THE MAKING OF THE 2008 KOREAN CANDLELIGHT VIGIL:
A STUDY OF POLITICS, MEDIA, AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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Acknowledgements

I know I am always in you, God.

I’m in your debt, Dad, Mom, and Brother.

I heartily thank you for your support and encouragement, Dr. Giovanna Dell’Orto.

And, with all my heart, I love you, Jiyoon.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to each of grassroots citizens – the smallest but the strongest actor in Korean history.
Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the process of constructing the collective identity of the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the role of media in the identity construction process. This thesis locates the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as the process of the symbolic power struggle among various actors in order to construct the meaning of the protesters and their movement in the public sphere in Korea.

In this thesis, I examine (1) how the process of developing the relationships among social actors – such as the state, the civil society, and the media organizations – has influenced the flow of information in the public sphere in Korea, (2) how this process was connected to the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, (3) how the protesters used the media as a tool of collective action, (4) how the protesters self-identified in their media messages, and (5) how the news media engaged in the production of meanings for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. To understand these questions, a discourse analysis of the newspaper ads funded and designed by the protesters during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was conducted. In-depth interviews with five protesters were also used to describe the process of this newspaper ad campaigns. In addition, I investigated frames in the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the two national newspapers, The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo, which have been viewed as representing the two ideological camps, the liberal-progressives and the conservatives, respectively.

The findings of this thesis show that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was an effort to change power relationships through constructing and transforming the social meanings, which have been deeply embedded in the history, culture, and collective
memory of Korea. The sociopolitical positions of the newspapers provided interpretive frames through which they defined details of the movement. Both The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo connected the collective identity of the protesters with values and norms that their readers have shared and been concerned about: in the liberal-progressive Hankyoreh, the movement was defined as the ideal of liberal progressivism, and in the conservative Dong-A Ilbo, it was portrayed as a threat to conservatism. In addition, during the whole process of the movement, a mutually beneficial relationship existed between the protesters and the liberal-progressive newspapers. This symbiotic relationship could have provided the movement’s source of values and actions and ultimately led to the construction of a unified actor that we can call the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was a massive social movement generated by Korean citizens against the Korean government and its policies. Initially, the candlelight protest was sparked by the agreement between the Korean government and the U.S. government to reopen the Korean market to U.S. beef, which had been banned since 2003 due to a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, more commonly known as Mad Cow Disease) in the United States. In the process of the negotiation, the Korean government agreed to eliminate many of Korea’s existing quarantine procedures against meat containing bone fragments or other parts that carry a risk of infection from BSE. For many Koreans, this concession was viewed as a marker of an unfair deal. They therefore began to conduct small candlelight vigils to show their opposition to the Korean government’s decision. As the government maintained its original plan for the resumption of U.S. beef imports despite the objection from the public, the Koreans protesters’ collective actions continued for more than 100 days and extended into a huge social movement opposing almost every government policy.

The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil obtained critical levels of support across the country and maintained such support in long-enduring rallies in the face of intense opposition. During the entire process of the protest, no political parties or social movement organizations played a leading role to mobilize citizens’ consensus and collective actions; most collective actions were generated from ordinary citizens’ participation (C. Kim, Lee, Kim, & Lee, 2010, p. 268).¹ Why did so many Korean

¹ All non-English sources used here are author translations.
citizens voluntarily join such collective efforts when they did not know whether their presence would do any good? How could they sustain their participation and lead the candlelight protest to achieve critical levels of support from the Korean public in the long enduring protest? How did they choose from among the strategies, tactics, targets, and deliberative styles available to them? To shed light on these questions, this study explores the relationship between the collective identity of the Korean protesters and their collective actions in the process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the roles that the media played in that relationship.

