honored as the founder of the nation, and Park Chung-hee, who was depicted as a great leader who successfully led the country to modernization and economic developments, are now heavily criticized for their authoritarian rule and the suppression of democracy. Transformation of political circumstances resulting from rapprochement with the former enemy, North Korea, and tensions with close ally, the US, have also led to revisions of textbook content. The US, for instance, is now portrayed to have shared some responsibility for the Korean War and the subsequent division of the nation. Anti-communistic narrative has gradually diminished and the North is depicted more positively than it was in the past.

Though these changes were implemented completely in line with a shift in politically acceptable discourses and were approved by the MOE, traditional conservative historians expressed their strong opposition to them. Narrative transformation in history textbooks is essentially connected to the rise of liberal and leftist historiography since the late 1970s. The challenge to the state-sanctioned narrative of authoritarian regimes from leftist and progressive intellectuals resulted in active academic publications from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, as discussed in chapter 3. In particular, progressive historians passionately explored the modern and contemporary history field. Enjoying benefits from the powerful impact of the *Gwangju* Democratization Movement, progressive historians were in a privileged position in narrating 20th century history. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, their publications were widely circulated and consumed, in particular, among college students involved in the anti-authoritarian government and democracy movement. Even after the official end of the democratization movement, they remained as important sources for the modern and contemporary history of South Korea for the public throughout the 1990s. When the progressive presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, took office, this historical view of liberals, progressives and leftists naturally came to be reflected in history textbooks.

Under this set of circumstances, the installation of the 7th Educational Guidelines enabled the progressive historical view to be adopted in history textbooks. Revised in 1997 and taking effect in 2000, the new guidelines brought two significant changes in teaching Korean history in high schools: 1) it separated introductory modern and contemporary Korean history into an optional

advanced course; 2) it allowed each school to choose its own modern and contemporary history textbook from a list of six privately published and government-authorized textbooks that became available from 2004 (Chŏng Kyŏng-hee 2013, pp. 105-106). It was Kwon Cheol-hyun, a GNP assemblyman, who brought the history textbook issue into the parliamentary examination of the Ministry of Education in October 2004. In particular, Kwon focused on the modern and contemporary history textbook published by *Kumsung*, which was enjoying an approximately 50% share in the textbook market at that time. The conservatives denounced its popularity as a conspiracy of politically "impure" and left-leaning teachers who were members of the Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union (KTE) (Chŏng Sŏng-chin 2008). The social controversy over the ideological leaning in high school textbooks added one more issue in an already turbulent political realm and civil society engaged in resettling past wrongdoings in late 2004. At the beginning of the following year, this sensitive reaction of the conservatives resonated in the establishment of a New-Right civic group, the Text Forum. The Text Forum contended that six privately published history textbooks, all allegedly left-leaning, were misleading young Koreans ideologically and imbuing them with distorted ideas on the nation's proud history. In order to correct this problem, it suggested publishing a new alternative history textbook by collecting scholarly and public opinions.

While preparing its own textbook, the Text Forum propagated its own historical perspective in several ways such as holding symposiums, publishing books and articles, and holding media interviews. With these activities, the Forum openly criticized the *Kumsung* Textbook while suggesting the blueprint of its own textbook. The most crucial problem of the *Kumsung* Textbook in the view of the Forum was that it described South Korean history as a failed history that was born illegitimately and resulted in a crippled state. The Forum claimed that the textbook fundamentally failed to implant a sense of pride as Koreans among the young generation by teaching them a distorted history. The Forum calls the perspective of the *Kumsung* Textbook a "self-tormenting" one. For example, An Pyŏng-jik (2008), one of the mentors of the New Right group and a prominent left-turned-right wing historian, denounces the textbook as no more than "a history of the *minjung* [people] movement," based on four reasons: 1) the text is predominantly structured on the development of the people's movement up to the post-liberation period; 2) it either states briefly or describes negatively the formation of South Korea and its economic achievements; 3) it depicts only the democratization movement itself without explaining its socio-economic context and its process, and thus commits the mistake of identifying the democratization movement with democracy itself; and 4) it stresses North Korean history and also evaluates its socialist nation-building process positively in sharp contrast to its negative descriptions of South Korea's nation-building process. The Text Forum drafted its own alternative textbook to counteract what the group members perceive as the naïve and overweening historical view of the type II history texts.

The Forum's critique on the *Kumsung* Textbook is in fact directed to overall progressive history circles and their historiography. For instance, *Taking back our stolen history* [*Ppaeakinuriyŏksadŏich'atki*] (Pak Hyo-jong et al., 2006), a symposium publication series of the Text Forum, specifically targets the major arguments of conventional progressive historiography. The three chapters of the book, except the first and last chapters, are dedicated to problematizing the major aspects of progressive historiography: 1) its emphasis on the ethnic nation and the people [*minjok/minjung*]; 2) its emphasis on colonial exploitation and deprivation in describing economic history under the Japanese rule; 3) its *minjung*-and-unification-centeredness. In this sense, the history movement of the Text Forum that reflects the perspective of the New Right historiography was a reactionary movement to the official narrative transformation reflecting historical interpretations of the progressives that had been built over the twenty years of the 1980s and 1990s, and was an attempt to take back the hegemony that the conservative historical view had enjoyed before.

With the election of the conservative president, Lee Myung-bak, there was a sudden demand for a rollback of some of the revisions that had been made during the progressive regimes of the previous ten years. Shortly after his election, he appointed conservative historian Chung Ok-ja to the head of the National Institute of Korean History, whose work included textbook production and oversight. More importantly, he announced it was time for the nation to stop fighting with the ugly past, move on, and appreciate national success (*Chosun Ilbo* 2008). On Oct 30, 2008 the MOE demanded that the authors of the *Kumsung* and five other textbooks used in high schools delete or revise 55 sections regarding such topics as the legitimacy of South Korea, the roots of the Korean War and the negative descriptions of the Rhee Syngman regime (Chŏng Kyŏng-hee 2013, p. 131). The authors rejected the requested amendments and launched legal action to prevent their text from being revised, claiming that critics were trying to "beautify" the country's problematic history, overlooking Korean collaboration with the Japanese occupiers and postwar dictatorships. Although the publishers went ahead and made some revisions, a number of schools decided to discontinue using the controversial textbooks, particularly the *Kumsung* text, and controversy seemed to have reached an end.

There is evidently more than one view of Korean history alive among the public in South Korea, which is reflected in vigorous debate in scholarly circles and in the press. What should be noted here is that the dominant view of the ruling administration, whether progressive or conservative, is taken as the basis on which the MOE can violate, or is possibly pushed into violating, the normal processes of the textbook drafting and revision, and simply force changes when political pressure from the Blue House demands. As many historians have pointed out as a key problem related to history textbook revision, if such actions are tolerated, this means that completely new history textbooks will have to be written every time there is a regime change.

In the 2009 reform of the national education curriculum, the history subject was replaced with "Korean History." There was another authorization process of the Korean history textbooks in 2013, and as a result eight privately published Korean History textbooks were authorized, which have been used in schools since 2014. However, right after those eight textbooks were approved, the criticism from conservatives grew stronger than before toward allegedly left-leaning textbooks. Since then, how history is told to young Koreans has been a subject of great disagreement among parents, professors, teachers, and school departments. In 2013, after another conservative president, Park Geun-hye was elected, once again the MOE asked publishers to correct left-leaning accounts.

In October 2015, President Park announced that all middle and high schools would be required to abandon the privately published history textbooks and instead, adopt the new single government-issued textbook with the clear intention to bring the writing of school history under its control. In the state-issued textbook (2017), under President Park, a preface clarifies that it aims to make students feel proud of the establishment of South Korea and its development. It emphasizes that the ROK was established by overcoming Japanese colonial rule, and since then, although it went through other challenges like the division of the peninsula and the Korean War, it has been able to keep developing. According to the plan of President Park, students would be taught history from the government-issued textbook as from the beginning of 2017, something which has never happened because of her impeachment. Park announced that the left-leaning private textbooks tainted the minds of young children. Her government worked with a secretly selected panel of scholars to write the new textbook that would instill students with a sense of patriotism. But her plan faced immediate protests. Critics accused Park of returning the nation's history education to the days of her father, President Park Chung-hee, whose government issued textbooks that sought to justify his dictatorial rule. When a draft of the state-issued history textbooks was unveiled in November 2015, opposition parties and scholars quickly accused it of highlighting the achievements of Park Chung-hee, the father of Park Geun-hye, such as rapid economic growth during his rule, while giving brief portrayals of his human rights abuses like the torture and execution of dissidents. The newly elected President Moon Jae-in, after Park's impeachment, decided in March 2017 to abolish the plan for adopting the single state-issued history textbook and the controversy over history textbook finally seems to have reached an end. However, the "history war" is still on-going with other issues related to the modern and contemporary history of South Korea, such as enacting the National Foundation Day.

It is important to note that the *Ch'inilp'a* discourse, one of the key themes in the ethnic nationalism historiography, was institutionalized as an official narrative through history textbook revision with the 7th Educational Guidelines, in which three urgent tasks that should have been accomplished after liberation were pointed out: the establishment of a unified nation, clearing up the legacy of colonization, and land reform. These were initially suggested in the 6th Educational

Guidelines (1993) by a leftist historian Seo Joong-seok but were not included in the final version of the guidelines at the time (Chŏng Kyŏng-hee 2013, pp. 107-108). Around 2004, along with the state legislation on past wrongdoings such as collaboration, the modern and contemporary high school history textbook controversy contributed to intensifying the so-called "history war" between the conservatives and the progressives. This textbook controversy has significance in that it is an excellent example of how the pro-Japanese collaborator [*ch'inilp'a*] issue can engage with the overall interpretation of modern and contemporary Korean history. The history textbook and the collaboration issue have been inseparable in the context of the "history war" since the 2000s.

The history textbook controversy began with the New Right's attack on left-leaning textbooks, and soon afterwards progressive historians joined in the debate when a right wing civic group, the Text Forum, announced the compilation of a new revisionist textbook reflecting the historical view of the New Rights. For the following five years, the controversy played out focusing on the contents of the two textbooks, *Modern and Contemporary History* textbook (2002) published by *Kumsung*, and the *Alternative* textbook (2009) published by the Text Forum. During the controversy, these two textbooks represented the positions of the left and right wingers, and progressive and conservative historians. Regarding the most controversial topics of collaboration, the legitimacy of the South Korean government and the description of North Korea, the two textbooks took very distinctive positions. The *Kumsung* textbook was highly critical of pro-Japanese collaborators and their influence in post-1945 Korea. In comparison, the narrative of the right wing's *Alternative* textbook shows a far more forgiving attitude toward those collaborators. For instance, it is described in the Text Forum's *Alternative* textbook that the elites' collaboration with the colonial regime was either inescapable or unavoidable. The debate over the two textbooks gives us an example of what kind of historical trajectory "clearing of pro-Japanese collaborators" advocates.

The criticism of history textbooks for their gradual left-leaning tendency began to be raised by conservatives as early as 1998, right after the presidential election of Kim Dae-jung. For instance, in its first two issues in 1998, *Han'guk Nondan*, a conservative monthly magazine, often regarded as extreme right, highlighted left-leaning tendencies in *minjung* [the people] and revisionist historiographies that were adopted in school textbooks. Pak Pong-kyun (1998) comments that the comprehensive revision of history textbooks in 1996 confused the students' value system by denying the political and historical legitimacy of South Korea. He claimed these textbooks distorted South Korean history with evil intention while legitimizing the nation-building process and existence of the North Korean state. However, the influence of left-leaning views in the school classroom was still limited around this time. It was in the early and mid-2000s that a progressive historical perspective, which treats North Korea as equal to South Korea as one of the two divided nations on the peninsula, emerged as the powerful competitor to the formerly dominant state-sanctioned

historical view in modern and contemporary high school history textbooks.

The production and dissemination of modern Korean history that was politically and socially divisive was placed at the center of political and societal debates under the conservative Park Geun-hye government when the decision to retake control of the publication of history textbooks was finalized by the Park administration and then ruling *Saenuri* Party. However, the decision was widely rejected in society, with those in opposition criticizing it for a variety of reasons: from the claim that the rollback represented the restoration of history interpretations under the father president Park Chung-hee's dictatorial era, to the argument that a single state-issued textbook system was a backward policy, denying plural interpretations of history. At the heart of the conflict lay contentious and politically driven views of history, that is, two conflicting narratives: the state-centered nationalism narrative supported by the New Right and conservatives; and the ethnic nationalism narrative, constructed by progressive and leftist intellectuals and adopted by most privately published textbooks since the 2000s.

Under the current Moon Jae-in administration that decided to abolish the former president Park's initiative of the state-issued history textbooks, the contents of history textbooks continue to change. In July 2017, the MOE declared the guidelines for publications of history textbooks for elementary, middle, and high schools, according to which the following are to be added, deleted, or changed.

Table 2. Changes in Curriculum and guideline for history textbook under president Moon

	Privately published textbooks authorized by the state under Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013)	The single state-issued textbook under Park Geun-hye (2013-2017)	Guidelines (draft)for history textbooks as of 2020 under Moon Jae-in (2017~)
Political system of ROK	Liberal Democracy	Liberal Democracy	Democracy
Foundation of the ROK In 1948	The ROK government was established.	ROK was established.	The ROK government was established
The Korean War	Specify "*Namch'im*" [the North's invasion to the South]'	Specify "*Namch'im*" [the North's invasion to the South]'	Specify "*Namch'im*" [the North's invasion to the South]'only in the curriculum, but not in the guideline
Saemaul Movement of the former president Park Chung-hee	Excluded	Included	Excluded
Negative effects of industrialization	Specify societal problems such as rich-poor gap	Replace the term, "societal problems" with "assignments to be resolved"	Specify societal problems such as social polarization

Descriptions over the North	Mention hereditary succession, failure of economic policy, human rights violation, and military provocation.	Specify details of "third hereditary succession", nuclear missile, and military provocation such as Cheonanham sinking incident	Aim to understand the societal changes in North Korea. (No mention about hereditary succession or military provocation)

(Source adapted from Sŏng Si-yun 2018)

The recent guidelines, once more, created strong criticism from conservatives. After collecting public opinions, the MOE decided in July 2018 to adopt all the suggested guidelines except two. First, for the term regarding the political system of the ROK, both "liberal democracy" and "democracy" are allowed to be used, which is largely because conservatives argued that replacing the term "liberal democracy" with "democracy" in textbooks, which is the expression clearly stipulated in the Constitution, is very disturbing, considering that they observe other attempts to change history away from the defining moment of the ROK's creation in 1948 and efforts to downplay the fact that the ROK has become a successful and prosperous state with liberal democracy and a market economy. Second, the expression "*Namch'im*" that refers to the fact that the Korean War began with the invasion from North Korea, which was originally planned not to be specified as one of the guidelines, is to remain in the list of the guidelines. In terms of the foundation of the ROK, the expressions "Republic of Korea was established" and "Republic of Korea is the only legitimate government on the Korean peninsula" are to be deleted, as suggested in the new guidelines.

Two other themes, the "*Saemaul* Movement" and "negative effects of industrialization", pertain to the assessment of President Park Chung-hee. In the guidelines of the Moon government, the *Saemaul* Movement, which is in general regarded by most conservatives as a successful policy of Park resulting in the development of rural areas in the 1970s, has been excluded, and in terms of its effects on industrialization in what is regarded as one of the most critical periods for the economic development, negative effects are to be emphasized with more detailed explanations. These changes have also brought criticism from rightists who suspect that there is a hidden agenda to disregard the success of South Korea. The changes in the guidelines have political significance because they reflect the historical understanding of the Moon administration. They clearly illustrate that President Moon's national identity and historical view are in accordance with the ethnic nationalism narrative that includes North Korea as part of the self to be unified and understates the influences of former authoritarian regimes. So the negative descriptions of the North Korean regime's succession and military provocation will not be mentioned in the revised textbooks according to the new guidelines, and the negative effects of former authoritarian regimes in South Korea will remain emphasized with detailed descriptions, as in currently used private textbooks.

The controversy around the revision of history textbooks recurs whenever a regime is

changed between conservatives and progressives. In the 2000s, when the progressive regimes took office for 10 years, they sought to challenge the predominant state-sanctioned narrative identity which had been only allowed during the past authoritarian era. As a result, history textbooks have become the battlefield to dominate discourses and narratives on the national identity of South Korea and history textbook revision is now more about politics in current South Korea, rather than about education. Furthermore, at the time of writing the Moon government, another progressive regime after the conservatives' nine years of governing, is attempting to change several dates of national anniversaries related to the foundation of South Korea. Right after his presidency began in May 2017, President Moon Jae-in abolished the single state-issued history textbook policy, which was his first move to erase the legacies of his impeached predecessor, Park. President Moon gave a speech on August 15, 2017, on the National Liberation Day, in which he mentioned that the year of 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the ROK, evidently identifying 1919 as the foundation year (Jeong Eun-hye 2017). Opponents of Moon criticized him for denying the establishment of the ROK in 1948 through the presidential election under the UN's monitoring, arguing that although the Provisional government has its meaning in that it highlights the Koreans' efforts to bring about liberation even under severe oppression from Japan, it cannot be considered as the establishment of a modern nation-state as it had no territory, sovereignty or people.

The controversy regarding the National Foundation Day continues with other attempts made by the Moon administration. President Moon mentioned in the meeting with the Ministry of National Defense that the National Armed Force Day should be moved to September 17 instead of the current date of October 1 because October 1 does not have any historical legitimacy in August 2017 (Kim Kwang-su 2017). This reveals President Moon's historical view that finds the legitimacy of South Korea in the Provisional government, not in the first government of Rhee Syngman in a divided state because the Korean Liberation Army was created under the Provisional government in September 17, 1940, which by then had moved to Chungching, China. Conservatives, however, claim that October 1 was appointed as an Armed Forces Day for several reasons. First of all, in 1950 during the Korean War, it was the date the ROK 3rd Infantry division broke through North Korean forces and crossed the 38th Parallel after the forced retreat to *Pusan*. It was also on October 1, 1953, that the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty was signed. Furthermore, October 1 was the date that the three branches of military service were completed, with the formation of the ROK Air Force in October 1, 1949 (O Tara 2018, p. 6). In line with this attempt to change the date of National Armed Forces Day, the ruling *Minju* Party introduced another bill to change the National Police Day from October 21 to November 5 (Choe Sŏn-wook 2017). Once again, the attempt to change this date is linked with the Provisional government, which created a temporary administrative law on November 5, 1919, in which it mentioned establishing a police bureau. President Moon made a statement on the 73th

anniversary of the National Police Day on October 25, 2018 that we can find the roots of the Korean national police in the statement of the Provisional Government of Kim Ku, who persisted in establishing the united government after liberation (Moon Jae-in 2018). Lee Chae-chŏng, a national lawmaker, asserted that changing the date to November 5 would recover the police's historical legitimacy and dignity by clarifying that the beginning of the police was not during the transitional US Military Government, but during the Provisional Government's police bureau (Chŏng Hŭi-wan 2017). Likewise, there have been persistent efforts by the current Moon administration to change several dates related to the birth of South Korea and its main institutions. This was in accordance with President Moon's historical view that dissociates South Korea's foundation away from 1948 toward 1919, when the Provisional Government was created. His view evidently reflects the ethnic nationalism narrative that finds the legitimacy of South Korea in the Provisional Government, not in the first Rhee Syngman government of South Korea, which is the conventional view. Hence, this series of attempts appears to be an effort to change the identity of what became the ROK since its liberation. All these controversies are linked to how South Korea should define itself and interpret its own history. And now through the controversies over history textbook revision and (re)assigning of several dates for national anniversaries, we can see that the battles between two conflicting narratives about identity are still ongoing.

6.2 Narratives of History Textbooks

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when communists in the North invaded the South under the leadership of Kim Il Sung with the support of his comrade Joseph Stalin. This is an unquestionable truth for nearly all South Koreans who have been educated in the South Korean school system. The MOE under the Moon administration tried to effect some change in this dogmatic narrative over the war by suggesting the guideline not to specify the term "*namch'im*" [the North's invasion of the South], which failed. The conventional historiography, in particular, regarding the violent war history, has been deeply embedded in the society by focusing attention almost exclusively on the events of that one day, June 25, rather than viewing the war as part of a complex series of social, economic, and political transformations. However, Korea is not a special case, and many societies recovering from recent violent experiences face the same dilemma of choosing either monumental or critical history in the process of nation-building.