In the context of social movements, it is crucial to understand how the protesters struggle to identify themselves. How successfully a social movement constructs its identities for the public can influence its ability to recruit members and supporters, gain a public hearing, make alliances with other groups, and defuse opposition (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, pp. 291, 294-295). The collective identity of protesters in a social movement is particularly influenced by how they define the situation that they participate in together, and this may be a result of the members’ communication and “laborious adjustment” (Johnston, Larana, & Gusfield, 1994, p. 15). By this process of negotiation and contest over the shared meaning of the situation, protesters can construct the collective “we.” However, this self-identification must also acquire social recognition if it is to provide the basis for identity. In other words, “the ability of a collective actor to distinguish itself from others must be recognized by these others” (Melucci, 1995, p. 47).

The media play a significant role in this process of constructing and maintaining of meanings for social movements. The media spread the messages of a
social movement from participants to the public. Through their news coverage about a social movement, the news media can particularly involve accenting and highlighting a part of issues, events, or beliefs about the social movement in order to make it comprehensible to their audiences, to draw attention, and to fit with favorable cultural, social, and historical values (Gamson, 1992, 1995). They can also reinforce and legitimize certain aspects of their issues or objects by including some information while excluding other information. Furthermore, the media can create vivid images of a social movement and amplify the sense of differences between the social movement and existing opposing institutions. These media representations of a social movement can influence the audiences’ perception of the social movement (Gamson, 1995).

Every moment of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was also filled with a variety of media messages created by all actors in the protest, such as the protesters, the news media, and the movement opponents. The media played a crucial role in the meaning construction for the movement at three levels: First, the media was used as a means by the protesters to achieve their goals in the movement. For instance, the protesters conducted online fundraising for the advertisements in two Korean liberal-progressive newspapers, *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* (*Shinmun* means “newspaper”). As a result, between May and August 2008, eighty-one candlelight

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2 In Korea, those who are liberal-progressives or who favor progress or reform, particularly in political matters, are referred to in a variety of ways, such as progressives, liberals, progressive-liberals, liberal-progressives leftists, reformists, pro-Communists, or pro-North Koreans. These terms are used in accordance with the bias of the commentators (Steinberg & Shin, 2006, p. 530). This study will use the term “liberal-progressives” because the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil self-identified as liberal-progressives. As Castells (2004) writes, social movements “must be understood in their own terms: namely, *they are what they say they are*” (p. 73).
protest ads were put in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*. All of the ads were sponsored and designed by diverse groups of Korean citizens, such as the Internet users, bloggers, college students, clergy, housewives, laborers, and overseas Koreans. Secondly, as *agents*, Korean news media engaged in the construction of meaning for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. While the government and the protesters struggled to exercise political influence over the public, major Korean newspapers split into opposing sides. It was clearly reflected in the protesters’ preference for certain newspapers: the protesters supported the two liberal-progressive newspapers, *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, and also condemned the three major conservative newspapers, the *Chosun Ilbo* (*Ilbo* means “daily”), the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. Third, as a by-product of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, media activism – which refers to grassroots efforts to influence media messages, practices, institutions and contexts in a direction that promotes democratic values, such as equal participation in meaning construction (Carroll & Hackett, 2006, p. 84) – became one of the main *purposes* of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. All of the three media’s roles in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil were connected and interacted in the process of constructing meanings for the movement.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the process of constructing the collective identity of the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the role of media in the identity construction process. Drawing on Manuel Castells’s (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009) theory of communication power and Jürgen Habermas’s (1984, 1989, 1996, 2006) concept of the public sphere as a theoretical framework, this study will conceptualize the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as the process of the symbolic power
struggle among various actors in order to construct the meaning of the protesters and their movement in the public sphere in Korea. This study will then investigate (1) how the process of developing the relationships among social actors – such as the state, the civil society, and the media companies – has influenced the flow of information in the public sphere in Korea, (2) how this process was connected to the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, (3) how the protesters used the media as their means of influence and persuasion, (4) how the protesters identified themselves as a collective actor in their media messages, and (5) how the news media engaged in the production of meanings for the protesters and their movement. Based on this analysis, this study will argue that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was an effort to transform power relationships through constructing and altering the social meanings, which have been deeply embedded in the history, culture, and collective memory of Korea. Diverse communicative actions performed by both the protesters and the news media played a pivotal role not only in challenging these pre-existing meanings, but also in creating and introducing alternative meanings. These communicative actions could have ultimately led to the construction of a unified actor that we can call the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 2 discusses the importance of collective identity in the process of social movements based on Castells’s (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009) theory of communication power and Habermas’s (1984, 1989, 1996, 2006) concept of the public sphere. The primary focus is to explain the process of the construction of collective identity in the public sphere where diverse forms of communication interact with each other. This study also emphasizes on the power struggle between social movements and other social actors, including political elites and journalists, over the flow of information in the public sphere and the struggle’s impact on the construction of collective identity.

Why Does Identity Matter in Social Movements?

Social movements are a type of group actions which focus on specific political or social issues. Social movements can be politically conservative or revolutionary depending on the sense of reinforcing directions of hierarchy and exclusion (Carroll & Hackett, 2006). Regardless of their social directions, social movements are “all meaningful signs of new social conflicts, and embryos of social resistance and, in some cases, social change” (Castells, 2004, p. 74).

Social movements are the process of the struggle to change power relationships. According to Castells (2009), power is “the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favor the empowered actor’s will, interests, and values” (p. 10). Power relationships are embedded in the institution of society. This institution results from “the conflicts and
compromises between social actors, who enact the constitution of society according to their values and interests” (p. 300). Particularly, in today’s world, *symbolic power* – the capacity to shape or transform people’s minds – is the most important source of power (Castells, 2004, 2007, 2009). Symbolic power is formed, maintained, and exercised by the construction of meanings on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action (Castells, 2009, pp. 10-16). How people *think* and *feel* about the structured patterns of behavior or of relations that are accepted as a fundamental part of their society *defines* “whose power can be exercised and how it can be exercised” (pp. 416-417). In other words, symbolic power determines “the fate of norms and values on which societies are constructed” (Castells, 2007, p. 238). In any power relationship, there is also a possibility of resistance from those who think in ways that are contrary to the values and norms institutionalized in a society, as guided by their abilities to communicate with each other and with their environment (Castells, 2009, p. 300).

Social movements are one of the crucial forms of such resistance. Collective actions from social movements therefore aim to exercise symbolic power through transforming existing values and norms and introducing alternative cultural codes into the society.

In order to achieve the transformation of power structure, social movements particularly need to construct *collective identities* of their participants that redefine their position in society. Collective identity is an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution (Melucci, 1995, p. 44; Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 285). It is also a perception of a shared status or relation among collective actors, such as the participants of a social movement. What makes a wide variety of participants – from different origins and with different goals –
part of a social movement is “their shared allegiance to a set of beliefs, practices, and ways of identifying oneself that constitute [their] collective identity” (Whittier, 1995, pp. 23-24). Collective identity provides the basis of emphasis and contradiction in both self-representation and collective action of the participants. Collective identity of the participants is therefore “people’s sources of meaning and experience” about the movement and distinguishes the participants from outsiders of the movement (Castells, 2004, p. 6). It is difficult to dispute the fact that, from a sociological perspective, all identities are constructed. Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition that is socially (re)constructed (Hunt, Benford, & Snow, 1994, p. 190). What the participants of social movements mean is partly “a function of the vocabularies, stories, and images available” in their society (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 289).

Collective identity influences struggles within society. Collective identity affects “people’s justice concerns and their willingness to engage in social protest as well as other collective activities that aim at social change” (Simon & Klandermans, 2001, p. 320). Melucci (1995) particularly calls collective identity the process of constructing an action system; collective identity as a process involves cognitive definitions in terms of the ends, means, and environment of collective actions:

These different elements or axes of collective action are defined within a language that is shared by a portion or the whole of a society or that is specific to the group; they are incorporated in a given set of rituals, practices, cultural artifacts; they are framed in different ways but they always allow some kind of calculation between ends and means, investments and rewards. (p. 44)

In the process of a social movement, collective identity enables the participants to act as a collective actor “to recognize the effects of its actions and to attribute these effects to
itself” (Melucci, 1995, p. 46). In short, collective identity defines the ability for the movement’s independent actions.