The construction of nationhood is not only a process of remembering but also one of forgetting. As Grinker (1998) puts it, "it is a process of filtering, condensing and organizing the complexities and uncertainties of history into well-bounded and highly specific terms that constitute

national narratives" (p. 128). History textbooks with different ideologies and historical views are necessarily related to a number of issues such as textbooks as an institutional framework for nationhood and the potentially coercive role of education. The purpose of this chapter is to extend beyond merely explaining education as an instrument of power or coercion to identify historical representations of the significant others and the self, in order to illustrate how these representations of history in textbooks have been patterned in ways similar to those in the realms of South Korean politics. The texts are patterned along many of the same oppositional lines between state and people and between conservatives and progressives, which can be seen in such media as newspaper articles, interviews and literature. Among those, textbooks are one of the most obvious vehicles for making particular historical narratives into "doxa" (Bourdieu 1977), that is, narratives that become so taken for granted that they are seen as natural and true, as seen in the case of the "*namch'im*" narrative in South Korea. Thus, in more general terms, this chapter is concerned with the importance of education as an instrument for the formation and reproduction of a particular and "doxic" vision of nationhood. In reality, education essentially includes and transmits ideologies of the state power that are never neutral (Grinker 1988, p. 137), which means that there necessarily exist some people and some classes that enjoy more benefits from the educational system of the state than others. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) see teaching in more Marxist terms as symbolic violence (p.5), propagated in the service of elites and the state, and rationalized in nationalist terms because it is essential to preserve culture. Different states or governments do not simply make different kinds of textbook and do not necessarily write more democratic texts as their governments become more democratic. However, to a certain extent, different historical and political conditions make possible different kinds of texts, with certain plots, metaphors, and concepts.

This chapter aims to demonstrate how history textbooks resonate with conflicting narrative identities based on the contentious concepts of nationalism: ethnic and state-centered nationalism. What I hope to suggest through this is that the textbooks are part of a larger process of producing a particular set of South Korean discourses of nationhood and national identity. Therefore, the controversy over history textbooks that has lasted almost for the last fifteen years has a significant meaning as it indicates the fact that inner conflicts of South Korea, the so-called South-South conflicts, are related to disagreement among South Koreans regarding how to define the self and the significant others. In doing so, I assume that there is a significant relationship between the materials included in textbooks and the way educated citizens come to think about their nations, based on the proposition that there is a relationship between what people read and what they think. And since a history textbook is a book about what South Korea thinks about itself, including the important relationships with the North and the US, it must also be about the ways in which South Koreans learn about those topics.

6.2.1 Narrative Analysis of History Textbooks

History textbook narratives in South Korea have been transformed from patriotic narrative, which puts emphasis on loyalty to South Korea, to ethnic nationalist narrative, which prioritizes the ethnic notion of the nation, and accordingly the unification of the two Koreas. Whenever the regime has changed between progressives and conservatives since the 2000s there have been controversies over which version of history should be taught to students among politicians, historians, and civil societies of teachers and parents. Among eight history textbooks currently used, published by private publishing companies and authorized by the government, seven textbooks tend to employ an ethnic nationalism narrative. However, the state-centered nationalism narrative still enjoys strong support from particularly conservative politicians, historians and civil societies (Zadora 2017, p. 258). In the following section, in order to analyze how the ethnic nationalism narrative is actually institutionalized in textbooks, among eight privately published textbooks close attention will be paid to two of these: *Kumsung* (2nd Ed., 2018), criticized by rightists as the most left-leaning; and the state-issued textbook (2017), published under President Park Geun-hye, claimed to be far-right. Two other textbooks, *Miraen* (5th Ed., 2018) and *Visang* (5th Ed., 2018), which ranked the first and second in the market share in 2014, as seen in Figure 1), will be used as references when necessary, both of which are also considered by conservatives to be generally left-leaning.

Figure 2. Textbook Market Share in 2014 surveyed by Offices of Education
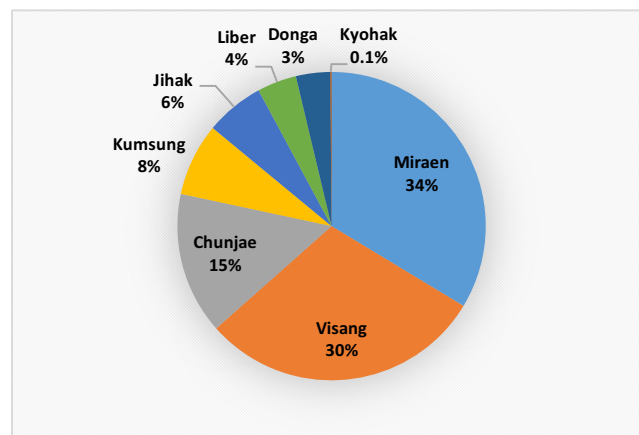
(Chŏng Kyŏng-hwa 2015)

The figure 2. is based on the data collected from 2285 high schools across South Korea by the Office of Education in 17 different cities and counties (Chŏng Kyŏng-hwa 2015). Among eight textbooks, five textbooks, *Miraen, Visang, Chunjae, Kumsung* and *Donga*, generally regarded as left-leaning,

account for nearly 90 % of the market share; two others, *Liberschool* and *Jihak*, considered moderate, account for 10%, and the other, *Kyohak*, claimed to be right-leaning, has been adopted by only 3 schools (0.1%). Thus, comparing the two highest market share textbooks, *Miraen* and *Visang,* plus the *Kumsung* textbook, allegedly the most left-leaning, with the state-issued textbook of the conservative Park regime, allegedly far-right, can illustrate how the ethnic nationalism narrative is actually reflected in privately published textbooks, and how the narrative in those textbooks is different from the rightist textbook published by the Park administration. The comparative narrative analysis will be done regarding the most controversial thematic concepts: 1) the legitimacy of the ROK and the foundation of the DPRK; 2) assessment of the Rhee Syngman and Kim Il Sung regimes; 3) descriptions of North Korea's negative aspects; 4) pro-Japanese collaboration; and 5) the Korean War and its consequences.

As explained, there are two contentious narratives on national identity in South Korea. While both are based on strong faith in the ethnic homogeneity of Koreans, each narrative has developed in its own way to define who "we" are and "they" are. The state-sanctioned narrative was the official master narrative under authoritarian regimes, which has evolved into the "state-centered nationalism" narrative with the New Right historiography that emerged in the 2000s, as a reaction to the progressive or allegedly left-leaning historical view. The newly developed state-centered nationalism of conservatives emphasizes loyalty to the Republic of Korea as the only representation of the true Korean nation, including lay people in North Korea who are fellow people hijacked by the Kim family, an illegal regime. Thus, the North Korean regime and its followers, including pro-North sympathizers within South Korea, are considered the out-group in the state-centered nationalism narrative. This assumes that unification is a release of oppressed fellow people from the totalitarian Kim family. On the other hand, as illustrated the ethnic nationalism narrative sees all North Koreans, including the North Korean government, as one nation that should be united without any interference by imperial foreign powers.

A. The Legitimacy of the ROK and the Foundation of the DPRK

Firstly, it is interesting to examine the terms on which historical events are labeled by each narrative. Regarding the foundation of South Korea, three privately published textbooks use the term, "the establishment of the government of the ROK." For instance, the *Kumsung* textbook explains that "The president Rhee Syngman declared the establishment of the government of the Republic of Korea" (p. 370). What is more interesting is that regarding the foundation of North Korea, all those privately published textbooks use the expression, "the establishment of the DPRK," not "the establishment of the government of the DPRK." Conservatives criticize this, arguing that there is a

hidden agenda of left-leaning textbooks in consistently using the term "the establishment of the government" for South Korea, while using the expression "the establishment of the DPRK." It aims to downgrade the birth of the ROK to the establishment of one of two separate governments on the peninsula, as opposed to the conservatives' narrative in which the establishment of the ROK was the only legal and legitimate nation-building, while the birth of the DPRK is highlighted with the nuanced expression, "the establishment of the DPRK," in order to acknowledge its legitimacy. Furthermore, all three textbooks explain that the establishment of the DPRK was declared soon after the establishment of the government of the ROK. For instance, the *Kumsung* textbook explains that "after the government of the ROK was established in August 2018, North Korea declared the establishment of the DPRK with the creation of a cabinet centered around Kim Il Sung at the beginning of September" (p. 371). Critics argue that the statement that the establishment of the DPRK was announced after the establishment of the South Korean government aims to blame South Korea for the division of the nation, despite the fact that the Provisional People's Committee for North Korea, which in reality functioned as the government to the north of the 38th Parallel, was first founded in February 1946. Contrastingly, the state-issued textbook describes that "The Republic of Korea was founded on August 15, 1948, with the establishment of the government of the ROK, which inherited the Provisional Government" (p. 252), while it only briefly mentions the North with one sentence, "the North Korean regime was established to the north of the 38th Parallel" (p. 252). The terms used to describe the establishment of the two Koreas in each textbook well reflect conflicting narrative identities. Three privately published textbooks adopt "the establishment of the government" for the South, while for the North both expressions, "the establishment of the government" and "the establishment of the DPRK," are used. The *Kumsung* textbook, allegedly the most left-leaning, describes the establishment of separate governments thus: "after the UN decided to hold the election only in the southern part of Korea under the US military government control, North Korea harshly criticized it, maintaining the establishment of the united government" (p. 317). Critics argue that the sentence clearly blames the South for the division of the nation, thus weakening the legitimacy of the ROK. These sharply conflicting narratives on the foundation of two Koreas well indicate that the roots of conflicts between progressives and conservatives are fundamentally connected to conceptions of national identity, between one narrative which sees the establishment of South Korea as a lawful and legitimate process through elections, and the other which regards it as the failure of the nation.

Additionally, the two textbooks, *Kumsung* and the state-issued example, display sharp contrast in interpreting the 3rd UN General Assembly Resolution, in which it was declared of the ROK, "This is the only such [lawful] government in Korea." In the *Kumsung* text, it is argued that this sentence actually means that "this government is the only lawful one in the area where it was

possible to hold the UN-monitored presidential election on the peninsula" (p. 370). In contrast, it is explained in the state-issued textbook that the UN General Assembly authorized that "the government of the ROK is the only lawful one on the Korean peninsula" (p. 252). The *Miraen* textbook makes the same interpretation as the state-issued textbook regarding this matter, while the *Visang* textbook does not include the UN resolution. However, three privately published textbooks devote about one page to contrasting Kim Ku's pursuit of establishing one united government by coalition between leftists and rightists with Rhee Syngman's statement that establishing a separate government in the southern part where the election is possible should be considered in order to ultimately make the Soviet Union withdraw from the northern part of Korea. Especially in the *Kumsung* textbook, it is described that Rhee's statement about the possibility of establishing a separate government in June 1948, the so-called "*Chŏngŭp* statement," caused quite a stir (p. 367), as opposed to the state-issued textbook in which Rhee's statement is not included. This difference derives from disagreement in one of the core values between two master narratives: the establishment of the united Korean nation as an ultimate goal in the ethnic nationalism narrative; and the establishment of a non-communist and liberal capitalist state as the representation of the true Korean nation in the state-centered nationalism narrative.

B. Rhee Syngman and Kim Il Sung Regimes

Another sharp difference in the narratives of history textbooks is found in the description of the first administration of Rhee Syngman. All textbooks fundamentally agree on the dictatorship of Rhee. Even in the state-issued text of conservatives who think highly of Rhee as the founding father of South Korea, it is stated, with details of electoral fraud under Rhee, that "the value of liberal democracy of the ROK was damaged due to the dictatorship of President Rhee" (p. 259), under the title of "Anti-communism and the long term seizure of power by Rhee." However, private textbooks display a tendency to highlight Rhee's dictatorship more than that of the Kim family in the North, which also draws intense criticism from conservatives. The *Kumsung* textbook highlights the dictatorship of Rhee under the title "Dictatorship of the Rhee government" by setting a specified goal of the chapter with the words "students can list policies that prove the dictatorship of the Rhee Syngman government" (p. 385). On the other hand, regarding the North Korean Kim Il Sung regime under the title of "Characteristics of the early North Korean regime," it states that "the North Korean regime was a kind of a coalition government, unifying political forces, and Kim Il Sung played the key role of the prime minister of the cabinet" (p. 371). Also, *Miraen* and *Visang* emphasize the dictatorship of Rhee, with very detailed explanations of the various methods adopted for a rigged presidential election (Visang p. 358; Kumsung pp. 324-25). In contrast, the state-issued textbook

pays more attention to the dictatorship of the North by explaining that "the North Korean regime intensified its dictatorship by eliminating opponents. … In the name of *Juche* [self-reliance], the dictatorship of the Kim family is further intensified" (p. 286) under the title of "The third hereditary succession and inter-Korean relations."

Contrary to the description of Rhee's dictatorship, the *Miraen* textbook, regarding the political system of the North, mixes the expression, "the monolithic ruling system [*yuilchibaech'eche*]," with "the dictatorship of Kim Il Sung" (p. 350). The *Kumsung* textbook mentions that "Kim Il Sung strengthened his power by eliminating opponents. … In doing so, the monolithic ruling system was established" (p. 407). It uses the term "the monolithic ruling system" for the North instead of "dictatorship", while it emphasizes "dictatorship" for the Rhee government. For conservative critics this comment was regarded as proof to show the intention of ethnic nationalists to delegitimize the legitimacy of South Korea by emphasizing the dictatorship of President Rhee, while it directly adopts the North Korean regime's justification for its totalitarian system as the unique monolithic ruling system. In addition, conservatives criticize the fact that the *Kumsung* textbook devotes half a page to explaining the *Juche* ideology, taken directly from the North's propaganda that the "*Juche* ideology is the worldview centered on human beings and is a revolutionary ideology to realize the autonomy of the people" (p.407). The difference in descriptions of the North, as well as the terms used for the North in textbooks, well indicates the different perspectives toward the North in two narratives: the state-sanctioned narrative of conservatives, which sees the North as the enemy, thus putting emphasis on the totalitarianism of the North; and the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, which regards it as a legitimate political entity and a political partner for cooperation on the peninsula, thus describing the ruling system of the North as monolithic, in contrast with its description of the Rhee regime as a dictatorship.

In comparing historical views reflected in different descriptions of President Rhee, it is important to note that privately published texts mostly claim that the dictatorship of Rhee was due to his strong personal desire for a long-term seizure of power and anti-communism was used as a tool to strengthen its dictatorial power. In contrast, in the state-issued textbook the reason for a rigged election under President Rhee is not mentioned. Indeed, this is in line with the assessment of conservatives regarding Rhee, which will be elaborated in the following chapter through in-depth interviews I performed with right-wing activists, that fundamentally acknowledges the dictatorship of Rhee but sees it as a necessary evil to avoid social confusion which might have been caused by communists, many of whom still existed at the time in South Korea where democracy was not yet fully implanted. For conservatives, the dictatorship was necessary or unavoidable to protect a newly-built, so still weak, democratic political system of South Korea from communist invasion. On the other hand, in the ethnic nationalism narrative, Rhee is portrayed as a dictator who only pursed his

own political interests, causing the division of the nation, and anti-communism is described only as an instrument to justify his pursuit of a long-term seizure of power.

C. Description of North Korea's Negative Aspects

While the state-issued textbook includes detailed explanations of negative aspects of North Korea, including criticism from the international world of North Korean human rights violations as well as the resolutions of UN Human Rights Commission, the *Kumsung* textbook provides only a short explanation with one sentence that "North Korea received strong criticism about its human rights violations" (p. 411). The *Kumsung* text, however, includes the North's justification regarding the matter of human rights in the name of "North Korean style of human rights" that "we prioritize duties as a member of the whole community to the freedom of an individual and guaranteeing material benefits as one of the human rights values is regarded as more significant" (p. 411). While the *Miraen* textbook provides a small section to introduce North Korean human rights abuse (p. 351), *Visang* does not include any mention of it, focusing on the development and cooperation of inter-Korean relations. This contrast over the North Korean human rights issue between the two narratives is also quite clearly observed in policy differences between past conservative and progressive regimes. For instance, the progressive President Roh government showed its reluctance to vote for the UN Human Rights Commission resolution over North Korea. It did not participate in the voting in 2003 and chose abstention in 2004, 2005, and 2007, but in 2006 voted for a resolution. In contrast, the two conservative governments of Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye voted for it from 2008 to 2016. While conservatives have asked North Korea to meet the universal norm of human rights in various ways, progressives have taken very cautious attitudes to pressing North Korea regarding human rights, prioritizing cooperation. This attitude of progressives is also witnessed in the current Moon Jae-in administration in that it avoids including the human rights issue in the agenda of the inter-Korean summit as well as the DPRK-US summit, arguing that it will ruin the efforts to build trust and a peaceful relationship with the North. It is usually the progressives that take the lead in other human rights issues in South Korea, such as the promotion of workers' and women's rights. On the other hand, progressives point out that traditional conservatives that turned a blind eye to human rights violations of the past authoritarian regimes have no right to criticize the North. Thus, both conservatives and progressives criticize each other: the former criticizes the ambivalence of the latter over the issue; and the latter criticize the duality of the former.

What is more interesting is the fact that while the *Kumsung* textbook provides a four-page-description of the development and cooperation of inter-Korean relations, it only devotes one sentence to military provocations of the North, stating that "the competition between the two Koreas

was intensified with incidents such as a sudden attack on the Blue House by armed espionage agents and massive infiltrations of armed agents into *Uljin* and *Samcheok* in the late 1960s" (p. 413). In contrast, the state-issued textbook provides thorough descriptions under the title of "North Korean nuclear crisis and provocations toward the South" (p. 288), including details of nuclear weapons development, its crossing of the Northern Limit Line (NLL), a murder of a South Korean tourist in Mt. *Kumkang* in 2008, the sinking of the South Korean corvette *Cheonan* in 2010, and the North's shelling on *Yeongpyeong* Island in 2010. Although the state-issued textbook devotes more than one and a half pages of explanations (pp. 288-289) to the inter-Korean exchanges cooperation with the title of "Efforts for peaceful reunification," it is only a brief introduction, compared to the four-page explanations in great detail in the *Kumsung* textbook. Two other privately published textbooks also place more focus on positive developments in inter-Korean relations: the *Miraen* text, with four pages of explanations of inter-Korean relations under the title of "Inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation" (pp. 352-355); and *Visang*, also four pages of details (pp. 389-391).

In general, three privately published textbooks tend to emphasize positive aspects of inter-Korean relations, with minor differences. For instance, the *Kumsung* textbook includes the most detailed explanations with eleven pages regarding the North (pp. 406-417), such as its political system, *Juche* ideology, economic development, and the schooling system, and also provides details of negative aspects of nuclear weapons and human rights violations (pp. 407-412). The focus in the *Kumsung* textbook, like other privately published textbooks, lies on cooperation between the two Koreas, including the "Sunshine Policy" of President Kim Dae-jung and positive expectations of unification (pp. 413-417). It is interesting that *Miraen* and *Visang* do not include any comment about military provocations while the state-issued textbook provides detailed explanations. Here, the clear difference between the two narratives over inter-Korean relations can be discovered: the state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives sees South Korea as still in intractable conflict with the North and naturally puts more focus on the security concerns, like military provocations and the North's nuclear development project; and the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives view is that the two Koreas are out of a protracted conflictual situation and thus prioritizes inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation for peaceful coexistence and unification.

D. Pro-Japanese Collaboration

All three privately published textbooks devote more than one page of detailed explanations to collaboration and collaborators under Japanese colonial rule, including the list of specific figures and their anti-nationalist acts; *Mirean* (pp. 252-253); *Visang* (p. 282); and *Kumsung* (p. 343). Also, they all strongly criticize the passive attitude of President Rhee Syngman toward the legal

punishment of those collaborators while he prioritized anti-communist activities for the legal process under the Special Investigation Commission for Anti-Nationalists that was established in 1948. In particular, it is mentioned that "many [of the collaborators] became high rank officials in the army, police and government or politicians after the liberation" (p. 252) in the *Mirean* textbook. Also, the *Kumsung* textbooks state that "due to the failure to legally punish collaborators after liberation, many of those became very actively involved in the army, police and government [of the ROK] in the name of anti-communism" (p. 343). The *Kumsung* textbook, which is generally critical of the Rhee government, sets the goal of the chapter "The establishment of the ROK" to be that students are able to explain the efforts to clear up pro-Japanese collaborators and the outcomes of their actions (p. 368), which proves that it regards the collaboration issue as important, as opposed to the state-issued textbooks' brief introduction of the theme. However, what should be noted here is how these texts of privately published textbooks do not contain any information about the socio-economic, political or personal contexts of people living in the colonial era who became pro-Japanese collaborators. Hence, in this narrative, collaborators are all essentially anti-nationalists and traitors to the nation without consideration of the historical and personal contexts in which they may have been forced or were otherwise willing to perform acts of collaboration. This proves that the ethnic nationalism narrative also shows features of monumental history with a low degree of axiological balance, in which the perception of the out-group is just as inherently evil and vicious, and a high level of collective generality, which views the out-group as homogeneous. It is vital to provide historical, socio-political and personal contexts of collaborators so as not to understand them in too simplistic a way as a whole group of people who are innately evil.