**The Public Sphere as the Communication Network for Constructing Identity**

The construction of collective identity matters in the process of social movements. Then, the question is: How can the participants of social movements construct collective identities? This study answers that the participants build their identities through the interaction among various forms of communication – including interpersonal communication, mass communication, and mass self-communication (defined below) – in the public sphere.

**The Public Sphere**

Habermas (2006) defines the public sphere as “an intermediary system of communication between formally organized and informal face-to-face deliberations in arenas at both the top and the bottom of the political system” (p. 415). The concept of the public sphere cannot be divided from two key political dimensions of modern societies: civil society and the state. Conceptually, the public sphere lies somewhere between the state and civil society (Castells, 2008, p. 78; J. Kim & Kim, 2008, p. 63). Through the public sphere, civil society enables feedback on the political institutions and consequently influences the decisions of the state. On the other hand, the political institutions set “the constitutional rules” by which the communication activities in the public sphere “[are] kept orderly and organizationally productive” (Castells, 2008, p.
The productive interaction between the state and civil society through the public sphere guarantees that “the balance between stability and social change is maintained in the conduct of public affairs” (Castells, 2008, p. 79).

The public sphere is “a network for communicating information and points of view” rather than a single physical space (Habermas, 1996, p. 360). Although physical space, such as public spaces in cities and universities, has contributed to developing the basis of the public sphere, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition of the existence of the public sphere. The public sphere is neither a political institution nor a civic organization. Rather, it is the space where each person interacts “intersubjectively and cooperatively with others to understand one another” and produces collective reasons (J. Kim & Kim, 2008, p. 55). The public sphere is also the “cultural/informational repository of the ideas and projects that feed public debate” (Castells, 2008, p. 79).

**The Construction of Collective Identity through Communicative Action**

Many communication scholars contend that people produce public reasons and achieve mutual understanding of the self and others through direct personal communication triggered by the mass media (e.g., Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002; Delli Carpini & Williams, 1994; J. Kim & Kim, 2008; J. Kim, Wyatt, & Katz, 1999; Wyatt, Katz, & Kim, 2000). They particularly emphasize the role of casual, informal, and spontaneous conversations – such as chatting, conversing, and arguing – in the political process.

Citizens largely rely on the mass media for much their political information, and this information is a major source of everyday political talk among the citizens.
(Southwell & Yzer, 2007). The media messages trigger those who are exposed to them to transmit those messages to those who were not exposed or attentive to the messages. The media messages also stimulate political talks among family members, friends, and other members of the community through which social norms and expectations concerning the media messages are clarified (J. Kim, et al., 1999; Southwell & Yzer, 2007; Wyatt, et al., 2000). Delli Carpini and Williams (1994) argue that the citizens play an independent role in constructing political meanings through ongoing conversations with other people, which are provoked by the television (pp. 802-804).

Kim and Kim (2008) also maintain that the tight association between mass media and conversations enables the citizens to construct “the concept of self and others, the sense of community, and public reason” (p. 51). Through this interaction between mass communication and interpersonal communication in the public sphere, citizens connect the meaning of personal experiences to the meaning of the political world and construct a sense of community (J. Kim & Kim, 2008). In the public sphere, citizens produce public opinion needed to “legitimate authority in any functioning democracy” (Rutherford, 2000, p. 18).

According to Habermas’s (1984) theory of communicative action, conversation voluntarily carried out by the citizens is the vital form of communicative action. Habermas (1984) conceptualizes communicative action as follows:

[The] concept of communicative action refers to the interaction of at least two subjects capable of speech and action who establish interpersonal relations (whether by verbal or by extra-verbal means). The actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement. The central concept of interpretation refers in the first instance to
negotiating definitions of the situation which admit of consensus. As we shall see, language is given a prominent place in this model. (p. 86)

Communicative action does not equate action with communication. Communicative action indicates a type of interaction that is coordinated through a means of communication, such as language and speech, and does not coincide with the means. For example, language is “a medium of communication that serves understanding, whereas actors, in coming to an understanding with one another so as to coordinate their actions, pursue their particular aims” (Habermas, 1984, p. 101). Conversation, from this perspective of communicative action, is “more than a simple back-and-forthness of messages in interaction; it points to a particular process and quality of communication in which the participants ‘meet,’ which allows for changing and being changed” (R. Anderson & Cissna, 1994, p. 10).

In the context of social movements, the participants produce collective identities through communicative action, such as conversation, during the process of their movement. Each participant repeatedly engages in communicative action with other participants and consequently contributes to the formation of collective identities by “rendering common and laboriously adjusting” multiple and conflicting requirements (Melucci, 1995, p. 44). In particular, Berezin (2001) considers social movements as a form of the public political rituals. Social movements, like any other religious or political ritual, serve as arenas “where ritual actors, both participants and observers, blur the boundary between self and other” (p. 84). The repeated and shared experience can produce a feeling of solidarity, build a sense of community that envelops the self, and derive meanings from “the communities of similar selves” (p. 84).
Collective identities are based on these meanings, such as the meanings of movement practices and a boundary that distinguishes the participants from others (Collins, 2001).

In addition, collective identities can be constructed in not only the protest sites, but also “everywhere” the participants engage in communicative action. People talk about politics everywhere, including home, work, and restaurants and bars (J. Kim & Kim, 2008). According to a U.S. nationwide survey conducted by Wyatt, Katz, and Kim (2000), people talk about political issues most frequently at home and at work, then in civic organizations, restaurants and bars, shopping malls, and elsewhere. Many political communication studies have also reported that people talk more frequently about public issues than personal issues in their everyday talk (e.g., J. Kim, et al., 1999; VanLear, 1987; Wyatt, et al., 2000). Through conversation with outsiders of their movement, the participants have an opportunity to express their opinions about their movement and to organize their opinions “in more coherent ways – consistent with what they say and what they now believe” (J. Kim & Kim, 2008, p. 61). On the other hand, the conversation with the outsiders of a social movement also causes some degree of risk of “being pressured” to transform one’s preferences and thus change the nature of one’s identity (Conover, et al., 2002, p. 56). People often find political discussion risky because of “its public and contested nature – the very qualities that make it so desirable to democratic theorists” (p. 57). Through negotiation and renegotiation, the participants can succeed in recognizing their similarities and differences with others, achieving mutual understandings, and constructing “an acceptable and lasting unity” (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant, 2005; Melucci, 1995).
The Contest over the Meaning of Collective Identity in the Media System

Although the participants of social movements can construct a new collective identity, this self-identification must also acquire recognition from society. In other words, the capability of the participants to distinguish themselves from others must be acknowledged by these others (Melucci, 1995, p. 47). In the public sphere, the media system functions as the major channel of getting such social recognition for social movements (Castells, 2007, p. 240; Thompson, 2000). The media create vivid images of social movements, and the media representations of the movements influence the citizens’ perception of the movements; the citizens construct their vision of reality regarding the movements by an interaction between their existing knowledge stored in their memory and the symbolic meanings presented by the media (Gamson, 1995; Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992). In order to reach a mature stage, therefore, social movements need to create and organize structure for communicating their messages to the public through the media.

Whether social movements successfully construct the identity for the participants vis-à-vis the larger public, is directly connected to their capacity to shape or transform the public’s minds – that is, symbolic power – in the media system. However, the media system is “a system of power,” the place where a wide variety of social actors compete for “voice and power” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 83). The space of the media is filled with diverse forms of messages, including news, commentaries, talks, and images, which contain an informative, persuasive, educational, or entertaining content. These media messages originally come from diverse social actors who attempt to use the media as their means of influence and persuasion (Castells, 2004; Thompson, 2000).
Castells (2004) argues that power in the information age is not just concentrated in the political and economic systems but lies in the flow of information in the media system:

Politics has been, by and large, enclosed in the space of the media. The media become more powerful than ever, technologically, financially, and politically. Their global reach and networking allow them to escape from strict political controls. Their capacity for investigative reporting and their relative autonomy vis-à-vis political power make them the main source of information and opinion for society at large. Parties and candidates must act in and through the media to reach society. Not that the media are the Fourth Power: they are, instead, the ground for power struggles. (p. 396)