Contrastingly, in the state-issued textbook the collaborators under Japanese rule and the failure of legal justice to punish them in the first Rhee government are introduced with only brief accounts. Further, there is no mention at all regarding the connection between pro-Japanese collaborators and high rank officials and politicians of post-liberation South Korea, unlike in the three other textbooks. The connection between collaborators and ruling elites of the authoritarian governments after liberation is crucial in the ethnic nationalism narrative because many of the conservative ruling elites are more likely to have ancestors of those who were involved in the Japanese colonial government. Pro-Japanese collaboration discourse is one of the historical topics that is highly politicized, and which led to contrasting accounts of the issue in those textbooks analyzed here.

E. The Korean War and its Consequences

The differences between the two contending narratives are very pronounced when it comes

to the descriptions of the Korean War in textbooks. While the state-issued textbook entitles the section simply as "The June 25 War" (p. 255), the war is described in the *Kumsung* textbook under the title of "The June 25 War and perpetuation of the division" (p. 376), highlighting the negative consequence of the war. Regarding the cause of the war, both texts use the term "*namch'im* [the North's invasion to the South]" that blames the North for the outbreak of the war. However, it is important to note that in the *Kumsung* textbook "the Acheson Line Declaration" announced by US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, on January 12, 1950, in which it was declared that Korea was excluded from the US defense line in Asia, was considered one of the significant factors that stimulated Kim Il Sung and other leaders to initiate the war by providing them with a conviction of victory (p. 377), although whether the Acheson Line actually led to the Korean War is still controversial (Ko Soo-suk 2018). The impact of the Acheson Line Declaration is also prominently described in other two privately published textbooks, *Visang* and *Mirean*, while there is no mention of the matter in the state-issued textbook.

Another difference regarding the war is found in illustrating the outcomes of the war. All textbooks agree with the idea that one of the tragedies caused by the war was the mass sacrifice of civilians because the front line of the war was moving up and down across the Korean peninsula. However, the assessment of the efforts to recover from the war, made by the Rhee administration, shows a sharp contrast. In the state-issued textbook it is said that the experience with communists during the war strengthened the anti-communistic ideology in the South and "many defectors who escaped from the North to seek for freedom, mostly bourgeois, merchants and Christians, contributed to the development of South Korea" (p. 258). Also, the considerable aid, mostly from the UN and the US, is described from a positive perspective, arguing that it helped to re-establish the South Korean economy (p. 260). In contrast, the *Kumsung* text focuses on one of the most negative consequences of the war, the perpetuation of the division, as seen in the title, saying that the war and mass killings of civilians left a legacy of hatred between South and North Korean people, which contributed a great deal to perpetuation of the division (p. 381). Furthermore, the aid from the US is portrayed in a negative way, maintaining that the recovery policies of the Rhee government made the South Korean economy heavily dependent on the US (p. 382). Implicit, and at times explicit, assessments of the consequences of the war are found through narrative analysis of textbooks. On one hand, the privately published texts highlight the negative nature of the war, which resulted in the prolonged division of the nation, and that of the recovery process of the Rhee regime, which led to heavy the dependence of South Korea on American aid. On the other hand, the state-issued textbook acknowledges the positive outcomes of American aid in developing the South Korean economy, and the contribution of North Korean defectors to South Korea's development.

Another important outcome of the Korean War is the ROK-US Mutual Defense Agreement,

which was signed on October 1, 1953, two months after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953. The agreement commits the two nations to providing mutual aid if either faces external armed attack, and allows the US to station military forces in South Korea. This treaty is described positively in the state-issued textbook, highlighting its contribution to the security of South Korea (p. 258). This reflects a tendency of conservatives, who regard the alliance with the US as one of the most important values for South Korea. The other texts simply mention the fact that the treaty was signed and the military alliance with the US was strengthened. In referring to the process of the war, there is a clear tendency to stress the tragedies caused by the war in three privately published texts, for instance, by including personal records of the war of a student soldier and an international reporter, and by emphasizing mass killings performed by the state forces of both Koreas and the reason why the state should reimburse families of those who were sacrificed in mass killings.

6.3 Limits of History Textbook Revision

Societies with a history of violent conflict face various challenges, one of which relates to how to deal with its divisive and violent past in ways that promote social integration and conflict transformation. As McCully (2012) points out that after conflict, "dealing with the recent past is especially problematic because the situation is still heavily disputed, raw, and characterized by personal trauma, anger, and grief" (p. 154). In the context of South Korea, where the nation is still divided while inner conflicts within South Korea over how to define itself are intensifying, it is particularly challenging to deal with the painful past of colonization, the division of the nation and the war. The South Korean government, whether progressive or conservative, thus has a double assignment when dealing with the North: on the one hand, establishing peaceful relations with the North, free from the dangers of another war; and on the other, negotiating with domestic political opponents who view inter-Korean relations from a totally different perspective. As elaborated in earlier chapters, domestic conflicts in South Korea are closely related to conflicting narrative identities. Post-war South Korea has faced many different challenges, including insecurity, poverty and institutional weakness, and the state monopolized the historical narrative in order to keep the people united and loyal to the state. However, with democratization demands for clearing up past wrongdoings conducted by the former state forces and reinterpreting the painful past of South Korea were high and the policy of textbook pluralism was eventually adopted in 2004. Less prescriptive curricula, liberalized textbook markets, involvement of professional historians and other interested parties in curriculum and textbook production, and a more open and vibrant public sphere should, in theory, lead to a greater diversity of historical interpretations. In reality, in contrast, pluralization of

history textbooks has resulted in a bitter "history war" in South Korean society and politics, disclosing the inherently conflicting nature of the society since its foundation. This research assumes that inner conflicts within South Korean society, including the history textbook controversy as well as other debates related to its modern and contemporary history, pertain to a disagreement among South Korean people regarding their political preference on the very fundamental question of nation-building, that is, how to identify South Korea.

Attempts made by two progressive regimes to construct an alternative narrative on national identity has in part contributed to narrating erased memories of the historical events, for instance, mass killings of civilians. This chapter, however, argues that those attempts have also contributed to deepening societal and political conflicts, largely due to two reasons: first, limits in the content of the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, which is itself partly critical in disclosing past wrongdoings that had been hidden in the narrative of authoritarian regimes but, more importantly, is monumental in many ways, just as the state-sanctioned narrative is; and second, limits in its "performative dimension" (Bentrovato 2017, p. 53), which refers to limits in the process through which the ethnic nationalism narrative was adopted as an official narrative in history textbooks as well as those in the process through which other policy changes were made. That is to say, limits in the transformative performative dimension have led to strong resistance of conservatives and rightists, who view this narrative change as a threat to their in-group values and norms that are foundational in their national identity construction.

6.3.1 Limits in the Content of Revised History Textbooks

A. Homogeneity of Narratives

Whereas textbook content has been dramatically revised in some cases, including complete verdict reversals on certain historical events and figures, history textbook revision appears to be simply a case of an old master narrative being replaced with a new one. The dominant narrative in the authoritarian era was that of modernization and development guided by anti-communist ideology; then, under Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, it was one of democratization and nationalist movements, which is named in this dissertation the ethnic nationalism narrative. President Lee Myung-bak, who took office after two progressive regimes, and another conservative president, Park Geun-hye, together with the MOE, attempted to abolish the work of his predecessors and bring back their version of historical narrative.

Narrative homogeneity across textbooks in South Korea can be found in the combined effects of politics and institutional inertia as Jones (2011) explains (p. 223). The responsibility for curriculum

development still lies with the MOE, although it is now usually subcontracted out to education research professionals and scholars. Some officials in the MOE may seek to promote a view that legitimizes the authority of their patrons in the government and to further secure their own status. Another reason for homogeneity might be the matter of socialization into established understandings of history and the "narrative templates" (Wertsch 2000). In the case of authoritarian states having kept longstanding monopolies on textbooks, textbook writers may become institutionally reluctant or even unable to avoid reproducing the narrative template through which they understand, interpret and represent past events (Jones 2011, p.223). Once the ethnic nationalism narrative has gained hegemonic status as a narrative template through textbook revisions under progressive regimes, as Wertsch puts it, textbook authors are more likely to reproduce it.

Another important matter to note regarding the matter of the homogeneity of textbook content is the complicated relationship between national identity and political legitimacy (ibid., p. 224). State powers in general aim to promote national identification and to legitimize the current regime or political system through the official historical narrative told in textbooks. Some of the very foundational stories of the nation have accordingly remained relatively unchanged, one of which, for South Korea, is the story of Japanese invasion and occupation, which serves as a driving force for national identity by invoking unity against a common enemy, Japan. The focus on narratives regarding Japanese colonization is, however, quite different in the two contending narratives: in ethnic nationalism, the blame generally falls on internal betrayals of pro-Japanese collaborators who later became the ruling elites of South Korea; and in the state-centered nationalism narrative, the focus is more on the heroic independent movements of the whole nation without paying much attention to any resistance movement of different ideological strains, in particular, of socialists and communists, and finding the conservative and authoritarian regimes' legitimacy in their connection with the resistance movement.

In the democratic society of South Korea, it is natural that opinions are diverse and are regularly publicized in debates in the media and other public arenas, and scholars and private citizens are free to speak and write on a range of historical issues conveying multiple views. In terms of history education, however, the national story has been constructed in such a way as to demonstrate "true" accounts of the past, which inevitably leads to the "rightness" of the present moment and providing its justification and outlining the prospects for a better future. Hence, history education for a pluralist democracy may necessarily and ironically exclude diverse viewpoints from history textbooks, though multiple historical views are allowed or encouraged in most public spheres (ibid.). That is, if the goal of democracy education is to promote democracy, the only historical views that are allowed in the curriculum are those that can justify and promote democracy. In this light, homogenization of history textbooks might be inevitable, no matter to what extent the society is

politically pluralized.

In South Korea, in the process of disseminating allegedly "correct" historical views to students and silencing alternative voices, the reformers are not actually so different from their own authoritarian predecessors (ibid., p. 225). Though the allegedly left-leaning narratives that underlie the new curricula may appear more acceptable than their predecessors' if they are more in line with one's own ideological leanings, reformers of historical narratives in South Korea are not much different in the sense of tolerating plural viewpoints. In this regard, history is merely reduced to a battlefield between rival ideologies and historical truth claims in South Korea.

B. Monumental History

The state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives shows many features of monumental history. First of all, it derives from the state-sanctioned narrative of the authoritarian regimes that was constructed in order to serve the function of legitimizing the ruling regime and develop loyalty among the people to a newly formed state, the ROK. In doing so, many past events were selectively remembered as well as forgotten. In the state-centered nationalism narrative that was revitalized by the New Right intellectuals, the in-group, which consists of people who are loyal to South Korea, is portrayed as a vital foundation of a nation with exclusive rights to define national identity, while the out-group, which consists of the North Korean regime and its followers, whether they are called pro-North or anti-South forces, is described as illegitimate agents that harm the true "Korean-ness". Mythic narratives concerning the economic and political success of South Korea, as opposed to the failed state of the North, justify the attribution of positive values to the in-group. Any positive values of Korean communists and socialists throughout history, such as their contribution to the resistance movement under the colonial rule, are denied or silenced. The state-issued textbook of the Park Geun-hye government has improved the degree of axiological balances, acknowledging the in-group's own moral faults and failings, for instance, by including negative aspects of past regimes, such as human rights violations, compared to a low degree of axiological balance in the state-sanctioned narrative that only highlighted the past regimes' positive impacts on social and economic development. However, descriptions of negative aspects in past regimes are still minimally introduced, stressing more the positive outcomes to provide the justification that their wrongdoings were necessary evils in order to develop the nation. Also, the state-issued textbook employs "the impediment by out-group" mechanism that is often adopted in monumental history, to justify the political legitimacy of the South Korean government, in which only the South Korean government defines the meaning of the whole Korean national identity. The opponents to South Korea, termed pro-North followers or anti-South forces, are presented as fomenting conflicts in South Korean

society, promoting the mistaken ideology of the North. North Korea is characterized by its unfair treatment, oppression, and use of violence to its own people who are regarded as part of the self to be saved from the evil North Korean regime. This mechanism helps to promote conservatives' correctness in defining national policies, in particular, security policies. It also applies another mechanism of monumental history, "condemnation of imposition," which rationalizes the claim that the in-group represents the interests of every group in the nation, while the out-group is imposing its own narrow ideology, interests and policies and wrongly claims to symbolize the nation. In the state-centered nationalism narrative, the duality between "good" and "bad" Korean groups is politicized as a very useful tool to exclude the others from the self, that is, to exclude the pro-North followers and anti-South forces from the true Korean self. Through mechanisms of justification, mythic narratives of the state-centered nationalism narrative function to define and recreate the particular connotation of national identity and legitimize the power of the traditional ruling elite groups in South Korea, failing to provide much detail or critical interpretations of historical events.

On the other hand, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives that emerged as a challenger to the monopolizing state-sanctioned narrative, is in part, critical. It deconstructs a clear dichotomy of the good self, South Korea, and the evil other, the North. Also, it provides different accounts of the roots of the Korean War and tries to recount the dominant state-sanctioned narrative by discovering hidden memories of injustice and negative aspects of the South Korean governments.

However, it is important to note that the ethnic nationalism narrative itself still displays many features of monumental history, thus intensifying conflicts rather than promoting conflict transformation and reconciliation between conflicting groups within South Korea. First of all, it also constructs the clear duality between good "self", the Korean nation and the masses, and bad "others", anti-nationalists, ranging from pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators to traditional ruling elites who suppressed the masses with undemocratic and authoritarian rule. It is based on explicit judgments about the importance of specific events in the history of the ethnic Korean nation and these judgments are influenced by the ideology of the progressive regimes that favors some events over others because they are deemed a significant and essential foundation for regimes' ideas and goals. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, democracy and nationalism are key ideologies that support the narrative so the process of democratization and the concept of self-reliance are particularly emphasized. As a result, those who ever violated the principles of democracy are heavily criticized. For instance, Rhee Syngman, formerly honored as the founder of the ROK, and Park Chung-hee, depicted as a great leader of economic development, are now described only as evil dictators due to their authoritarian rule and suppression of democracy, without acknowledging their contribution to establishing foundations for South Korea's political and economic development. It thus clearly adopts the mechanism of "impediment by out-group", given that it portrays only the negative

activities of out-group.

Furthermore, the ethnic nationalism narrative presents "a low degree of axiological balance" and "a high level of collective generality" of monumental history. The low degree of axiological balance refers to the fact that it perceives the in-group, the Korean nation and the masses, as morally pure and superior without mentioning the in-group's own moral faults and failings, and the out-group, anti-nationalists (pro-Japanese and pro-American collaborators) or undemocratic ruling elites, as inherently evil and vicious. It, thus, uniformly describes the masses and the Korean nation as victims and the out-group of ruling elites and anti-national collaborators to imperial foreign powers as aggressors. A historical narrative with a high level of collective generality views the out-group as consistent, homogenous, and demonstrating fixed patterns of behavior, while a low degree of collective generality reflects the perception of the out-group as differentiated, exhibiting a variety of behaviors, and ready for transformation. The ethnic nationalism narrative describes pro-Japanese collaborators with a high level of collective generality, perceiving collaborators as "a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes," and disregarding the personal and societal contexts in which they came to serve or were related to the Japanese colonial government. Thus, those who were once categorized as collaborators by historians are depicted as homogenously evil, and more significantly, the descendants of those collaborators also often fall into the same category of evil traitors to the nation who are destined to demonstrate the same fixed patterns of evil behavior. Also, strong ethnic nationalism in the narrative tends to perceive the Korean nation as pure and superior to any other principles, and thus self-reliance [*juche*] is regarded as the uppermost value for the nation, while any form of dependence on or cooperation with foreign powers is treated as an evil act. In this regard, those who prioritized other ways for survival of the nation under colonial rule other than self-reliance tend to be uniformly categorized as anti-nationalists or imperialists. In short, the ethnic nationalism narrative is constructed based on a deep belief about the in-group of the Korean nation as pure victims and the out-group of betrayers to the nation as essentially evil aggressors, thus decreasing any possibility of mutual understanding.

The ethnic nationalism narrative is now homogeneously adopted in revised history textbooks of South Korea. Although it is partly critical, as seen above, it is still restricted by the progressives' ideology and promotes sole loyalty to the ethnic Korean nation. It also fails to hold all perpetrators, such as pro-Japanese collaborators, accountable, and to show the complex and multiple roots of violence by providing historical and socio-political contexts. Thus, although textbook content has been dramatically revised in some cases, it appears to be simply a case of an old master narrative being discarded in favor of a new one. It is significant that by failing to provide critical and multiple interpretations of history, the progressive regimes have lost an opportunity to promote social reconciliation within South Korea, which is of critical importance to settle peace on the peninsula.

This is largely because the narrative of progressives has failed to be accepted as a critical and neutral perspective on history by their political opponents and, as a result, history is now highly politicized. Conservatives have generally regarded the progressives' attempt to change historical narrative as a political tool to exclude traditional ruling elites of conservatives and disregard the founding values of South Korea that conservative supporters hold as critical to their existence. Contrastingly, progressives have thought that traditional conservatives have utilized history to propagate their anti-communistic ideology and to exclude the North and its followers from the nation. Such incompatibility between two contentious narratives in which both groups have strong faith has led to intensifying conflicts in South Korea.

6.3.2 Limits in the Transformative Performative Dimension of the Textbook Revision Process

Research in post-conflict textbook writing, particularly regarding joint projects of groups engaged in past violence whether as aggressors or victims, suggests that while such initiatives have been, in theory, inevitably challenging and, in reality, often unsuccessful in effectively transmitting their outcomes into classroom practice, the processes involved provide us with valuable insights in themselves. One of the most crucial achievements identified in various case-studies from around the world is the attitudinal change induced by collaborative initiatives that brings together representatives from opposing parties in conflict to produce textbooks or related guidelines (Bentrovato 2017, pp. 53-54), which has been absent in the process of South Korean textbook revision. This is a fundamental starting point for reconsidering the conciliatory potential of post-conflict textbook revision from a processual perspective. A "transformative model of post-conflict textbook work" (Bentrovato 2017) suggests that the conciliatory potential of textbook activities lies partly in the capacity of the processes of collaborative textbook development to encourage a process of "narrative transformation" of the competing accounts that typically accompany conflict. Theoretically based on social constructionism, the reframing of conflict narratives and related mythical stories is key in conflict transformation processes aimed at inspiring changes in intergroup perceptions and attitudes that are critical to achieving reconciliation. The transformative model regards narrative reexamination and reconfiguration as a critical step towards resolving conflictual relationships between opposing groups that are often trapped within a competing victimization-based "schematic narrative template" (Wertsch 1998) through which they make sense of reality.

In the ethnic nationalism narrative, the masses, including dissidents of authoritarian regimes, are described as victims of injustice and political and societal oppression of those regimes, and as heroes who successfully managed to bring democracy into South Korean society. On the other hand, in state-centered nationalism, those dissidents are described as anti-South forces and pro-North

sympathizers who seek to delegitimize the legitimacy of South Korea, and only the people who accept its legitimacy and have loyalty to South Korea over the ethnic nation are identified as true patriots. These seemingly irreconcilable narratives have been constructed and repeatedly reformulated since the division in the context of intractable conflicts with the North. Collective identity that is formed in those intractable conflicts tends to develop into a belief system with non-reflective certainty (Chhabra 2016, p. 253), thus being extremely hard to be transformed because any changes in the belief system are regarded as threats to its own existence. However, what is noteworthy is that in the societies emerging from recent violence, textbook work also can provide great potential for creating a "dialogical space" (Hermann 2004) in which parties involved in former conflicts can reassess and redefine their narratives and their underlying antagonistic perceptions and belief systems, only if textbook work involves and facilitates sustained cooperative interaction and critical and constructive confrontation with the controversial past. The processes involved in the textbook revision under the progressive regimes did not include cooperative interaction with their opponents, that is, conservative politicians, intellectuals and civil society, who see the reality of South Korea through the narrative identity of conservatives. The pluralization of history textbooks was led by liberal and leftist historians who authored the privately published textbooks in accordance with their ideology and perceptions of history, which are in sharp contrast with those of conservatives. Thus, although textbook content has been revised in some cases, it seems to simply replace an old narrative with a new one favored by the progressive regimes, without any effort to create a dialogical space between conflicting groups where they can negotiate and reform their own narratives. Consequently, it fails to bring "narrative transformation" in South Korea, that is, a transition from competing narratives that one-sidedly emphasizes incompatible historical claims towards more inclusive and pluralistic narratives (Bentrovato 2017, p. 55). A significant turnaround in the content of textbooks written in accordance with progressives' ideas, both in a general ideological sense and in the representation of specific topics and figures, has especially important implications for the national identity conception of conservatives, from which they perceive they have come, for the values and traditions from which they arose, and for their pride and security. Transformation of historical narratives thus represents a value-based threat to conservatives, causing strong resistance toward transformation. It has been essential to create the dialogical space in the process of history textbook revision, where conflicting groups sit together and negotiate, so that to a certain extent cooperation and consensus between competing groups can be achieved and ultimately narrative transformation and the ultimate reconciliation can be accomplished. Without creating such cooperative interaction with opposing conservatives, the process of textbook revision led by progressives in South Korea has consequently been highly politicized. For conservatives, it is viewed as a tool to exclude them from politics and even an attempt of pro-North followers to overturn the

South. This politicization of history keeps both groups trapped within dichotomous victim/perpetrator discourses that prevent rapprochement, only leading to deepening conflicts in all sectors of the society.

Largely due to limits in the content of the ethnic nationalism narrative and transformative performative dimension of textbook revision elaborated in this section, progressive regimes' textbook revision and pluralization work have failed to create more inclusive and pluralistic narratives. Rather, attempts of progressives are perceived as threats to conservatives' value system and to their very existence. Thus conservatives, feeling a sense of threat and insecurity, started to take collective action to protect their own identity, which will be closely studied in the following chapter.

7. Fourth Juncture: The Impeachment of President Park Geun-hye and Self-Reflective Transformation of Conservatives: Right-Wing Extremism or Restoration of True Conservatism?

As has been discussed in chapter 5, the conservatives, in the face of challenges from progressives, started to introspect their own values, principles and historical views, while resisting the attempts to change policies as well as the master narrative under the two progressive administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun. As a result, the New Right movement emerged and political activism of its civic organizations has come to the fore since the 2000s when traditional conservatism experienced loss of its hegemonic power in institutional politics. Since then, conservatism has been forced to go through self-reflective reforms in accordance with the democratic political context. In this light, revitalized political activism of conservatives and rightists in civil society has been as a kind of reactionary movement to challenges they face. With the retaking of office of two conservative presidents, Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, the conservatives seemed to successfully regain hegemonic political power but the impeachment of President Park in 2017 totally changed the political scene in institutional politics as well as in civic political activism.

This chapter focuses on a new type of political activism of conservative civic groups kindled after the fourth historical juncture of President Park's impeachment in the most striking scandal in South Korean history. Recent theories of collective identity suggest that a feeling of relative deprivation, strong identification with the in-group and out-group, and group efficacy are key triggers of collective action on behalf of the in-group (Psaltis et al. 2017, p. 14). The crisis of conservatism in institutional politics awoke feelings of threat and deprivation among conservative supporters who then started to reinvestigate values and principles of South Korean conservatism, criticizing conservative politicians for abandoning those norms and values for the sake of their own interests. This group of conservatives identifies themselves as true conservatives, most of whom have been strongly against Park's impeachment, arguing that the rule of law in South Korea was damaged by leftist populism in the process of the impeachment. On the other hand, many of the media and academic intellectuals view this new trend of conservatism after the impeachment as the emergence of right-wing extremism in South Korea. Based on 15 in-depth interviews with right wing activists I conducted in 2018, this chapter aims to support the argument that was made in the former chapter, namely that the narrative transformation process led by progressives has failed on three counts: to include those who have different ideologies and values, to promote conflict transformation in South Korean society, and to create inclusive and multiple narratives of the past. The institutionalization of progressives' ethnic nationalism narrative in policies and in the official narrative adopted in most

textbooks has not led to interaction and open discussion among people. Thus, strong competition between political and social groups to dominate the discourses over how to define South Korea and its significant others along ideological lines has contributed to deepening conflicts and divisions throughout society in South Korea. Consequently, with the critical juncture of Park's impeachment, political activism of conservatives has been once again undergoing self-reflective processes, consolidating supporters of conservatism, rather than weakening their belief system. It is noteworthy that young conservatives have emerged as leaders of this revitalization of conservatism, which has never happened before. They learned the lessons from the New Right movement's failure and progressives' tactics to educate and mobilize supporters, hoping to revitalize true values and principles of conservatism, on the basis of which they believe South Korea was founded.

When South Korean president Park Geun-hye was impeached in 2017, her regime's strong supporters, commonly categorized as extreme right-wing groups, such as the Korean Freedom Federation [*Han'guk chayu ch'ongyŏnmaeng*] and Korea Parents' Federation [*ŏbŏiyŏnhap*], attempted unsuccessfully to obstruct the impeachment process by organizing massive rallies. Yet their attempts failed because South Koreans from many factions feared the loss of all the reforms that South Korea had achieved from the democracy movement in the 1980s, and even the moderate right eventually supported the impeachment although they still favor conservative approaches to such areas as the economy and security. In the aftermath of President Park's impeachment, Moon Jae-in of the progressive Democratic Party took office without having any transitional period. The right side of institutional politics, being split over impeachment and other issues, was forced to contemplate its loss of power and its future in order to plan a course back.

The driving force for impeachment initially came from civil society. Oppositional party leaders, including Moon Jae-in, were hesitant at first. This was due to their experience in the election after the failed President Roh Moo-hyun impeachment. Roh was impeached by the National Assembly in 2004 because his opposition parties, traditional conservatives, which at that time enjoyed a large majority in the Assembly, accused him of having failed to ensure electoral neutrality. Later, the Constitutional Court overruled the attempt to impeach Roh and during the whole process of the impeachment, mass candlelight rallies to support Roh were held by civic organizations. Many legislators who voted for the impeachment lost their following election. Only after the eruption of the scandal of Choi, Park's secret confidante, which infuriated the public, politicians joined civic protesters. Just as political activism of civic groups of leftists and progressives played a key role in Park's impeachment, rightist civic organizations led pro-Park movements like *Taegukgi* rallies, which are surprisingly still ongoing, more than two years subsequent to her impeachment being decided in the Constitutional Court. It seems that when the impeachment was passed in the National Assembly, pro-Park supporters lost their trust in traditional conservative politicians and started to

organize their own political activities and mobilize supporters, separating themselves from traditional parties and politicians. This group of pro-Park supporters is frequently described as extreme rightists by the media. Also some observers point to the collaboration between the Protestant rightists and pro-Park supporters as one of the key features of Korean right wing extremism (Kim Chin-ho 2017).

In the following section, the general claim that political activism of pro-Park supporters should be considered as right wing extremism is firstly introduced. Then, based on in-depth interviews with right wing activists I conducted in 2018, right-wing activists' arguments that conservatives are experiencing crisis with the impeachment which, however, could be seen as a golden opportunity for self-reflexive reforms in conservatism, are examined. In doing so, the chapter aims to illustrate that the ongoing struggles of rightists are occurring to take back their own narrative identity as the official national identity of the ROK. This also justifies the argument of the dissertation that inner conflicts in South Korea inherently pertain to competing narratives on national identity. Even though the hegemonic power of conservatism in formal politics has been lost, there are still many people who see the reality of South Korea through the prism that accords with conservatives' ideologies, values and principles. In the recent survey research conducted in January 2019, the approval rating for the traditional conservative party, Liberty Korea Party [*Chayuhan'gukdang*] was 31.2%, while the progressive ruling party, Democratic Party of Korea [*Dŏburŏ minjudang*] shows the slightly higher support rating 36.5% (Kim Sŏng-eŭn 2019).

Under the current Moon peace initiatives, there are many positive signs that the formerly hostile two Koreas are willing to talk to find a way of coexistence. At the same time, the degree of inner conflict within the South has grown even higher since the impeachment of former president Park, and there exist deep discords over how to approach and how to pursue cooperation with the North. We have seen in other post-conflict societies like Germany and Northern Ireland that a political declaration or peace agreement does not necessarily lead to genuine peaceful relations and reconciliation between the former adversaries. In this light, the narrative of rightists in South Korea who have constructed a national identity that still views the North as an arch enemy should be taken into consideration in advancing peaceful relations with the North. As seen in the case of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, a peace agreement or a decision of political integration that is made in high politics can be always dissolved by the public. The difficulty of conflict transformation lies in the fact that reconciliation between former enemies goes beyond conflict resolution in representing a transformation in each party's identity.

7.1 Extremism of Rightists

Political activism of conservative civil organizations in the 2000s has led not only to the

emergence of the New Right but also to division of rightist movements. One of the distinctive movements is the group of online rightist communities, commonly called "Net-*Uik* [net-rightists]," which started to attract the younger generation to political discourses (Park Gwŏn-il 2015). For instance, *DoknipSinmun* [Independence News], initiated by Shin Hye-sik, was one of the online outlets that spread provocative news stories that usually attracted extreme rightists and created the frame of "patriots [*aegukseryŏk*]" vs "traitors [*maegukseryŏk*]" that is still widely used in right-wing discourses.

On the other hand, there is another type of online rightist, called "*Ilbe*", one of the most active online communities for extremists, which displays the strongest hatred discourses against females or *Cholla* province where leftists and progressives have been traditionally strong. Park Gwŏn-il (2014) argues that surface motivation of the *Ilbe* needs to be understood through the term "attention struggle", which refers to the pursuit of ideology in order to attract attention (p. 52). Although surface motivations of each online extremism community vary, Park points out that there is the common mentality of "imagined exploitation" in his term, which means that extremists see themselves as victims of unfair exploitation and they believe that they lose necessary benefits that they should enjoy as a member of community due to the invasions of outsiders (Park Gwŏn-il 2015). This narrative of victimization is one of the common features of universal right-wing extremism. A scholar on right-wing extremism, Thomas Grumke, points out in an interview with *Jongang Ilbo* (Chŏng Yong-in 2014) that throughout history extremists have portrayed themselves as victims, just as in Nazism. Collective memories of persecution by communists in the northern area of the peninsula right after liberation and during the Korean War have resulted in the victimization narrative in which Koreans who love freedom and liberty suffered from evil communists. This is the powerful underlying theme in the master narrative of conservatives because it provides the rationale for a collective focus on securing and maintaining South Korea from evil attempts made by the North. The Korean War and the Cold War narratives serve as the ultimate story of South Korean victimization in the state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives, and saturate the identity discourses in South Korean society, framing identity politics. This thematic focus on vulnerability and threat naturally creates a parallel thematic emphasis on security against the North and the military alliance with the US. Grumke explains that the victimization narratives among extremists are related to two factors: relative deprivation, which is universally observed in extremism; and an identity issue, which is inherently connected to the issue of social acknowledgement (ibid.). According to him, when it comes to the issue of identity, extremism functions like faith. A democratic political system does not offer a sense of identity and acknowledgement, and thus people who have a strong need for acknowledgement are prone to fall into ethnic extremism or religious fundamentalism. Grumke mentions that anti-communistic discourses in South Korea, in which anyone who points out negative

aspects of South Korea is categorized as a pro-North sympathizer, are striking in that there still exists such a clear cut between us and them, which is similar to the "character assassination" that was widespread from the 1950s to the 1970s in Germany (ibid.). Character assassination refers to the fact that someone was criticized for being on the side of East Germany without knowing what exactly was wrong with him or her, and once categorized as an East follower, regardless of what is said or done, one is assumed to be evil.

Sisain, a Korean weekly journal, has analyzed online discourse data, from 24 October 2016, when Park's scandal was first released in the media, to 20 March 2017, 10 days after the Constitutional Court upheld the impeachment, of two groups that strongly support *Taegukgi* rallies: *Parksamo*, which literally means People who love Park Geun-hye; and *Ilbe*, an online community for extreme rightists (Ch'ŏn Kwan-yul 2017). The article maintains that patterns of discourses in both groups are almost the same. In discourses of both groups, a national flag of South Korea, *Taegukgi,* signifies the protection of the nation from the communists and only participants in or supporters of *Taegukgi* rallies are categorized as patriots. The article analyzes three constituents which construct the patriotism discourse of these conservative groups named "the triangle of patriotism": a sense of belonging, faith, and behaviors. This triangle of patriotism functions exactly in the same way as "Emile Durkheim's triangle" that explains how religions work in human societies. According to Durkheim, a religion is not only constituted with faith in a supernatural being, but also works as a mechanism to produce communities in which faith with a strong sense of collective consciousness and actual behaviors of participants are well combined. In this sense, for *Taegukgi* rally protesters, patriotism works like a religion: South Korea is an object of faith, citizenship of South Korea is a collective consciousness, and the *Taegukgi* rally is a form of behavior to express their faith. According to the article, the most striking aspect is that all the discourses end with the key word, "liberal democracy," which should involve abundant other values and agendas for further discussion. However, in the discourses of two groups, liberal democracy is an empty phrase, just denoting a system of protection, but participants in discourses do not present any interest in what the liberal democracy actually means and what kind of attributes it should contain.

This empty discourse of the liberal democracy as a value to be protected requires "otherness" or a series of "differences" in order to be socially recognized. As Connolly (1991) argues, these differences are essential to its being. If they did not coexist as differences, it would not exist in its distinctness and solidity. That is, identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty (p.64). This is also found in the writing of Wodak et al. (1999) which claims that the discursive construction of identities, of in- and out-groups, necessarily implies the use of strategies of positive self-presentation and the negative presentation of others (p.40), which also coincides exactly with one of the features of monumental history

(Korostelina 2016). In discourses related to *Taegukgi* rallies, two key words are used for negative presentation of others: the media and North Korea. The mainstream media and political parties who do not support Park Geun-hye and people who don't agree with *Taegukgi* rallies are differentiated as leftists, reds, and commies, who are a distinct threat to the liberal democracy of South Korea. Therefore, for them the value of the liberal democracy works like "civil religion" (Bellah 1967) in America and their behaviors display similar features of believers of certain religions. Patriotism is not just a rhetoric or slogans for *Taegukgi* protesters but it functions like a religion and becomes a driving force that makes possible the unity, sustainability and voluntariness of mass *Taegukgi* rallies, in which protesters have continued to gather for nearly two years after Park's impeachment. The emphasis on patriotism and loyalty to South Korea in *Taegukgi* protestors' discourses is innately related to the issue of the legitimacy, South Korea as the true and only representation of the Korean nation as opposed to the North Korean regime, which has been claimed since the establishment of the ROK by the ruling elites. It clearly indicates that for *Taegukgi* protesters the presence of North Korea is still regarded as an existential threat and a source of evil.

In this regard, linking the national flag of South Korea and that of America, along with pro-Trump slogans, is a strategy of *Taegukgi* protestors to control the definition of patriotism and to fuse it with nationalism. The US flag is used as a symbol of strong alliance between two states, which is nothing new in rightist street protest, as discussed in chapter 5. In counter-candlelight protests that emerged as a kind of reactionary movement to candlelight vigils in 2002 where strong anti-Americanism was expressed, US flags along with *Taegukgi* started to be waved. As the main visual symbol of a wartime alliance between the US and South Korea, fostered in the history of shared bloodshed in the Korean War, the US flag signifies vigilance against those who are pro-communist, pro-North or "the reds" within South Korea. It is the rightists' general belief that without the US' intervention in the Korean War, South Korea would have become a communist country and the US is the key partner in fights against leftists in South Korea (Lee & Brown 2018, p. 58). In particular, the older generation uses the US flag, indicating their trust in the US to protect South Korea and prevent North Korea from provoking armed conflicts. Some protesters held signs that referred to the US as the "savior" of the country. A big banner was put up at the *Taegukgi* rallies in which large photos of Park Geun-hye and President Trump were placed along with the sign "Make Korea with America Great Again!" (Lim Tae-hoon 2017), harmonizing splendidly with the catchphrase of "Make America Great Again" from the 2017 Trump campaign. As Horwitz (2013) points out, in McCarthy's terms it was "internal betrayal" that was the reason why the US was not winning anymore (p. 172). The same logic often applies to discourses of conservatives who identify political opponents, allegedly the pro-North sympathizers, as internal betrayers, anti-South forces. Trump's "America First" slogan hence, strongly appeals to those who hold collective identity based on a clear

dichotomy between us and them. This is in accordance with the South Korean right-wing's own definition of patriotism and nationalism constructed on the idea that patriots have a mission to fight against internal betrayal by the pro-North followers, leftists and anti-South forces (Lee & Brown 2018, p. 63). The critiques from the conservative strain regarding ongoing inter-Korean summits under President Moon Jae-in are also in line with this rhetoric, arguing that President Moon betrays South Korea by being loyal to the North and investing many of the resources to meet the requests of Kim Jong-un while disregarding South Korea's urgent political and social issues, such as deepening economic recession.

Kim Chin-ho (2017) argues that another important thing to note regarding extrematization of rightists in South Korea is the close connection between extreme rightists and Protestant rightists, which has been frequently observed in *Taegukgi* protests. Some media reports raised the question of the reason why Israeli national flags along with Korean and American ones were frequently waved in *Taegukgi* protests. It was people who identify themselves as devout Christians that brought the Israeli flags with the crosses and other symbols they thought could represent their faith (Yi Whan-woo 2017). According to Kim Chin-ho (2017), the Korean Protestant rightists, just like the American Religious Right, have strong faith in the idea of the "chosen nation". They believe that Korea, like the US, has been spiritually chosen by God with a mission to fight against communism. Thus, it is natural for them to feel connected with Israel, the chosen nation in the Bible. On the one hand, the presence of the Israeli flags in *Taeguki* rallies signifies deep involvements of conservative Protestants in recent right-wing activism. On the other hand, it indicates the idea of exceptionalism in conservatives' narrative identity, which is deeply connected to the legitimacy of South Korea. The idea of Korean exceptionalism owes much of its origins to strong faith in the Korean nation as chosen by God that early Korean Christians had. After his conversion to Christianity in prison, the first president of South Korea, Rhee Syngman, advocated Christianity throughout a number of writings, claiming that it can serve as a political bedrock in making Korea a modernized country, since he believed that Christianity had played an essential role in western modernization. With such a conviction, he asserted a necessity to Christianize the Korean populace. In his book, *The Korean Church in Trials* (1913) [*Hangukkyohŏe p'ippak*], he demonstrates three main plans for the nation-state, building on the basis of Christianity: 1) to reanimate the Korean people by encouraging them to have faith and hope in God; 2) to promote national unity through the teachings of Jesus, especially on the love of the neighbor; and 3) to build up a highly civilized country based on the Christian spirit of freedom and equality (Chang Kyu-sik 2010). Although there is controversy among scholars over whether Rhee truly intended to Christianize the Korean nation or just wanted to use Christianity as an instrument of modernization, most Protestants regard it as God's blessing to have the Protestant elder as the first president and founding father of the nation, which further supports their conviction

of South Korea as a nation chosen by God. The chosen nation narrative is naturally connected to the idea that sees America as the symbol of God's blessing and a representative of chosen nations. Then why did those Christians hold American and Israeli flags in the pro-Park rallies, which seems unrelated to religion? Kim Chin-ho (2017) explains that for conservative Christians, those political forces who asked for Park's impeachment were pro-North sympathizers and, more importantly, anti-South forces, internal betrayers of the true nation, South Korea. Thus, it is natural to hold American flags along with the Israeli ones as a symbol of anti-communism, which is a mission bestowed by God on South Korea as a last bastion to stop the invasion of communism into the world. In this narrative, the fact that South Korea, which was surrounded with the strongest communist states in history, China and the Soviet Union, was saved and established as an anti-communistic and liberal democratic state with the help of the US has its significant meaning as proof that South Korea has also been chosen and saved by God. The narrative of the chosen people is often found in speeches of conservative church leaders. For instance, the pastor Kim Jun-gon, who initiated the National Morning Prayer in South Korea in which most congressmen as well as all the presidents of South Korea have attended, said in his sermon in the 3rd National Morning Prayer in 1970 that "when Europe declines, nations of materialism decline, and nations of affluence are corrupted, then God will choose Korea and make a second Jerusalem in the corner of Asia" (Kim Jun-gon 2006, p. 105). One of the leading mega church ministers, So Gang-seok (2017), who is also a leader of conservative Christian organizations, such as the Prayer Meeting for Peace and Unification [*Han'gukgyohoe P'yŏnghwat'ogil Kidohoe*] and the Korean Council for anti-LGBT [*Han'gukkyohoe Pandongsŏngae Taech'aenk Hyŏbŭihoe*], mentioned in his Sunday sermon on 6 November 2017:

> I have attended the National Morning Prayer in Israel… Koreans are like the Jews. We Koreans have constructed a strong national identity like the Jews. This identity is connected with our security. … The Jewish people I met said that the nation of Israel is explicitly the chosen nation, but Koreans are people implicitly chosen by God.