Of relevance to the analysis of the media politics is an understanding of how news narratives are created in the media and how they are selected and interpreted by social actors (Castells, 2009, p. 155). In order to achieve the support of citizens who can be the “consumers in the political market,” those actors – such as the government administration, political parties, candidates, businesses, experts, social groups and institutions, or the participants of social movements – attempt to exercise influence over the media system and over each other (Castells, 2007, p. 240). Their activities have an impact on both the volume and character of news messages (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

It is important to note that the media do not just reflect the social actors’ strategic communication. Journalists – such as reporters, columnists, producers, editors, and publishers – are also active agents in constructing meanings in the public sphere and have an independent impact on other social actors (Castells, 2007; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Journalists can highlight certain aspects of an issue while excluding
others, depending on the way the events or issues match their news organizations’ routines and/or their own values.

**Framing**

These meaning constructions of social actors and journalists can be explained by the concept of *framing* (Entman, 1993, 2003; Gamson, 1992; Scheufele, 1999; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Framing is the process of selecting and emphasizing some aspects of events or issues, and building connections among them in order to promote a certain interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution (Entman, 1993, 2003, 2004). Frames, as defined by Entman (1993), perform two or more of the following functions: define effects or conditions as problematic, identify causes, convey a moral judgment, or endorse remedies or improvements. Based on these functions, framing is the vital process through which journalists and other social actors exert influence over each other and over the public. In addition, the ability of framing to call attention to certain aspects of an issue causes the audience to miss other aspects of the issue. The absence of possible aspects of the issue can also affect how the audience comes to understand the issue (Entman, 1993, p. 54). “What does not exist in the media,” as Castells (2007) argues, “does not exist in the public mind, even if it could have a fragmented presence in individual minds” (p. 241).

The words and images that construct the frame can be distinctly recognized in the news reports “by their capacity to stimulate support of or opposition to the sides in a political conflict” (Entman, 2003, p. 417). In particular, those frames that use more culturally resonant terms have the greatest possibility for political and cultural influence (Benford & Snow, 2000). These frames employ words and images highly noticeable
and memorable in the culture. In other words, those frames that are able to link the message to the pre-existing knowledge in the mind become “activators of conduct” (Castells, 2009, p. 158). The greater the resonance, “the more likely the framing is to evoke similar thoughts and feelings in large portions of the audience” (Entman, 2003, p. 417). Using the narratives of the past to frame more current issues is one of the significant examples of cultural resonance. Social actors’ depictions of the past attempt to make the past relevant to the present by using a past event as a tool to interpret and predict the outcome of a current situation (Edy, 1999, p. 77). In particular, journalists tend to use the past as a historical context of a story, a part of the environment that cause current circumstances (Edy, 2006, p. 94). Zelizer (1992) demonstrates that many journalists use past events to explain the present in ways that establish their roles as “authoritative storytellers” about public events. This authority acts as “a source of codified knowledge, guiding individuals in appropriate standards of action” (p. 2).

This does not mean that most journalists attempt to concoct a story or misrepresent a fact. Rather, framing, particularly for journalists, is “a necessary tool to reduce the complexity of an issue, given the constraints of their respective media related to news holes and airtime” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 12). Scheufele (1999) identifies extrinsic and intrinsic factors in the process that influence the creation or changes of frames applied by journalists. First, he explains that journalists actively and consciously choose to include and omit certain frames from a broad spectrum of available options based on their ideology, attitudes, and professional norm. For instance, in some countries, because of work routines of journalists to prefer moderate
views and to avoid radical ideas, protesters’ attempts to transmit their messages to the
public are often discouraged (Kielbowicz & Scherer, 1986).

Secondly, the political orientation of each media institution can influence the
selection of frames in its news coverage. As Hallin and Mancini (2004) put it:

No serious media analyst would argue that journalism anywhere in the world is
literally neutral. A tremendous body of research has been devoted to debunking that
notion, showing that even where journalists may be sincerely committed to a
professional ideology of “objectivity,” news incorporates political values, which arise
from a range of influences, from routines of information gathering to recruitment
patterns of journalists and shared ideological assumptions of the wider society. (p. 26)

The media in certain countries have clearly distinct political orientations, while the
media in other countries do not. This distinction can be explained the concept of
political parallelism, “the degree and nature of the links between the media and political
parties or, more broadly, the extent to which the media system reflects the major
political divisions in society” (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 21). Media frames for a
particular event can be one of the indicators that can be used to measure how strongly
political parallelism is present in a media system.

The third factor is external sources of influence. Frames proposed by social
actors, such as political elites, are adopted by journalists and incorporated in the news
coverage of an issue or event. Social movements also attempt to influence the amount
and character of media coverage to increase public awareness and mobilize support and
resources (Gamson, 1995; Gamson, et al., 1992; Hackett & Carroll, 2004). Social
movements strategically attempt to convey their narratives and frames in the space of
the media because the media provide a potentially shared public discourse to the
audience. If framing strategies are successful, the media can help the public to recognize the identity of the participants and definition of social movements.

However, the strategies used by social movements to gain media attention often fail because there are asymmetrical power relationships among social movements and other social actors in the public sphere. Although the process of frame building can be seen as part of a process of democratic competition in the public sphere, political institutions can get media attention for their opinions far more easily than the participants of the social movement (Entman, 2003; Oliver & Maney, 2000). The government administration and political parties, for instance, typically play a prominent role as a source of information and “primary definers” of news, with huge influence on agenda and frames of the movement issues (Entman, 2003, p. 420; Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 44). In addition, the relationship between the participants of social movements and journalists is not equal. This relationship describes a situation whereby social movements “greatly depend on the media to help them mobilize, and to validate their standing, while news organizations are less dependent on movements for the stories they feature” (Hackett & Carroll, 2004, p. 1). The position of the news media at the center of the public sphere allows the media to have “a spectrum of options for ‘making news,’ while movements have few options beyond the mass media for getting their message to the public” (Carroll & Ratner, 1999, p. 3). The news media’s coverage of social movements consequently reflects, integrates, and constructs the power struggle among the social movements and various social actors, including journalists. The sources of influence on the news coverage of social movements have to be understood
in terms of the conflicts and compromises between those social actors (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 625).

The Impact and Limits of Mass Self-Communication on Social Movements

Many communication scholars pay great attention to the role of information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly social media, in the process of social movements (e.g., Castells, 2004, 2008, 2009; Couldry & Curran, 2003; Downing, 2001; Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012; Lim, 2012; Nisbet, Stoycheff, & Pearce, 2012; Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2012; Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012; Youmans & York, 2012). The diffusion of the Internet, wireless communication, and social media has provoked “the development of horizontal networks of interactive communication that connect [citizens] in chosen time” (Castells, 2009, p. 65). This new form of communication includes some aspects of mass communication, such as the capability to communicate with the “mass public,” as in the posting of a video on YouTube. At the same time, it also has characteristics of interpersonal communication. For example, social network sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are used as a means of social interaction among the users. By allowing for “multiple channels for interpersonal feedback, peer acceptance, and reinforcement of group norms,” these sites facilitate the construction of personal and collective identities (Valenzuela, et al., 2012, p. 302). In this sense, Castells (2009) calls this historically new form of communication *mass self-communication* (p. 55).

Mass self-communication has become indispensable for contemporary social movements. The participants of social movements use their ability of mass self-
communication networking for conducting their projects, protecting their rights, constructing a sense of community, and asserting their values (Couldry & Curran, 2003; Downing, 2001). In the process of social movements, the participants produce their own systems of mass self-communication, as they appropriate diverse forms of ICTs – including Short Message Service (SMS), blogs, online communities, social network sites (SNS), podcasts, and wikis (Shirky, 2008). The participants can determine both the content and destination of their messages, and they become simultaneously producers and audiences of multidirectional flows of messages. These systems help strengthen ties among the participants, potentially creating trust and constructing a sense of community, and then these “virtual ties” can lead to offline mobilization (Harlow, 2011; Nisbet, et al., 2012; Valenzuela, et al., 2012).