The successful establishment of South Korea as an anti-communistic liberal democratic country, which was the backbone of the narrative identity that both early political elites and Christians of South Korea held, provides contemporary rightists and Protestants with a sense of exceptionalism, serving as a source of national pride. This sense of exceptionalism further serves to delegitimize North Korean identity. Anti-communistic slogans like "It is okay to kill the reds" are very easily observed in right-wing street protests, such as *Taegukgi* rallies (Kim Kyu-nam 2017). Associating anti-communism with the rhetoric of exclusion of political opponents in South Korea is nothing new. Pro-communist ideology was completely suppressed before the political democratization in South Korea and each South Korean authoritarian regime incorporated McCarthyite political tactics to

accelerate the goals of its domestic iron-fisted rule. Park Tae-gyun (2014) asserts that McCarthyite tactics in South Korea have been useful for the right-wing to oppress dissidents when its authority and vested interests have been threatened (p. 207). South Korean right-wing politicians often seek to evade criticism by discrediting opponents as North Korean followers, traditionally, and, more recently, as anti-South forces.

What this study points out as significant in terms of right-wing extremism in South Korea is that that the narrative identity of rightists was originally formed in the context of protracted conflicts with the North. Accordingly, contemporary rightists still recognize the North as an existential threat to its own being and believe that the two Koreas are still technically at war. It is this conception that makes conflicts between competing narratives irreconcilable because the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives views the North as no longer a threat to the South and the two Koreas as out of a conflictual situation, which is a viewpoint fundamentally colliding with the national identity of conservatives. The perspective that sees conflicts as ongoing on the Korean peninsula makes it difficult for rightists to transform their identity. This is because for them transformation of identity can mean a danger to their own existence.

According to the socio-psychological analysis of conflicts, in the context of intractable conflicts, psychological mechanisms come into play when new information contradicting existing beliefs is introduced. In normal situations when not in conflict, people are open to learning and integrating information, even if it is contradictory to preexisting beliefs, and adjusting to it. People are able to tolerate some uncertainty about their beliefs, accepting that these beliefs may change after reflecting upon their experiences and given facts, and acknowledging that their beliefs may have even been "wrong" from the beginning (Chhabra 2016, p. 253). However, in conflict contexts an automatic, self-preserving process is activated and shuts down the channels of learning and reflection, consequently being resistant to any change. The capacity to take in new information about others and the world becomes frozen, as their existing beliefs about the self, others, and the world further consolidate. People thus come to have a rigid certainty about their assessment of what is right, and to lose the capacity to accommodate and assimilate new information. Because of their need for self-protection, information that does not fit their beliefs and attitudes is filtered out. Thus, the collective identity of rightists who claim that the current South Korea is still in intractable conflict with the North is extremely difficult to transform as it has been constructed with strong certainty about the conviction that their assessment of the reality is "right". Likewise, in protracted conflictual situations, collective identities are formed with strong beliefs about self and others. Historical events of collective violence between groups and collective memories of those events further consolidate beliefs about us and them, with which a degree of non-reflective certainty about them is formed. It is through those beliefs with strong certainty that a sense of inner coherence is created and a set of

expectations about the world is provided (Chhabra 2016, p. 253). Those rightists who have a strong belief about good South Korea and inherently evil North Korea with non-reflective certainty are likely to be actively involved in political discourses and activities when they see the crisis of their beliefs, making them appear extremist in the eyes of others .

7.2 Restoration of True Conservatism

Before analyzing interviews with right wing activists, I will briefly introduce related key theoretical concepts related to this section. A recent study on identifying the relationship between master narratives and personal narratives reveals an attempt to link the idea of narrative identity at multiple levels (Hammack 2008). This work conceives of master narratives as dominant scripts which can be identified in such cultural products and discourses as media, literature and textbooks. These scripts contain collective storylines that range from a group's history to notions of what it means to belong to a particular social category (Hammack 2010, p. 178). Narrative identity development is best understood as a process that is closely mediated by social experience (Hammack 2012). That is, identity development involves a process of narrative engagement in which individuals confront multiple discursive options for making meaning of experience through language, and they undergo a process of appropriation that tells us much about the course of a conflict. In this way, identity is conceived of as an internalization of speech (Vygotsky 1978), and is accessible through the act of narration (Hammack 2008), and of using language to make individual and collective experience sensible (Bruner 1987). The construction of narrative identity, assessed at the individual level through the telling of a life story and at the collective level through historical and ethnographic analysis (Hammack 2008), thus provides a window into not only processes of personal psychological adjustment and development, but also larger processes of social reproduction or resistance.

Another important factor to be taken into consideration regarding the construction of South Korean identity is whether the two Koreas are in intractable conflict or not. All of the interviewees I met commonly identify with the fact that South Korea is still in armed conflict with the North and this perspective greatly impacts on their narrative identity. While intractable conflicts are often rooted in a competition of material resources and political or territorial control, they are made salient through the construction of stories that motivate inter-group antagonism. Scholars of conflict have argued that narratives of exclusive legitimacy, victimization, and the justness of one group's goals fuel the flames of conflict just as much as they provide a sense of solidarity and security. For instance, the competition over territorial control between Israelis and Palestinians has become intensified in a stalemate of stories that are irreconcilable (Hammack 2010, p. 179).

In particular, most of the right-wing activists I had interviews with had not been engaged in political activism before the incident of Park's impeachment, which, however, provided a critical moment for them to realize the existential insecurity of their collective identity as South Koreans and motivated them towards strong right-wing activism. Hammack (2008) argues that the experience of identity threat, or of existential insecurity in matters of identity, most certainly influences the process of social regeneration. Concern over the possible loss of collective identity, which is common among many groups who are marginalized or disempowered within a particular social structure, likely motivates a strong connection between master narratives and personal narratives of identity. This well explains the driving force with which right-wing activists started to become engaged in social and political activities with the impeachment of President Park.

Interviews with right-wing activists were not only to understand their personal engagement and adjustment with collective narratives, but also to see how rightists facing the political crisis of the impeachment went through processes of the social reproduction of identity or resistance to counter national identity through consolidating narratives which they already had strong belief in. In doing so, it aims to illustrate that existential conflicts between two Koreas have become crystallized in competing narratives, which, I argue, are one of the sources that influences domestic conflicts in South Korea. Although the study focuses on right-wing activists who have been actively involved in right-wing civic groups to protect their understanding of national identity, it is expected to contribute to broader theoretical perspectives on the reproduction of conflict through narrative engagement. If one key to peace-building is the reconciliation of divergent and polarized narratives of history and identity (Kelman 1999), it is vital to understand the ways in which rightists are motivated to resist the counter-narrative.

7.3 Interviews with Right-Wing Activists

7.3.1 Method of Interviews

A semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 right-wing activists and 5 active members of right-wing organizations including one journalist of a Christian online newspaper. Among these 15 in total, 13 identify themselves as devout Christians, including two Catholics. Five are leaders of the right-wing university student organization, "Truth Forum," which was founded by students and alumni of Seoul National University (SNU) in the spring of 2017 in response to the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye. As of August 2018, it has over 800 members, composed of students and alumni from over 70 universities over South Korea. The reason why I chose to

interview leaders of the Truth Forums of four major universities in Seoul, including SNU, Yonsei, Korea, and Ehwa, was that they ably represent a new trend in the right-wing movement, which is distinctive in that it is run by the young generation, unlike other right-wing civic groups. Truth Forums of different universities now work in solidarity as the Truth Alliance. The Truth Forum declares on its official website (www.truthall.com) that all Truth Forums share the five fundamental understandings: 1) we appreciate the foundation of the ROK and its economic development; 2) we pursue the liberation of North Korea; 3) We advocate a strong ROK-US alliance; 4) we recognize the unjustness of President Park's impeachment; and 5) we respect Judeo-Christian values and tradition. This statement of commitments clearly uncovers fundamental principles and values that these new conservatives regard as important and sufficiently in danger to be protected. It is also emphasized in the statement on October 12, 2018, that "the Truth Forum is committed to establishing an objective and balanced contemporary history of Korea, which is essential for appreciating the values of liberal democracy and market economy which form the backbone of our proud ROK" (Kim Sŏng-hun 2018). It is also declared that is to be committed to preparing for the future of the ROK, in which fellow people in North Korea are liberated from its tyranny to enjoy freedom and prosperity with South Koreans. Mirroring this collective narrative of the Forum, related to the identities of South and North Korea, narrative engagement of individuals will be examined through analysis of stories and opinions that interviewees shared.

And four other leaders of Protestant right-wing civic groups, including one organization advocating history textbook revision from a rightist historical view, were interviewed. The interviews began by asking the participants to explain a personal motivation to engage in political activism. They contained material about life experience, faith, in the case of Christians, and personal opinions on the politics and critical events in history. Interviews lasted from 1 to 3 hours.

7.3.2 Analysis of Interviews

The thematic content of right-wing activists' narratives reveals key points of convergence with the master narrative of conservatives. The theme of South Korean victimization by evil communists is consistently present and the need for security is internalized with the recognition of a continued existential threat, both physically and ideologically from the North. The exceptionalism of South Korea that protected the "true" "Korean-ness" from invasions of a communist ideology is innately connected to the delegitimization of the North Korean regime and its followers.

A. The Crisis of Identity and Self-Reflective Reformation of the Right-Wing

As shown in the declaration of the Truth Forum saying that it recognizes the unjustness of President Park's impeachment, a strong sense of crisis surfaced among conservatives, as they believe that "anachronistic and illiberal political instigations of *Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*] among the leftists dangerously undermine the very foundation of the ROK" (Kim Sŏng-hun 2018). The sense of crisis raised in the process of impeachment is at the core of the new trend of rightist political activism, which is prominently discovered in the interviews with right-wing activists and active members of civic groups collected for this study. Among ten leaders of right-wing civic groups, eight said they joined the right wing activities due to the impeachment of President Park, identifying it as identity threat from the leftists (anti-South forces or pro-North followers). For example, Kim, the leader of the Truth Forum SNU and the Truth Alliance, who first initiated this right-wing student movement, mentioned in the interview with an online news media, Future Korea (Paek Josep 2018):

> While I was watching what was going on with the impeachment incident, I came to realize the propaganda of leftists reached the limit, which can possibly lead to the crisis of the whole country just as they did in candlelight protests with the issue of mad cow disease in 2008. So, I started this movement with the feeling of desperation that I should not be sitting without doing anything. … Among those who led the "democracy movement" in the past, there were, of course, those who joined it with a pure heart for democracy, but there were others who fought for "people's democracy" which the North claims, rather than "liberal democracy". It was the so-called *Jusapa* who distorted the pure student movement for liberal democracy. (Hereinafter, all the interviews are translated by the author.)

The narrative of the national crisis indicates that the national identity construction in South Korea is necessarily related to how to define North Korea. Cho, a leader of the Truth Forum and a PhD candidate in North Korean studies at Korea University, narrated his personal life story to explain why he joined right-wing activism:

> While I was studying War studies in England, I had a chance to think about my national identity after reading an essay from a North Korean defector. Then, I came to think about my country and my national identity, which I had never thought about before. I spent my student life in India and England but I came to realize I cannot live as a British person even though I can get British citizenship. … In the end, I personally thought I need to restore my identity as a Korean so I came back home and did military service. In the meantime, my concern about my country and North Korea was growing serious and I concluded that the national identity of South Korea necessarily includes the North, and that without restoring the North, goals such as becoming a developed nation and a leading country in the international arena are meaningless.

To be a Korean in Cho's mind is first and foremost about realizing the reality of the division and the issue of North Korea. He voluntarily went to do military service with the goal of restoring

his identity as a Korean, which he could have avoided by gaining British citizenship. For most Koreans, whether they are progressive or conservative, the division is regarded as temporary largely due to the strong faith in ethnic homogeneity developed under colonial rule. In this light, it is not surprising to see that even though Cho lived abroad for a long time since his teens, he reveals this nationalistic idea that naturally includes the North, while viewing the North Korean people as liberated and restored from oppression. He said, however, that while doing his doctoral course of North Korean studies in South Korea, he experienced confusion about his political identity. In this portion of his narrative, Cho makes a very critical statement on understanding the way in which contemporary conservatives construct their narrative on national identity. First of all, being Korean is basically based on an ethnicity. When he started to think about his national identity, his thinking naturally led to considering North Korea as part of the self, lost but to be restored.

> I came back to Seoul to join a doctoral program in North Korean studies. When I started researching about the North, I soon realized that the criteria to distinguish progressive and conservative in South Korea are quite different from what I had thought. I believed that I myself was progressive while being abroad largely due to my interests in the North Korean human rights issue. … What I realized was that the category of progressivism in South Korea included different ideas and ideologies, even the *Juche* ideology of the North. And I realized that what I want to argue about North Korean human rights is in line with the argument of the conservative camp in Korea. … When I began my PhD in North Korean studies, I expected it would be about how to change the North, which means how to overcome the Kim family's totalitarianism and ultimately to achieve unification under the liberal democratic system. However, it was not the case. I found that North Korean studies in South Korea is about how to have a proper understanding of North Korea and to sustain its system. The issue of North Korean human rights is dealt with a bit but it is not the main focus, but understanding of the *Juche* ideology of the North was at the core of North Korean studies. … I was startled by that and then I moved on to research the history of Korean leftists. The beginning of the leftists was the campus movement in the 1980s, in which some students were sacrificed by the state forces. I believe that the sacrifice of those students was tragic, but the fact is that many of them were dreaming of the socialist revolution in South Korea.

Here, he displays another critical factor in his understanding of Korean national identity, which is about how to view the North Korean regime. In terms of the North, his main goal is to transform the North Korean regime. The term "totalitarian", used to describe the North Korean regime in his interview, aptly displays his opinion about the Kim regime. His view well accords with the Korean conservatives' as he confessed. It does not really matter how long the two Koreas have been separated. They are united in a blood line. Hence, they should be reunited, but for conservatives it is most critical that the unification should be achieved under a liberal democracy, as Cho clarifies. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Cho identifies the existence of the North Korean followers in the

South in his comment that some involved in the student movement in the 1980s were followers of the North Korean ideology, dreaming of revolution in the South. It is quite obvious that Cho's idea about his political identity was already established before his return to South Korea for study, identifying himself as a progressive. Yet he found his idea belongs to the conservative strain in the context of South Korea, which is mainly because he identifies with the North Korean ideology and regime as illegal and illegitimate. In his view, the political strain commonly called "progressive" includes different ideas of liberals, leftists, socialists, and even communists. Hence, his ultimate definition of Korean identity places the ROK as the true representation of the nation and the only legitimate political entity at the forefront.

The sense of crisis that rightists have felt since Park's impeachment is best illustrated in the statement of the Truth Forum addressed to the US and the international community at the conference held by the right-wing civic group, Save Korea Foundation, on October 12, 2018. It is declared that South Korea is facing a danger of takeover by *Juche* ideology followers among the leftists who undermine the very foundation of the ROK. This narrative clearly explains why the *Taegukgi* rally protesters are bearing the slogans of anti-communism. In the narrative of conservatives, the impeachment of Park is connected to pro-North followers' agenda to subvert the South. This is addressed in the following statement:

> President Moon is known to have been a democracy activist and human rights lawyer. However, we must not uncritically applaud him and the democratic movement of the 1980s in Korea because Kim Il Sung's *Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*] that sought to subvert the ROK were at the core of that movement. They denounced the US as the arch enemy responsible for the division of the Korean peninsula and the agent of capitalistic imperialism. … President Moon appointed *Juche* ideology followers to many of the important positions in the Blue House, including his chief of staff Im Jong-seok, who was the most prominent *jusapa* member in the late 1980s. While the threat to the ROK and the international community by North Korea and its nuclear weapons is far from being resolved, President Moon is taking actions that weaken the ROK-US alliance. It should be remembered that in West Germany, Gunter Güillaume, the secretary of the prime minister Willy Brandt, was revealed to be a communist spy. … Many Koreans are concerned that South Korea is in similar circumstances (SKF International Symposium 2018).

What should be noted here is that while all interviewees identified the impeachment as a crisis for conservatism and consequently the very foundation of the ROK, they all emphasized that the crisis should be taken as an opportunity for conservatives to go through a self-reflexive process to reform corrupted and distorted conservatism by politicians. With the impeachment, the traditional conservatism has almost been destroyed and the political power of the traditional conservative party has been lost. Many of the interviewees explained that this is because core values and principles of

conservatism were disregarded for a long time by conservative ruling elites who were satisfied with their enjoyment of vested interests and ignored the importance of educating the younger generation with those values, while leftists including pro-North followers were actively engaged in educating college students with their ideologies. For instance, Cho mentioned that "it is a failure of rightists and churches that have not been watchful over our enemy despite the fact that we, South Koreans, have a clear enemy."

Another interviewee, Son, a PhD candidate in North Korean studies and a leader of the Truth Forum at Ewha University, also states that "what I have seen after the impeachment is division within conservatives and churches. In my opinion the impeachment provided us with an opportunity to see who are true and fake conservatives and Christians." Another interviewee, Lee, a PhD candidate in SNU and a leader of an online right-wing broadcasting channel, also views the impeachment and consequent *Taegukgi* protests in a positive way, arguing that:

> Before the *Taegukgi* protests there were no grassroots right-wing political forces at all in South Korea. There were some civic groups which were not voluntarily organized but mostly connected to the conservative party. However, with the *Taegukgi* rallies, the number of voluntarily organized civic groups has been exploding. Some people like me started broadcasting on Youtube and others organized various new civic organizations. And right-wing media like Pennmike were founded. This is all because many people felt the sense of crisis and then they started to actively mobilize material and human resources. Even though there is some discord among groups, I see this as a positive phenomenon.

He also explains that the self-reflexive processes of conservatism started with the emergence of the New Right in the 2000s.

> One of the most serious problems of the Korean right and conservatism is that it has no contents that can explain its political ideas and ideologies. We have to admit that. Leftists have dominated universities with contents ranging from the *Juche* ideology of the North to postmodernism. In this context, thanks to the New Right that emerged in the 2000s, the historical reappraisal of President Rhee Syngman and Park Chung-hee began to emerge among intellectuals. Many of the New Right were converted rightists from leftists and after conversion they contributed to rewriting the history of South Korea based on the values and perspectives of rightists.

Cho also makes a clear statement understanding the incident of impeachment as a golden opportunity for conservatives to reflect on their wrongdoings and return to true values of conservatism.

With the impeachment, conservatives, who had not known on what basis they should be

united, realized that they should get together centered around principles and values that were respected during the process of nation-building by President Rhee Syngman, as well as cultivate an identity that acknowledges the legitimacy of South Korea. Also, this is a chance to unite those who agree with the idea that this battle is between liberal democracy versus totalitarianism. In particular, this impeachment was the only opportunity for ruling elites and conservative Christians who just sat where they were, satisfied with what they enjoyed without realizing what was coming, to become united around our values and principles, but not around political interests. … This is a golden opportunity for self-reflection on how we have disrespected our values of liberal democracy inherited by our ancestors who established South Korea, and have neglected the sufferings of our fellow people in the North. Without this self-reflection, it is difficult to persuade the masses that this government is fake, built on the injustice of the impeachment.

B. Irreconcilability in the National Identities of the Two Koreas

As seen in the declaration of commitments of the Truth Forum, there are two backbones in the narrative of rightists regarding the South Korean national identity: 1) the contemporary history of South Korea, which is, they argue, essential for appreciating the values of liberal democracy and the market economy; and 2) the identity of two significant others: North Korea and the US. The people in the North are regarded as fellow countrymen who should enjoy freedom and prosperity with South Koreans and the North Regime as tyranny that oppress its own people. The strong ROK-US alliance is one of the key issues for the security of South Korea's founding values as well as physical security.

The narrative of the existential threat, both physical and ideological, from the North leads to the irreconcilable nature of national identity in the two Koreas. For instance, as Cho argues, unification is regarded as the ultimate goal in both Koreas but when it comes to details of how to achieve it, there are sharp contrasts between them.

With the impeachment of Park, of course, I admit that President Park did some wrongdoings as a president but I believed that there was a hidden force, *Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*], who drove the candlelight protests behind the scene. Politicians like Im Jong-seok, the current chief secretary of the Moon government who used to be a *jusapa* member, have never clearly declared that they are converted from it. … If you looked at the slogans that were shouted in candlelight protests, their true identity was clearly revealed. For instance, a slogan, "Let's get united with the North under the confederation system [*yŏnbangche*]," is in line with what the North has consistently argued in the name of the "Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo [*Koryŏyŏnbangche*]". When seeing these slogans, I felt threatened but I couldn't do much as one individual. Later I found that a poster was posted in the Seoul National University, in which the arguments about why the impeachment was wrong were elaborated. And that was the beginning of the Truth Forum, a right-wing student movement, and I joined it by posting posters up in my campus.

Reflecting on what happened around the incident of Park's impeachment, his narrative reveals a sense of threat from *Juche* ideology followers and pro-North followers within South Korean society. The presence of pro-North followers in the current government who give away South Korea's interests and security in the name of peace has come to consume the South Korean conservative discourses regarding ongoing inter-Korean summits for peace agreement. The strategy to pursue unification under the confederation system that the North wants to establish is regarded as a concession for the rightists that prioritizes unification under the liberal democratic political system. This idea is also found in the comment of Lee:

> The confederation system is possible only if the North becomes a normal and liberal state and thus there is no necessity of China's intervention as a mediator. The precondition for the confederation system is the collapse of the Kim Jong-un regime. That is, the totalitarian system of the North should be taken down. … Some say that if we keep cooperating with the North and providing aid, one day the North will open their system. But Kim is not that stupid. The regime has sustained its totalitarian system for about 70 years and even if they agree with economic cooperation such as the *Kaesung* Industrial Region, the district is absolutely controlled by the state and there is no actual impact on the North Korean people in other regions.

In Son's narrative, the hidden strategy operated by the North and North Korean sympathizers in South Korea behind the impeachment of President Park is argued in more detail:

> Why was humanitarian aid under progressive governments who disregarded the issue of human rights violations conducted by the North Korean regime consistently provided to the North? In the Park administration, the policies toward the North were mostly to press the North Korean regime and on the contrary, President Park even mentioned that the North Korean people coming to the South were always welcome in the South. It was the North that felt most uncomfortable about this kind of rhetoric and policies from Park. I think this is closely related to the impeachment. … As I am doing a PhD in North Korean studies, I was reading the *Rodong Sinmun* in April 2017 to do an assignment and what I found was striking as the articles that claimed that President Park must be impeached were consistently published from March 2016 for about a year. Then, the impeachment actually happened in 2017. … I am sure that there was a political agenda and movement for the impeachment of Park operated by North Korean followers in the South, which was ordered by the North Korean regime. In the North, there is no freedom of speech and thus all the articles of *Rodong Sinmun* represent the ideas of the regime. … I was astonished by the articles so I took photos of the articles, which is illegal according to the National Security Law. In the South, it is only allowed to read North Korean papers within libraries for the aim of research and it is not allowed to take materials out in any form, including taking photos. … However, I felt I had to let this fact be known to the world so I posted the photo on my Facebook page. … I got tens of thousands replies and comments over one day, which mostly criticized me for

spreading fake news but the truth is that I read those articles with my own eyes in the library. … While I was reading all the replies, I realized that there actually exists a group of North Korean followers in the South, who threatened to kill me in messages.

Lee also clearly recognizes the North as an illegal state that oppressed its own people, and was thus to be destroyed.

The North Korean regime is the worst totalitarian and fake communist regime in world history. In reality, it is a vicious dynasty and dictatorship which committed mass killings of its own people, where the universal norms of liberty and human rights that all human beings should enjoy are violated to the extreme. Thus, the North Korean regime should be destroyed and its people should be saved. The North is not a partner for negotiation and cooperation. It is proved in many historical cases that it is not possible to make such cooperation with totalitarian communist states.

Reflecting on national identity, Cho regards too much emphasis on ethnic nationalism that was brought from the North's *Juche* ideology as dangerous and pre-modern:

South Korean national identity is notably evident in the Constitution, in which it is clearly stipulated that the fellow citizens in the North are part of the ROK and the territory of the ROK covers the whole peninsula. Thus, South Korea has its ultimate duty to liberate people in the North from the oppression of the illegal regime, which is our national identity. President Rhee left his intention that "South Koreans should keep the national identity that South Korea has a mission to save people in the North based on the founding values of the ROK." …
The nationalism that North Korea promotes is ethnic nationalism. This concept has been brought into the South and thus we do not see "the nation" from a civic perspective. The nation [*minjok*] commonly used in both Koreas and self-reliance [*Juche*] ultimately refers to the fact that we, two Koreas, deal with our own issues without intervention of imperial powers such as the US. *Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*] in Korea have brought these two concepts of *Juche* and *minjok* from the North so the citizens of South Korea, without realizing it have been attracted to those ideas in the name of ethnic nationalism. I personally think this is because the masses in South Korea still have a very weak understanding of the national identity as a modern nation state. The administrations of Park Geun-hye and Lee Myung-bak were trapped in this notion of one community of Korea based on the ethnic notion, which is, I believe, most dangerous. … There are not many modern states which are composed of only one ethnic group. A modern nation state is thus united centered around a political system of a state, which in part includes ethnicity. When we think of a nation state, we must consider it from a modern perspective which prioritizes loyalty to the state as a political entity, not to ethnicity.

Cho's view of North Korea assumes that there are irreconcilable differences between the two Koreas. In keeping with right-wing South Korean political narrative, he identifies the North Korean regime as an evil dictatorship, which thus should be removed, while showing empathy toward North Korean people based on respect toward other human beings who are ill-treated by their own government. Further reflecting on ongoing inter-Korean summits, his view on the irreconcilability between the two Koreas is clearly explained:

> In my opinion, the recent inter-Korean summits amount to a declaration of surrender. That is, it is to give away the political system, liberal democracy, of South Korea to the system of Kim Jung-un. … The reason why the North declared it would stop nuclear tests is that it had completed the development of nuclear weapons. Considering this, any attempts to talk with the North without clearly stating the issue of North Korean human rights violation and denuclearization should be regarded as surrender to the North. Not mentioning the human rights issue in the summits means abandoning South Korean national identity that includes the fellow North Koreans as part of South Korea to be recovered. Furthermore, summits which proceed without suggesting clear paths toward the denuclearization of the North amount to giving up the security of South Korea, which is our existence. Thus, these two should be included as the main agenda of the summits, which is, of course, not going to happen. … What we should be more careful about is what the term, nation [*minjok*], is meant in the North. The meaning of *minjok* is not one ethnic nation of Korea in North Korean terms, rather it means only people who belong to the ruling class who respect the Kim Il Sung family, which is what the *Juche* ideology means. *Juche* is based on nationalism but since the end of the 1970s, the term, *Juche* has been identified with the Father Kim Il Sung, which I call in my doctoral dissertation "the incarnated Supreme Leader [*Suryŏng*]." That is to say, "the *suryŏng* is the state" just as Louis XIV in France said "I am the state." Therefore, in the extreme nationalism of the North, the notion of the nation is interpreted through the lens of *Juche* ideology, so whoever is opposed to the *Juche* ideology does not count as a human being. When the North Korean regime argues that North Korea is a state centered around humans, we should know that dissenters in the North are not included in the category of humans. This justifies the North's claim whenever submitting the human rights report to the UN every year that North Korea is the state that respects human rights. This is because from its perspective, political opponents are not counted as humans.

Also, Cho states that the national identity of North Korea has been constructed around its unchanging goal of unification under communism, presenting his negative predictions on ongoing inter-Korean summits achieving peace on the peninsula. In his view, conflicting national identities of the two Koreas cannot be reconcilable or negotiable.

> The reason why Kim Jung-un came to agree to have a series of summits with the US and South Korea is that the North had completed the development of nuclear weapons. They have never abandoned their national identity in which the ultimate goal is unification under communism. What North Koreans mean by denuclearization is well explained in the recent

report, titled "What does denuclearization mean to North Korea" by Voice of America. It is clear in the North's argument for denuclearization that firstly the US military must be removed from the peninsula and the US nuclear umbrella in South Korea should then be taken away. They argue that only if these happen will the North remove its own nuclear weapons. … Harry B. Harris Jr., who was newly appointed as the US ambassador to South Korea, mentioned in his speech in the American National Assembly at the beginning of this year (2018) that "the nuclear development of the North is not for its own survival but for its goal of unification under communism… It is not for deterrence against the US but pressure against the South Korean regime, including deterrence. … It is natural given that the "democracy base theory [*minjugichiron*]" of Kim Il Sung, which declares the ultimate goal is first to establish a socialist revolutionary state in the north of the peninsula and then to extend it to the south, has never been removed in the articles of the communist party since 1945. … Just as we have national identity of liberal democracy, the North has its own national identity which has never changed. The research aim of my doctoral dissertation was to examine the intention of the Kim Family by analyzing the New Year's addresses. Some say that Kim has adopted an appeasement policy based on the 2018 New Year's address, which is wrong in my opinion. Just as we have our own national identity of liberal democracy, the North has its identity which has never been transformed.

The narrative that North Korea is, for conservatives, an illegitimate group to be removed is revealed in all of the interviews conducted. For instance, Lim, one of the leaders in Christian right-wing civic groups, declares:

When it comes to North Korea, we should not think of whether it is part of us or not. What is important is whether North Korea is a legitimate state or not. We all know that the three elements of a modern state are territory, people and sovereignty. However, in the North, people do not enjoy any rights as citizens of a state but are only under oppression like slaves. … Despite the fact that it is declared that the whole Korean peninsula is the territory of the ROK in our Constitution, it makes no sense to acknowledge the North as a legitimate state and to have summits with it. … It is very ironic that even a neighboring state, Japan, does not recognize North Korea as a normal state, and a government that rejects identifying the North as an enemy and illegal entity has come to take power in South Korea.

The Truth Form also makes a clear statement, regarding the North:

There is no point in having peace talks without bringing any concrete changes in North Korea. These talks for the sake of talks will only extend the sufferings of the North Korean people and the nuclear threat posed to the international community. We must now bring about substantial and tangible changes in North Korea. We must free those unjustly suffering North Koreans. The US and the ROK shed blood together to uphold freedom and truth. We must fight the good fight together for the well-being of the international community and to bring changes in North Korea (Kim Sŏng-hun 2017).

This argument that there must be transformation of the North has essentially led to anti-communist discourse, which is at the core of South Korean national identity. Cho argues that:

> The term, anti-communism should be replaced as it is a word that has been framed by leftists in many negative ways. However, I believe that what is important is to clarify that the people in the North are to be liberated from oppression by us and are part of us based on our Constitution. In addition, the North Korean regime is not a state but an illegal group that has committed crimes against humanity to our fellow people, which is the key of our national identity that we should protect. Whether we call this "anti-communism" or something else, that is the national identity of South Korea.

The importance of protecting South Korean national identity from the invasion of communism is also declared in the statement of the Truth Forum addressed to the US:

> The communist Soviet Union, which we fought against together, collapsed. However, under the tolerance of democracy, different derivative forms of socialism are still threatening our values of freedom and truth. In South Korea, romantic nationalists have been advocating the world's worst slave state of North Korea while threatening liberal democracy and the market economy. They intentionally instigate anti-American sentiments. Those who led the "democratic" movement in the 1980s have gained control over the media, education system and businesses by dominating labor unions. They have been twisting and distorting history, controlling the media and spreading anti-market populism. … We are gravely concerned that President Moon and the ruling party of Korea share these socialist views considering the paths they have walked in the past and the policies the current administration is promoting (Kim Sŏng-hun 2017).

The concern over the allegedly left-leaning government of Moon is also well elaborated in another statement of the Truth Forum delivered at a press conference on 26 February 2018:

> Constitutional reform should be carried forward when there is sufficient political stability and social consensus. The South Korean society is now severely divided since the impeachment of our president merely a year ago. Many are furiously concerned by the Moon administration for its socialist leanings and outright pro-North Korea stances. The Moon administration's anxious attempt to change our Constitution in the midst of all this commotion is completely unreasonable. … In fact, there are sincere concerns that such a rash reform effort may be hijacked by those who seek to subvert our liberal democratic free market system. Already, the Constitutional reform drafts propose to delete "liberal" from "liberal democracy," the very foundational concept of freedom that defines the Republic of Korea, which separates it from North Korea (Truth Forum 2018).

The leader of the Truth Forum in SNU who initiated this student movement, Kim, argues:

Leftists in America have no idea about the fact that Korean leftists support the North and that is why, I think, American leftists cooperate with Korean leftists. Also, this is why we should raise our voices about it. American intellectuals rarely know about the presence of *Juche* ideology followers and their political activities within the South since the 1980s. It is our duty to enlighten people.

This concern over the cooperation between progressives in South Korea and the US is also witnessed in this statement of the Truth Forum:

In particular, we are deeply concerned by the mistaken cooperation between the progressives of the two countries. The American progressives are seemingly cooperating with the "progressives" of South Korea under the value of progress. However, the American progressives should realize that the so-called "progressives" in South Korea … are led by *Jusapa*, the followers of North Korean ideologies who hold a strong grudge against the US. While they speak about general human rights, they utterly ignore the grave human rights violations that are being committed in the North (Truth Forum 2018).

Mirroring the master narrative of the state-centered nationalism, right-wing activists emphasize the importance of the founding values, liberal democracy and free market system of South Korea and the physical and ideological threats from the North, while acknowledging that the people in the North and its territory are part of the South, as stipulated in the Constitution. Unification is thus set as the ultimate goal to be achieved. However, one interviewee, Lee, expressed his disagreement over the view that sees unification as an urgent aim for the South, saying:

I believe that the national identity of South Korea is based on liberal democracy established by Rhee Syngman and further developed by Park Chung-hee. In contrast, the North has developed its own identity based on the ideology of Kim Il Sung. In reality, these two opposing national identities are irreversible and irreconcilable, and even from a cultural perspective it seems impossible to become one nation after having such a long period of division. It is our duty to liberate the people in the North from oppression but it is a responsibility as a human being who respects the universal norms, not because we are one ethnic nation. … Unification is possible only if we have enough time and a process in which the North Korean people can develop an ability to govern themselves according to the rule of liberal democracy after the collapse of the illegal regime. Only after going through those processes, then, can unification be discussed.

However, it is noteworthy that among 15 interviewees from 20s to 60s, Lee in his 20s is the only one who clearly displays the view that unification is unrealistic at the moment and undesirable without serious reform and transformation of the North Korean system as well as people's mindset, acknowledging great gaps between people in the two Koreas in their mentality and culture. Others like Son, the leader of Ewha Truth Forum, and Han, of Yonsei Truth Forum, generally agree that the

most urgent task is not unification but liberation of North Korean people from oppression so that they can enjoy the same freedom South Koreans do. If this is realized, it does not really matter whether the North and South stay as separate states or are reunited. This argument was common among other Christian interviewees, who all prioritized liberating oppressed people from the North Korean regime over unification.

Lee's criteria to be identified as a Korean are dependent on whether one accepts and respects the values of liberal democracy and individualism regardless of ethnicity, as opposing ideas of totalitarianism. Despite the widespread ethnic notion of nationalism in South Korea, I found in the interviews conducted that there is an increasing trend among the younger generation towards seeing unification as unnecessary. Lee's view on unification reflects the analysis of Lee Nae-young (2016) on the perspective of unification based on the survey on national identity of South Korea conducted every five years from 2005 to 2015 by EAI, ARI and *JongangIlbo*. The number of participants who identified the North as the "other" and "enemy" was 10% and 8%, respectively, in 2005, but this increased to 13.5% and 16.1% in 2015 (Lee Nae-young 2016, p. 214). More importantly as Lee pointed out, it was those who viewed the North as an enemy numbering the highest for those in their 20s and 60s, accounting for 19.3% and 19.8%, respectively, in 2015. The number of those in their 30s who regarded the North as an enemy was slightly higher than those in their 40s and 50s, signifying that among the younger generation, the identity that sees the North as an enemy is generally increasing (ibid., p. 215). This negative view of North Korea among young people innately pertains to their negative or passive view on unification. In terms of unification, those who replied that there is no need to rush for unification was 31.9% and those who saw that unification is not necessary was 12.5% in the 2015 survey, which shows a sharp rise compared to 19.5% and 7.9 %, respectively, in 2005 (ibid, p. 222). It should also be noted that among those in their 20s, the number of participants who had negative or passive views on unification, including both those who saw that there is no need to rush unification and no need for unification at all, accounted for 55.6% in 2015. This indicates the growing negative view of unification among the younger generation, sharply opposed to the fact that over 61.6 % of those in their 60s replied that unification is necessary (ibid.).

The narrative that sees the North as an enemy is necessarily connected to the discourses of South Korea's security in which the very presence of the North is a permanent existential threat to the South. The possibility of ideological invasions as well as physical attacks on the South creates fear and anxiety as Lee explains:

> As far as I know, in the west the term liberal democracy is not frequently used. The reason why only in South Korea two words are combined into one to explain its political system is that there exist followers of communism within society. During the process of communists' ideological invasions to South Korea in the past, they disguised themselves as followers of

true democracy or progressivism. Democratization in South Korea in the past thus meant the North Korean style of people's democracy as declared by its official name, rather than democracy based on freedom of individuals, as in the west.

Cho also expresses security concerns:

Even some conservatives say that if we can achieve a peace agreement or some sort of declaration, the North might not pursue unification under communism through military attacks, and that in the end, it might adopt more liberal policies as a result of cooperation and the free market system, as we see in the cases of China or Vietnam. What I think is that it was only possible in those cases because the free market system or cooperation with the liberal world were not existential threats to those regimes. As we recognize, the North knows that as long as the South, a neighboring state, exists as a liberal democratic state, its political system cannot survive the invasions of a free economic and liberal political system. As might be expected, the totalitarian identity of the North might change with cooperation but it does not seem feasible without the collapse of Kim's dictatorship. This is because as I said before, the national identity of the North will not change unless the pre-modern identity that "the supreme leader [*suryong*] is the state" is abandoned, which naturally means a regime change. … If our ultimate aim through the inter-Korean summits is a strategic aim of regime change, a series of summits as a stepping stone can be seen positively. As far as has been discovered so far, I can only see these summits as a surrender that is led by this government composed of high officials who have history as *jusapa* and never declared their conversion. If the government, who clearly shares the same values, principles and identity, pursues cooperation with the North in the name of peace, we could agree with it as we know for a fact that the government share the same identity. However, with this government the hidden intention of the summits is very evident.

For the security of South Korea in broader terms, including military and ideological, the alliance with the US is regarded as top priority for the South, which is found in many places in the statements of the Truth Forum and in the interviews conducted. For instance, in the statement of Truth Forum in 2018, it is stated under the subtitle of "We call for a strong ROK-US alliance,":

The alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea is forged in blood. Without the sacrifice of the American people, the Republic of Korea would not exist today. Their noble sacrifices to secure our lives and freedom have not been in vain. Many South Korean people are furious against the Moon administration for its attempts to damage this ROK-US alliance. We sincerely insist that the US continue to cooperate with the South Korean people who support Korea's reunification under the principle of freedom and liberal democracy which is shared by the American people, and to unite with our efforts to liberate the people of North Korea. … Moreover, they (*Juche* ideology followers) have been inciting anti-American sentiments in South Korea to weaken the ROK-US alliance, and they capitalize on the American progressives to influence the American media and its politics. We strongly urge the US to stop assisting those who deny American values and principles. We also

strongly urge the US to bring North Korean regime followers who live and operate within I
ts US borders, such as *MinjokTongshin* (www.minjok.com), to justice (Truth Forum 2018).

Cho also emphasizes the alliance with the US:

The role of mediator that President Roh pursued as his principle of foreign policy does not
make sense in international politics. Small states which are not super powers have to rely on
alliances with strong powers. That does not mean a tributary system but a strategic alliance
as a sovereign state only in terms of security. Keeping a strong ROK-US alliance does not
harm our self-reliance. … In the name of economic cooperation, allying with China is more
problematic as it does not follow a value of liberal democracy, which, however, we share
with the US. From a Chinese perspective, we become a tributary state, which is elaborated
in their official documents. … If we need to choose an alliance with either the US or China,
it is natural that we take the US, whose values are in line with ours.

Son also makes a clear argument about the relationship with the US:

I believe that the US is a nation which chooses policies based on their values and principles.
The foundation of America was based on freedom. … In the end, the reason why Americans
fought for us was to protect their values and principles. South Korea is an ally for them which
shares their identity and values. In this context, I believe we are on the same side.

Lee's statement also reveals the narrative of the US as a savior of South Korea:

We were not in a situation in which we could decide our own destiny (after liberation) and
as seen in other cases in the world, the foundation of the ROK would have not been possible
without strong support and sacrifice from America. … America is an object for us to be
thankful not only from a perspective of international politics but also from a religious
perspective. … Koreans were educated by many American missionaries. … Thanks to their
decision (to join the Korean War), the ROK now exists. … Another benefit we get from
alliance with the US is related to the historical fact of how South Korea, a small country that
was surrounded by states like China, Russia and North Korea, could fight against those
strong communist forces. This was only possible through the strong alliance with the US.

What is interesting in the statements above regarding the US, is that the importance of shared
values and principles between the US and Korea is highlighted, rather than a military alliance. This
means that in terms of security, they see security in broader terms. Traditional state-oriented security
theories assume that physical survival from external threat is the primary human need which must
be secured by a state. However, a number of scholars in the field of international security started
applying sociological insights to broaden the concept of security, in which the basic need for security
is dependent on management of relations with others (McSweeney 1999). From this perspective,

South Korea's insecurity largely depends on North Korea's unpredictability. South Korea feel less secure as it is hard to know what is going on inside the North. So it tries to improve security by managing relations with the most important and strongest ally, the US.

C. Irreconcilability in Historical Views

The survey conducted by EAI, ARI and *JongangIlbo* in 2005, 2010, and 2015 regarding the assessment of former presidents shows that there are sharp differences in how to interpret and assess achievements of past presidents according to political leanings (Kang Won-taek 2016, p. 188-193). That is, people increasingly tend to positively assess former presidents who were from the same ideological strain. This clearly illustrates that historical views are more influenced by party preferences in South Korea, causing more conflicts regarding the history of South Korea between groups that hold different political preferences.

In the interviews I conducted, it can also be observed that in terms of what distinguishes rightists from leftists in South Korea, all of the participants point out the importance of the interpretation of South Korean history. Lee emphasizes that:

> The national identity as a South Korean which we must have is that the ROK was established in 1948 with the founding value of liberal democracy based on the strong alliance with America. What is most important for South Korean identity is whether one accepts its founding value of liberal democracy or not, and here the ethnic notion of the Korean nation does not count.

Reflecting on the state-centered narrative, whether one acknowledges the founding values, which are at the core of its historical view, is a matter of whether one sees the establishment of a separate state, the South, as necessary and legitimate. This emphasis on the history and legitimacy of South Korea's nation-building as a foundation of South Korean identity is also found in Son's firm statement:

> What divides rightists and leftists in South Korea is historical interpretation, more precisely, whether one acknowledges that the ROK was established in 1948 by President Rhee Syngman or not. Whenever I talk with my friends who see history from a leftist point of view, I find that difference is irreconcilable with them. This is, I think, because of conflicting interpretations of history.

The emphasis on historical interpretation in South Korean identity is also plainly evident in the statements of the Truth Forum. This declares that it is "committed to establishing an objective and balanced contemporary history of Korea, which is essential for appreciating the values of liberal

democracy and the market economy which form the backbone of our proud ROK" (Kim Sŏng-hun 2018).

The post displayed on the walls on Yonsei University campus by the Yonsei Truth Forum on 28 February 2018 criticizes the "pro-North historiography and policy of unification under the confederation system," saying that:

> Historical facts exist as facts. However, in researching history, what events are included or emphasized, and how to interpret those events rely on historians' identities and perspectives. Why have we been taught that the first Rhee government needs to be blamed for the division, rather than that it was an inevitable decision to prevent the communization of the southern part of our nation? And why have we been taught positively only about Kim Ku, who was against the establishment of a separate government and pursued talks with Kim Il Sung to establish the united government? Why have we been taught negatively about the *Yeosun* Incident where a mass killing of innocent civilians was conducted by the state, without being provided with information that the incident initially occurred by resistance led by members of the Workers' Party of South Korea [*Namrodang*] who intended to subvert the South? … Why have we been taught only about the meaning and significance of the democracy movement in the 1980s, without being informed that at the core of the movement, there were activities of pro-North followers like *Juche* ideology followers [*jusapa*], the National Liberation (NL) strain or the National Council of Student Representatives [*chŏndaehyŏp*]? … We want unification under liberty and freedom based on the proud history of South Korea, which can liberate the fellow citizens in the North who are oppressed under the most violent and tyrannical regime in the world. This can be achieved through a critical assessment of leftist historians who have developed this distorted view and their pro-North historiography, which has been deeply rooted among our people. Also, the critical assessment should be applied to the current ruling party and government that have pursued North Korean policies in the way the North has wanted, and have hindered the implementation of sanctions over the North, which have strong support from the international communities (Yonsei Truth Forum 2018).

The master ethnic nationalism narrative, allegedly left leaning, which is dominant and adopted in most of the current history textbooks, is criticized in the statement above for not being neutral or not offering balanced information. It seems quite obvious that the issue of historical interpretation and the acknowledgement of the establishment of the ROK are critical in the construction of South Korean national identity, thus being highly political.

A personal narrative of Han, a leader of Yonsei Truth Forum, well displays the significant influence of history education on her national identity conception:

> I thought I was progressive. However, after I joined the voluntary work for helping North Korean defectors' children, I had a chance to watch videos concerning our first president, Rhee Syngman, which provided me with an opportunity to realize that the knowledge I had

thought was true before was not actually true but distorted, and instilled in me through education. …

In the school education I received, the legitimacy of South Korea was denied. I was taught that it was wrong to establish a separate state of the ROK. If Rhee had not established the South, and the united government had been established under the leadership of Kim Ku, there would not have been the tragedies of this nation, such as the Korean War, mass killings of civilians conducted by Rhee, and all other corrupt acts done by ruling elites. Why this country is unhappy and divided now is all due to the division of the nation so all the blame for what is wrong now goes to Rhee. I believe that is why people are so excited about the ongoing inter-Korean summits. People simply think that without division, there will be no problems in this society. … They don't see the most important thing, that is, what President Rhee wanted to protect, even enduring the division of the nation. … I believe that Rhee prioritized the liberty of the nation and faith in God. In order to protect those values, he must have thought that liberal democracy was the best political system, under which each individual can enjoy the freedoms such as the right to life and property rights, and live independent lives with full rights and corresponding responsibilities.

In her narrative, Han claims that it was her history education that did not provide her with full facts or different perspectives on history but only instilled a one-sided story in her. She mentioned that only after realizing this, did she for the first time feel love for the nation. In constructing a personal narrative, Han recognizes the important values bestowed on all South Koreans, which people in current society have lost, saying:

I was very unhappy about this country before and my dream was thus to live abroad but after realizing there are other perspectives on the origin of this country, I looked back on why I had hated this nation so much and I realized how distorted were the facts about Rhee which had been taught to me, and which had actually made me dislike my nation. Only knowing that there exists a different perspective on Rhee, in which the origin of South Korea is viewed more positively, made me loyal to this country and helped me to realize what values we must protect and pursue. … This enlightenment has led me to research President Rhee in the master's program which I am enrolled on right now. … President Rhee knew that communism is essentially the ideology that oppresses people and thus with the communistic system, how much struggle people would have. That is why we should not just sit back and watch our fellow people struggling under communism, and that is why South Korea has its legitimacy. …

In current South Korean society, those values are all destroyed. For instance, on Facebook there was a post where it was asked if you have one bullet left in your gun, between two candidates for the North leader, Kim Jung-un, and Hong Jun-pyo, a former leader of the conservative party, if you would like to kill Hong, you would click "like." And more than 40,000 people clicked the "like" option, meaning they would kill Hong over Kim, who is the murderer of loads of innocent people in the North, including his own relatives. … I thought that in this society the morality and values are so destroyed and only obsessed with the idea that without division, we will be okay.

What distinguishes the Republic of Korea (ROK) from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), especially for South Korean conservatives, is its political system of liberal democracy and a free market economy. Especially distinctive is South Korea's freedom, including individual freedom, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly. The ROK's identity is, therefore, intrinsically linked to the concept of "freedom" and "liberty". This is the reason why the conservatives were so strongly against the attempts led by President Moon's Democratic Party of Korea to remove the term "liberal" from the "liberal democracy" stipulated in the Constitution, and by the MOE to change the expression "liberal democracy" to just "democracy" in school textbooks. For conservatives, in the South's political and economic system, "liberal" is the key that separates South Korea from the North in that the North officially promotes its political system as a "people's democracy."

Lee In-ho (2018), a professor emeritus in SNU, regarding the current President Moon's historical interpretation, argues:

> The birth of the Republic of Korea is perceived by Moon and his core supporters not as an event to be remembered and celebrated, but as an unfortunate, if not unforgivable, aberration resulting in the nation's unnatural division. The fact that the Republic of Korea was born and developed as an anti-communist country has to be erased, not just from history as it naturally develops, but from established historical record and memory as well.

In keeping with the right-wing master narrative, Lee's statement shows that historical interpretation is inherently connected to the birth of South Korea and South Korean national identity. The policies the Moon administration has implemented since his inauguration are considered by conservatives as attempts to transform the backbones of South Korean national identity. If we use a broader concept of security and see security as management of relations with others, security is inseparably connected to collective identity because it means firstly we need to go through the process of identifying who we are and who others are, and then we can manage relations with others through policies. Therefore, the issue of identity, what makes us believe we are the same and they are different, is inseparable from security. The activists and members of right-wing civic groups I interviewed commonly mentioned that differences between rightists and leftists on how to identify South Korea and North Korea and how to interpret the past of the two Koreas are irreconcilable, arguing that they cannot lose this war of history and identity because it is a matter of the existence of South Korea, which is under threat from the North and from its followers within the South. Also, there is a clear tendency among those activists to see that this battle is between totalitarianism and individualism (or democracy), rather than ideology of communism and democracy as seen from Son

and Lee's descriptions of the North as a fake communistic state, which has existed only for Kim family.

D. Christianity and the Right-Wing in South Korea

As mentioned earlier, 13 out of 15 interviewees were Christians, including two Catholics. It seems quite evident that there are close relations between Korean Christianity and the political rightist movement, as many scholars and media sources point out. For example, some media reports paid attention to religious symbols like crosses and the Israeli flags held by protesters during the pro-Park, *Taegukgi* rallies. According to a rightist journalist Cho Gab-je (2017), the *Taegukgi* protests originated from massive prayer meetings held by Protestant civic groups. He further maintains that "the number of members of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (the leftist group) who mobilized people for candlelight protests was 600,000, while that of the Korean Protestants was 15,000,000. Thus in the end, the *Taegukgi* won this battle (Cho Gab-je 2017)." The great influence of Protestants in South Korean politics is also claimed by progressive media or intellectuals. In one of the progressive media outlets, *Hangyoreh*, it is maintained that "Protestants have affected political ideology and policy areas of the government through rightist networks such as the National Prayer Meeting and the Text Forum" (Park Ki-yong & Park Yu-ri 2016).

The strong influence of religious faith in political tendency was observed in the interviews conducted with right-wing activists. Many opined that joining right-wing political activism was the mission of God bestowed on them in order to protect the founding values of South Korea, which are in line with Christian values in many ways. For instance, this can be clearly be discovered in Cho's personal narrative:

> I posted two posters on the walls in my campus and on Facebook pages on December 9 and 22, in 2017. Especially after the article about the poster I posted on 22 December was published in *Jongang Ilbo*, I got threats from leftists, some of which actually mentioned that they would kill my son and I was a bit scared because on my Facebook page, all my family photos were exposed. Since then, I have thought it is a spiritual battle, rather than a political movement so I asked for prayers for what I do to my Christian friends and families.

Another Son, who used to work in one of the NGOs for North Korean human rights, mentioned:

> I was born in a Christian family and I was apolitical even though my parents were conservatives. However, I happened to read a book in a hair salon on a Korean American's activities to save North Korean people and I cried so much while reading it. … I realized

that I was so indifferent and ignorant about my fellow people, while only living for my own welfare. I thought that it was God's plan to provide with me a chance to read that book on that day. I looked for things I could do for the people in the North and then came to work in one of the NGOs for North Korea. … I thought I was a feminist in my 20s. I was very interested in human rights issues, in particular in minorities who were excluded from society. While staying in Canada to learn English, I was involved in activities to promote the human rights of Canadian natives. After I started to work for North Korean human rights, however, I realized the fact that progressives and leftists, who were usually regarded as very active in protecting human rights, were silent only about the North Korean human rights issues. I started to question why they had such dualistic attitudes over the human rights issues. Even Christian leftists remained quiet about the issue. … Most humanitarian aid toward the North goes to the North Korean government. I think that less than 10 percent of that aid goes to the people. … And much of the financial aid to the North comes from Korean Christians. … Since then, I have been thinking whether we, as Christians, should be a neighbor of people who were robbed, or a neighbor of a robber.

Han confessed in her personal narrative why she turned from leftist to rightist:

I happen to watch the online lecture on President Rhee Syngman through Esther Prayer Movement, which gave me a chance to realize that I did not know all the facts regarding Rhee, and that knowledge that was taught to me in school was very distorted. Through this, I realized that God didn't intend that I was born in this country to be unhappy, which I had believed before, and which was the reason why I had hated this country so much. … I wanted to become a diplomat just to live abroad. … I realized how distorted information on President Rhee has been given to younger generations. Only by providing the correct historical knowledge, can they love their nation and establish right visions and values for the future, instead of being resistant to this nation, just as I turned away from that path. … I started to search for more truth about my nation, which was for me the way of contributing to realizing God's vision for our nation.

A leader of SNU Truth Forum, Kim, also shared his personal narrative on why he started the movement:

There are five fundamental values we share which one needs to agree on when one applies for membership of the Truth Forum: the legitimacy of the establishment of the ROK and the values of industrialization; the importance of the US-ROK alliance; the liberation of the North; the injustice of Park's impeachment; and the principles and values of Christianity. The last is the most important in fact. As Christian leftists have provided ideological backgrounds for political leftists, it is our duty to protect our Christian values and principles in the society regarding issues such as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender). … We have many non-Christian members who know we run this movement based on faith in Christianity, and core members of the Truth Forum are those who have faith in those foundational values. Thus, if the Truth Forum loses its Christian principles, it will lose its power. … Personally, if I think I do political activism, I wouldn't be able to do this with such passion and I won't continue to do it. I do this because I believe this is connected to the

restoration of the Korean churches as well as the ROK itself. Thus, the Truth Forum is not ultimately a religious group, but it is based on values of Christianity and it will stay like this in the future.

Another activist, Im, who used to work for North Korean human rights in one of the NGOs, said:

In my perspective, politicians who institute policies based on values close to Christianity are mostly rightists. I know many rightist politicians are corrupt and have been doing so much wrong. So it is our duty to protect the values and principles which we think are right. … I became active in political movements while I was working for the NGO for human rights of the North Korean people. Among Christians, there are differences between those who only emphasize love as Christians and those who put equal focus on love and justice in terms of the North. Some leftists have said that while we continuously provide aid to the North Korean regime under an engagement policy like the Sunshine Policy, and in the end, the people in the North will get benefits from it. In reality, however, we saw only that nuclear weapons were developed with our financial aid. … Some who have visited the North came to be on the side of the North Korean regime, protecting and supporting it. … When I asked many North Korean defectors in the South why they generally become rightists, not leftists, after settling down in the South, one of them said to me that "I came to the South to find liberty and freedom. After settling down here, I realized that rightists at least talked about the values of freedom although they are corrupt, but what leftist politicians argue is exactly what I was taught in the North. Especially, when I read the textbook for elementary students in South Korea, I found that the same content that I was taught in the ideological education class in the North was included." … Thus, we Christians cannot sit back naively without doing anything under the current circumstances. We have many issues regarding which we should raise our voices. … I believe that there is a national identity of the ROK. … This country was blessed by God after the great awakening in Pyongyang in 1907. … The ROK was established by God through President Rhee, who believed that if we built our nation as a state of God, we would be blessed. … He had a dream of unification under liberal democracy. … By simply comparing the current economic situation between South and North Korea, we are so blessed and there is no country in the world that was developed in such a short period of time.

Another interviewee, Park, an activist in a Protestant civic group, also recognizes that Christian values and principles are inherently connected to the ideology of rightist, liberal democracy:

Politicians, regardless of whether they are rightists and leftists, are all privileged groups. I have never seen any conservative politicians who actually act according to the values and principles that they declare they are pursuing. Despite that, the reason why I still support conservatism is due to its values. … As you may know, liberal democracy originated from Christianity. … In the Bible, 1 Timothy chapter 2 verses 1 and 2, … what these verses mean is we should pray that the system of the nation should not interrupt our faith. That is, we

Christians should first pray that the nation and its political system are not in conflict with the word of God. … In a modern age, this is only possible under liberal democracy. Once a religion becomes a national one, it is coerced. But in God, faith should not be coerced but should be voluntary. … The political system which provides the freedom that makes it possible for us to be voluntarily devoted to our faith is liberal democracy. … I am not supporting rightists because I can totally agree with them, but I support them because I have only two options, either rightists or leftists. … In terms of peace talks with the North led by leftists, they prioritize unification, not the system of liberal democracy. … There is peace all the time if we give up our faith and values. … Look at the case of China. After Xi taking power, the constitution was changed and oppression toward churches and Christians was growing harsh. … In terms of the North, liberation of people who have lives like slaves should be prioritized rather than peace with a totalitarian regime. … Leftists attack us saying "why are you guys against peace?" What this rhetoric aims at is the frame in which we Christians are described as people who only care about our own interests and security.

In the interviews I conducted, the sense of identity crisis is commonly found regardless of the interviewees' age and religion, and this is also viewed as an opportunity to go through self-reflection and to have proper reforms. What is interesting is that young participants in their 20s and 30s seem more realistic than the older ones regarding the issue of unification, acknowledging the irreconcilability between the two Koreas as largely due to the pronounced differences in their identity and historical views. Hence, many of them said the most urgent and uppermost task is not unification but liberation of the North Korean fellow people from the Kim family's totalitarianism, even though the reasons why we should liberate the North Korean people vary from the universal humanitarian perspective to the argument that it is part of South Korea's national identity stipulated in the Constitution or that it is part of the mission of Christianity. Also, young respondents commonly expressed their distrust in politicians, whether conservative or progressive, and clarified the reason they joined the rightist political activities to be due to the values and principles of conservatism. As seen in their argument that they do not want to have hasty unification because of the differences of national identity conception and historical views, this group of young rightists prioritizes the ideas and principles of conservatism, that is, liberal democracy and a market economy, as opposed to the North's system. Lastly, faith in Christianity provides them with a strong sense of vocation so they regard their political activism as a mission given by God which functions as a driving force for people to act, not just remain by-standers. These young activists are doing lectures for the older rightists through various civic groups, holding lectures and seminars to educate people, and making educational materials and posting them online. Older interviewees in their 50s, 60s and 70s showed similarities in their narratives to that of the New Right movement. What is interesting is that they acknowledge that the elders need to be educated by young rightists to fight against invasion of leftists.

Whether they are extreme rightists or self-defined true conservatives, it seems evident that

conservatism is going through reforms after the impeachment of Park. These activists are seeking to refresh and revitalize corrupted conservatism. Although whether their attempts will be successful remains to be seen, the narratives on national identity of those respondents have significance. As mentioned, even if a political agreement is made between the two Koreas, social conflicts between groups who have different national identities, values, and ideologies will not be naturally resolved without efforts to include these conflicting groups into the process of peace settlement on the peninsula.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Deepening Conflicts in South Korean Society and Contentious Narratives

According to the survey study of people's perception of social conflict in South Korea conducted by *Hankook* Research and the Korean Center for Conflict Resolution [*han'guk kaldŭng haeso sentŏ*] in 2018, nine out of ten respondents replied that the level of social conflict in South Korea is high. More importantly, those who think that conflicts have been intensified under the current Moon Jae-in administration accounts for 52.4%, displaying a dramatic rise compared to 22.9% in 2017. In contrast, those who believe the conflict has been alleviated under President Moon shows a sharp decrease from 29.9% in 2017 to 12.3% in 2018 (Pak Chi-yun 2019). Conflicts between labor and management, the poor and the rich, and progressives and conservatives are chosen as the most serious in the survey. While inner conflicts are deepening in South Korea, the peace initiative of President Moon through expanding inter-Korean cooperation, including summits, inter-Korean and DPRK-US, is in progress. Against this backdrop, both anti-American and pro-American protesters took to the streets in the city center of Seoul on February 17, 2019, right before the Hanoi Summit between North Korea and the US (Pak Hye-yŏn 2019). Anti-American protesters shouted for unification without US interference, while participants in pro-American protests called for a stronger bond with the US for the security of South Korea. Although the number of protesters gathered was small, those street protests right before the second, historic DPRK-US summit have significance in that they clearly indicate that there still exists sharp difference within South Korea over the way to approach the North and to settle the peace on the peninsula.

As many scholars point out, the policy change toward the North of the first progressive regime in South Korea from containment to engagement triggered the innate divided nature of South Korea to come to the surface. There still exists controversy over the peace initiative of the current progressive President Moon for denuclearization of the North and peaceful coexistence of the two Koreas on the peninsula. With this in mind, why do some people disagree with the engagement policy toward the North? Do they really oppose the idea of peaceful coexistence with the North as the policy proponents argue? If so, why? The possible answers to these questions can be discovered in suggested assumptions throughout the dissertation regarding what causes deep division in the politics and society of South Korea.

First of all, this study assumes that the absence of a transcendent narrative on the national identity and history of South Korea has contributed to the divided nature of South Korea. The partition of one nation into two states raises the tension between two contradictory aspects of Korean politics, the strong myth of homogeneity developed under the Japanese colonial rule as an anti-

imperial ideology, and the actual reality of oppositional identity practices, which creates and intensifies the internal division in South Korean society. While the antagonistic forms of identity based on anti-communism that identify the North as the evil enemy to its own existence have been deeply entrenched in the societal consciousness of South Korea throughout past years, an alternative narrative which views the past events of the two Koreas from a different angle has emerged as a strong challenger to the state-sanctioned narrative identity of the authoritarian regime with political democratization. With the two progressive administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun that took office from 1998 to the 2008, this alternative narrative came to be institutionalized in different areas from foreign to domestic policies. It is, however, a challenging task to transform the identity of the North from the arch enemy toward a partner state for peaceful coexistence, as well as changing the perspective on the US from the closest ally or even the "savior" of South Korea toward one of the imperial powers that has pursued its own interests on the peninsula. Furthermore, it is a far more difficult task to transform the narrative about its violent past of war and self identity as a victim suffering from evil communists' invasion. Since the mid-1960s, internal divisions of societies and separatism within a single political entity have been more frequently observed than international wars between nation states in the world (Psaltis et al. 2017, p.1). In such a context, the primary challenge is for former enemies to find a way to not only live together peacefully but also, when necessary, to cooperate and share power, which is what South Korea has been experiencing in the post-Cold War era.

This study is concerned with clashes between South Korean conservatives (rightists) and progressives (leftists) over almost all areas from foreign policies toward North Korea and the US to domestic issues related to the interpretation of history, which have created the phenomenon of deep domestic conflicts, called "a house divided" (Hahn Chaibong 2005), or more commonly known as the "South-South conflict" to South Koreans. The fundamental assumption of this research is that to have a better understanding of social and political conflicts in South Korea, one must take national identity into consideration. The most contentious and ideologically conflicting issue, which reaches far beyond South Korea's domestic political arena, was the effort for the progressive governments to redefine the country's relationship with North Korea on the one hand, and with the US on the other, which essentially pertains to the identification of the significant others in national identity formation. National identity is constructed around two important concepts of the "self" and the "significant others" because national identity as collective identity is present not only to define who we are, but also to separate us from others. Hence, the concept of the other is inextricably linked to the notion of national identity. North Korea and the US are the most significant others to the South. The fact that the "South-South conflict" phenomenon has initially occurred around the issue of foreign policies toward those two significant others, and recently the issue of how to interpret its modern and

contemporary history, well illustrates that the polarization of South Korean society and politics intrinsically pertains to the contradictory narratives regarding national identity.

Because the Korean nation was divided along the ideological line of communists and capitalists, ideology among all other factors that influence the formation of national identity is the most important component. Thus, traditional approaches focused on ideology as a major cause of societal conflicts in South Korea. It is true that ideology is discursively constructed as a crucial element of national identity discourses in order to draw the line between the self and others in South Korea. However, as mentioned, in this research ideology is treated as one of the components that comprise national identity. Especially in the narratives of the authoritarian regimes and currently conservatives, Korean communists are excluded from the category of self, the "true" Korean nation, because of their political ideology. Hence, in the context of South Korea, ideology is not separable from the concept of national identity.

This study primarily argues that disagreement over national identity has been a source of inner conflicts in South Korea and a major challenge for national reconciliation between conflicting groups in the post-conflict era. Through historical case studies, this research identified two dominant yet contentious narratives in discourses on South Korean identity: "the ethnic nationalism" narrative of progressives, which prioritizes one ethnic Korean nation to a separate state, South Korea, and emphasizes the masses' suffering under the authoritarian ruling elites who are blamed for the division of the nation and for their collaboration with the imperial powers for the sake of their own interests; and the "state-centered nationalism" narrative of conservatives, originating from the state-sanctioned narrative of the authoritarian regime, which blames uncivilized communists and the North Korean regime for Koreans' tragedies and emphasizes loyalty to South Korea, the only legitimate and "true" representation of the Korean nation. It further examines the process in which the master narrative on South Korean national identity has been gradually transformed from the state-sanctioned narrative of the authoritarian regimes to the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives, which was institutionalized through foreign policies toward two significant others, North Korea and the US, and through domestic policies such as "clearing up the past wrongdoings" and history textbook revision under the two successive progressive administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun. This transformation created strong resistance from the conservative camp whose narrative based on anti-communism has been firmly entrenched in society and has enjoyed hegemony since its division. With the process of narrative transformation, conservatism has been forced to go through self-reflective reforms in accordance with the democratic political context. In the process of reforms, the New Right that separated itself from the traditional conservatives emerged and political activism of its civic organizations came to the fore in the 2000s when traditional conservatism experienced loss of its hegemonic power by losing consecutive presidential elections. With the retaking of office of

two conservative presidents, Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, conservatives seemed to successfully regain some political power but the impeachment of President Park in 2017 totally changed the political scene in institutional politics as well as in civic political activism. What this study points out is that although the traditional conservative party has lost its hegemonic status in the formal politics of South Korea, there are still many who see the reality through the narrative identity of conservatives.

Another important factor to bear in mind regarding South Korean national identity is that it was originally constructed in the context of intractable conflicts with the North. Narrative identity created in intractable conflicts is formed with strong certainty of the self and others, thus being resistant to any change. In particular, the state-centered nationalism narrative of conservatives has been reformulated based on the state-sanctioned narrative that was originally formed during and in the aftermath of the war. Accordingly, it was built on the rigid certainty that the North is an inherently evil aggressor and the South is a victim that has a mission to protect the "true" Korean nation from communists' invasion. Thus, those who hold the state-centered nationalism narrative which still views the North as the great existential threat find it extremely difficult to adapt to the alternative narrative that identifies the North as a normal neighboring state to coexist with. It is of great significance to note that narrative identity constructed in the intractable conflicts or post conflict context is extremely difficult to be transformed, and those who hold a strong concept of identity based on the state-centered nationalism narrative assume that the opponents' narrative identity is irreconcilable with their own narrative. In sum, this research primarily assumes that competing narratives on national identity have created and deepened domestic conflicts in South Korea, found in almost every field of society and politics. Reforms led by progressive regimes were not able to construct a transcendent narrative of national identity which their opponents can agree with, resulting in conservatives' resistance to narrative transformation being intensified.

8.2 Identity Politics: Rhetoric of Othering/Exclusion and Victimization Narrative

Secondly, identity politics of South Korea conducted by both conservatives and progressives, in which rhetoric of othering is commonly used, has greatly contributed to a deepening polarization of South Korean society. The rhetoric of othering or exclusion is a commonly used tactic in the world, in particular in extremism politics. This research adopts a discursive approach to identity construction, in which not only symbolic constructions but also institutional practices are deemed significant. Identities are (re)produced and transformed through institutional practices including state policies and everyday interactions. Discourses around national identity operate in the context of institutional

supports and practices that they depend on, and it is specific individual and collective narratives that reproduce and transform discourses. Specific narratives of the nation are understood as important components of broader discourses of national identity. The narrative conceptualization of identity emphasizes the importance of stories and storytelling for processes of identity construction. Giddens (1991), for example, argues that identity is constituted through the continuous formulation and re-formulation of narratives of "the self", which means that self-identity is reflexively construed through "stories" by the individual concerned, as well as by others. In this light, national identities are conceptualized as narratives in this study, which are concerned with the drawing of boundaries between members of the nation and non-members. Such boundaries are crucially bound up with political processes and mechanisms of othering, in which specific groups of people are constructed as the others, who are fundamentally different. Another point to bear in mind is that at times of war, mechanisms of othering the enemy become particularly intense, often taking the form of presenting the other as non-human or evil. In political discourse, the enemy is thus frequently represented through evil imagery.

The self-understanding of a nation is primarily crafted in relation to its own history. We learn who "we" are by gaining an awareness of how we got where we are now, that is, by gaining an understanding of our own history. South Korea's deep division also stems from radically different interpretations of the modern nation's birth and development, thus pertaining to interpretations of history. As much of the rest of the world does, conservatives celebrate South Korea's industrialization and democratization despite the many shortcomings, such as human rights abuse and authoritarian rule of the regimes. The progressives, in contrast, are relentlessly critical of the nation's history despite these achievements. This is because progressives believe that South Korea achieved the current developments through too many compromises and much injustice, including dictatorship, human rights violations, and dependence on foreign powers. Around the world, attempts at dealing with nations' violent pasts have proven to be highly contentious. A history of collective violence and abuse has often led to conflicting memories and polemic confrontation around the historical "truth". It also sparks intense debates on how to educate younger generations about the past for the sake of a better future. Schools, as key instruments of socialization, have inevitably been affected by societal dynamics and tensions in the context and aftermath of conflicts, including power struggles and related "memory wars," and making them a crucial arena in contestations for political legitimacy. In particular, the history taught in schools, as an important site of collective identity and memory, has been the object of great political and societal contention in countries emerging from violent conflict. On the other hand, school history has also increasingly been considered a significant element in peacebuilding and transitional justice processes aimed at reconciling divided societies. So-called "South-South conflicts", which initially came to the surface with the policy change toward significant

others under the progressive administrations in the early 2000s, are now more intense regarding how to interpret the birth and development processes of South Korea, which strongly supports the main argument of the dissertation that inner conflicts within South Korea are deeply connected to the issue of national identity.

In the rhetoric of conservatives, conflicts between the North and South originally framed based on "anti-communism" are recently understood in the frame of the "anti-South" that accords with South Korean centralism of the New Right's narrative. While classifying dissidents as communists or North Korean sympathizers, which was the most powerful strategy under authoritarian regimes, is still quite frequently adopted in discourses of conservative politicians and their supporters, a new rhetoric of exclusion that takes a frame of "anti-South" has emerged in the New Right discourses. Anti-South generally refers to those who oppose the legitimacy of the South Korean government as the only lawful political entity on the peninsula, while sympathizing with the North. This anti-South rhetoric has been adopted since the New Right's attempt to reassess South Korean modern history. Anti-South rhetoric also pertains to distinctive definition of the nation in the New Right discourses, in which the North Korean regime and its followers are excluded from the nation, as they are uncivilized and so cannot be included in the modern civilized Korean nation, that is, South Korea. Like the state-sanctioned narrative, the state-centered nationalism narrative of the New Right employs the rhetoric of exclusion with a political aim, classifying political opponents and dissidents as pro-North or anti-South forces, and excluding them from its own concept of the nation. Thus, patriotism and nationalism of conservatives are defined primarily through vigilance against internal betrayal by pro-North and anti-South groups, justified by every aggressive move taken by North Korea.

On the other hand, the ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives establishes a new dichotomy between "nation (*minjok*)" as the self that is pure and absolute, and collaborators with foreign powers (mostly Japan and the US) as traitors to the nation, as a result creating new evil others. In this regard, the historical narrative of progressives is also monumental just like the narrative of conservatives. Societies recovering from recent violence often choose to create a monumental history to serve the function of legitimizing the ruling regime and promote it as innocent and heroic, thus unifying its people and developing loyalty among the younger generation. Alternatively, they can choose to teach a critical history that holds all perpetrators accountable and shows the complex roots of violence without promoting loyalty to one particular side. The state-sanctioned narrative which had been dominant and the only narrative allowed as an official presentation of history before democratization, is clearly monumental in that it was the main instrument to legitimize the ruling regimes of South Korea and to raise loyalty to the nation. With democratization, however, this dominant narrative was challenged by an alternative ethnic nationalism narrative of progressives,

which is partly critical given that it brings back erased memories into official history, such as the *Jeju April 3 incident* in 1948, in which many innocent civilians were killed by state forces in the name of anti-communism. However, it still displays some features of monumental history. For instance, it establishes a new dichotomy between good nationalists and evil anti-nationalists. The ethnic nationalism narrative, which is now officially accepted in most history textbooks, describes Japanese collaborators with a high level of collective generality, perceiving collaborators as a single entity with uniform beliefs and attitudes, and more importantly, disregarding the personal and societal contexts in which they served and related to the colonial government. Hence, those who were once categorized as collaborators by historians are depicted as homogeneously evil and the descendants of those collaborators also often fall into the same category of evil traitors who are assumed to demonstrate the same fixed vicious patterns of behavior. The ethnic nationalism narrative that is constructed based on a deep belief about the in-group of the Korean nation and the masses as pure victims, and the out-group of internal betrayers, that is, collaborators, as essentially evil aggressors, significantly decreases the possibility of mutual understanding among conflicting groups within South Korea.

The rhetoric of exclusion in both narratives has led to intensification of victimization discourses. In the ethnic nationalism narrative, the masses [*minjung*] and the nation were exploited by evil pro-Japanese collaborators, later by pro-American imperialists and ruling elites who only pursued their own interests. Thus, in the dichotomy of the ethnic nationalism narrative, the masses are depicted as victims, and imperialists and ruling elites are blamed for all the tragedies of the nation including the division of the nation. On the contrary, in state-centered nationalism, the Korean people are portrayed as victims suffering from the evil communists' invasion. The North Korean regime and its followers are the arch enemy, who started the Korean War and are thus blamed for the national partition. Accordingly, both narratives fail to provide comprehensive understandings of the violent and painful past of modern and contemporary South Korea. This is largely because of their notions of dualistic identification and simplistic victimization. As a result, history and narrative identity have been heavily politicized as a strategic tool to delegitimize opponents.

8.3 Absence of a Dialogical Space

Lastly, the idea of the "transformative performative dimension" (Bentrovato 2017) of the history textbook project that emphasizes the importance of an open and inclusive "dialogical space" between competing groups can have significant implications regarding the inner conflicts of South Korean society. The processes of cooperation and negotiation with the North led by progressives,

liberals and leftists in past regimes have failed to create this dialogical space with the policy opponents, mostly the conservative camp. Choi Jang-jip (2017) points out that it is essential for the current Moon Jae-in administration to have dialogues with his opponents to persuade and include them in the process of the peace initiative in order to avoid the same mistakes of the past progressive regimes. Choi argues that considering the domestic context where conservatives do not recognize the North as a normal state and thus see peaceful coexistence with it as almost unfeasible, it seems impossible to realize peace on the peninsula without the processes of negotiation and persuasion with those who have different ideologies and values. His point is in line with the idea of the "transformative performative dimension" in the history textbook project discussed in chapter 6, which emphasizes that the conciliatory potential of textbook revision lies in the capacity of the processes of collaboration between conflicting groups. Peaceful coexistence between the two Koreas can only be achieved if the policy makers of engagement in South Korea, mostly the progressive camp, involve conservative politicians and activists in the processes of policy decision making and enforcement (Choi Jang-jip 2017). The lesson learned from past experiences in the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations that enthusiastically promoted the engagement policy is that peace between the two Koreas cannot be attainable only if all agree the ideal of peace, yet it can be achieved through patient and inclusive processes. Establishing a positive domestic context in South Korea toward peace through consensus and cooperation with those who have different values and ideologies is a necessary condition for conflict transformation and peace settlement on the peninsula. Hence, the ongoing peace initiative of President Moon heavily relies on whether cooperation between progressives and conservatives in South Korea is crafted or not.

8.4 Implications for Peace Settlement on the Korean Peninsula

In order for an eventual unification to be achievable and sustainable, it is not enough just to say that both Koreas must be united under one system. Indeed, this would assume a top-down approach, meaning that governmental structures, legal systems, economic policies, as well as other components of a country, would be reformulated in order to accommodate both North and South Koreans. However, unification or any other type of political integration between the two Koreas must address the emotional and personal components of individuals which a nation consists of. It is insufficient to assume that people will naturally develop a sense of unity and belonging to a reunited Korea, considering the fact that such processes are extremely complex. Even if an agreement of peace or political integration is made in high politics, it can be easily dissolved by the public, as we are currently witnessing in the case of Brexit, the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU).

Rhetoric of exclusion has great impact on contemporary politics, fanning the flames of victimization discourses in political extremism in which structural injustice and inequality are attributed to such specific groups as migrants in most of the western world. Individuals drawn to rhetoric of exclusion and consequent victimization narrative believe they are victims deprived of benefits by out-groups they naturally should enjoy, whether the out-groups are immigrants, anti-nationalists, or communists.

In essence, a Korean reunification will necessarily lead to the building of a new nation. At the time of writing, the expectation for a peace settlement on the Korean peninsula is greater than ever due to ongoing inter-Korean summits, as well as the historical encounters between the two leaders of the US and North Korea. However, we have seen in other post-conflict societies like Germany or Northern Ireland that a political declaration or peace agreement does not necessarily guarantee genuine peaceful relations and reconciliation between the former adversaries. Reconciliation goes beyond conflict resolution in representing a transformation in each party's identity. This is why the narratives of conservatives in South Korea, whether they are extremists or true conservatives who hold a strong narrative on national identity that still identifies the North as an arch enemy, are of great importance in the progress of achieving peace with the North. With the impeachment of the former President Park, the institutional conservative parties are in crisis, losing their political power, and pro-Park supporters are commonly described as irrational elderly people and are disregarded in academia. However, there are still quite a good number of South Korean people who see the current political and societal issues through the prism of the conservative narrative identity and, as seen in chapter 7, there is a new trend of conservatism, in which younger activists have emerged as leaders who seek to revitalize values and principles of "true" conservatism. Even if a political declaration of peaceful coexistence or unification is made between the two Koreas, the effort should be made to create a transcendent narrative on national identity on which those South Koreans who have hostile attitudes to the North can agree. In doing so, creating an open dialogical space between conflicting groups in South Korea is critical.

It seems evident that political rhetoric of exclusion based on conflicting identity concepts between progressives and conservatives cannot bring genuine peace on the Korean peninsula. It is, therefore, time to make efforts to transform the inherently divided nature of Korean national identity among South Koreans and to develop an integrative and transcendent narrative both parties can accept. More importantly, politicians should stop using rhetoric of exclusion to serve their own political interests, thus intensifying identity politics. As mentioned in chapter 6, history textbook pluralization without creating a dialogical space in which competing parties can reassess and redefine their narratives has simply replaced an old narrative with a new one, thus only deepening controversies. It is, however, argued through empirical case studies in societies emerging from a violent past that textbook work can provide a great potential for conflict transformation through

creating a dialogical space and facilitating cooperative interaction and critical and constructive confrontation with the controversial past. This lesson provides the insight for South Korea that the ultimate conflict transformation within South Korean society, as well as between the two Koreas, cannot be accomplished without the processes of cooperative interaction with their opponent groups.

This research aims to contribute to the field of identity politics and peacebuilding by offering novel insights into the role of narrative identity and history in the contexts of protracted, identity-based conflict and the peacebuilding process. Its particular focus is on the Korean peninsula, one of the areas where the legacy of the Cold War is still lingering and history is deeply contested and politicized. In addition, the present study can offer theoretical grounds for rethinking inner conflicts with South Korea so as to lead to conflict transformation and an ultimate peace settlement on the peninsula. The analysis of this dissertation has paid much attention to narrative identity at the collective level, while partly examining relations between the master and individual narratives through the analysis of interviews with right-wing activists in chapter 7.

In the future, multi-level analysis of narrative identity, including the analysis of collective and individual levels as well as the correlation between them, will need to be further researched. A recent shift toward identifying the relationship between master narratives and personal narratives in peace and conflict studies reveals an attempt to link the idea of narrative identity at multiple levels (Hammack 2008). In this approach, master narrative is understood as dominant scripts which can be identified in cultural products and storylines (Hammack 2010, p. 178). Identity as narrative is not static. Rather, narrative identity development is best understood as a process of narrative engagement in which individuals confront multiple discursive options for making meaning of their experience through language. The construction of narrative identity at the individual level is accessed through the telling of a life story, and at the collective level through historical and ethnographic analysis (Hammack 2008), providing a window into not only processes of personal psychological adjustment and development, but also larger processes of social reproduction or resistance. This idea of narrative identity at multiple levels might provide us with insights regarding the way in which South Korea can craft a more inclusive and transcendent narrative for peaceful coexistence with its former enemy, and how individuals can make sense of their lives as Koreans engaging with collective stories of the nation. In the empirical study of Israeli youth, Hammack (2009) suggests that in the absence of the institutional and cultural support for coexistence, young Israelis have difficulty in integrating a transformative ideological perspective in their personal narratives, so tend to reproduce a status quo of nationalist discourse, which is a reason for the perpetuation of Israeli and Palestinian conflicts (p. 70). He thus concludes that peace-building efforts depend on both personal and political transformation that can contribute to ultimate social change and conflict reduction. In order to find a way of resolving conflicts within South Korea as well as between the two Koreas, we can derive

great benefit from the recently growing literature in the social psychology of peace and conflict that recognizes the salience of narrative in the maintenance and reproduction of intractable conflict. In return, the Korean case can contribute to extending generality of the study of the narrative basis of conflict.

List of Figures and Tables

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Statement of Authorship

I confirm that the dissertation presented has been researched and written solely by myself except where explicitly identified to the contrary. I confirm that this work is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Ph.D. in the Department of Political and Social Science at Freie University Berlin and has not been submitted elsewhere in any other form. This paper does not contain any material or content previously published or written by other papers or anyone else.

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