Through mass self-communication, social movements attempt to establish a degree of their symbolic power over other social actors, such as political elites, in the public sphere. Mass self-communication, unlike any other form of communication, allows the participants of social movements to freely create their own stories and frames of their movements without conflict or compromise with other social actors. Furthermore, mass self-communication promotes “access to a large number of contacts, thereby enabling social movements to reach critical mass” (Valenzuela, et al., 2012, p. 302). The systems of mass self-communication can consequently function as an effective channel for gaining social recognition for social movements.

The emergence of mass self-communication, however, does not always have democratic outcomes. Some argue that the ICTs can generate threats to democracy through the ways in which political and economic elites abuse the technologies to
manipulate citizens and legitimize their control (Morozov, 2011; Pearce & Kendzior, 2012). For example, Pearce and Kendzior (2012) examine how digital media were used by the authoritarian government in Azerbaijan; the authoritarian government has successfully dissuaded frequent Internet users from participating in political activism and average Internet users from using social networking sites for political purposes. The possibility of social and political impact of the ICTs is therefore contingent upon how the technologies are being applied by the users.

The movements’ relations with other components of the public sphere, such as mass media system, can also influence the contours and effects of the systems of mass-communication. The systems of mass self-communication alone, without other components of the public sphere, do not always guarantee success in shaping or transforming people’s minds. Although ICTs can foster the development of social spaces for the participants of social movements in the public sphere, the participants have to develop good connections to the mass media. Löblich and Wendelin (2012), interviewing a group of leading ICT policy activists in Germany, write:

All ICT policy activists emphasized that only by getting mass media coverage and by trying to put public pressure on policy-makers does collective action have the chance to influence political processes. Though discussions which only remain in the ‘echo chambers’ and ‘information cocoons’ of the Internet are very useful for the constitution and internal consolidation of the movement, they cause little effect regarding the external achievement of public visibility. Not only in the view of one author of the most popular ICT policy blog, the biggest success so far is having achieved this goal over the last few years. But this success and the consequent political impact was only possible by mass media coverage. (p. 12)
The diverse forms of communication – including interpersonal communication, mass communication, and mass-self communication – are not mutually exclusive but are an intertwined and indivisible process. They connect to each other to form a communication network, namely, the public sphere.

How social movements shape the meaning of the participants and maintain it can only be understood in the process of symbolic power struggles over the flow of information in the public sphere. The struggles between social actors and a social movement can challenge the identity of the movement. As it fights through the struggle in the public sphere, however, the movement can establish the boundaries of the collective actor with respect to its environment and social relations. This process can supply the movement’s source of interests, values, and actions and ultimately lead to the construction and maintenance of “a unified empirical actor that we can call a social movement” (Melucci, 1995, p. 49). In addition, such a process needs continuous efforts because in order to act, the movement’s distinction from other social actors is continually recognized by them, even if it takes “the form of a denial, a challenge, or an opposition” (p. 48). The movement’s particularities are defined within a set of language and image in the diverse forms of communication. The public sphere is therefore the place where collective identities of social movements are identifiable and diffused.
Research Questions and Methods

This study applies this theoretical framework to explore the case of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The goal of this study is to understand the process of constructing the collective identity of the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the role of media in the identity construction process. More specifically, this study investigates the following questions:

- **Research Question 1:** How did the Korean public sphere operate before and during the process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?
  - How did the Korean media system develop between the 1960s and 2008?
  - How did the relationships among the main actors in the Korean public sphere – such as the state, the civil society, and the media – develop and change between the 1960s and 2008?
  - How did the main actors in the Korean public sphere influence the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?

To address these questions, Chapter 3 traces the history of developing the Korean media system and the roles of diverse social actors – such as the governments, media companies, and citizens – in the process through a new analysis of secondary sources.

- **Research Question 2:** How did the Korean protesters identify various movement actors during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?
  - How did the protesters employ the media as a means of collective actions?
  - How did the protesters self-identify in their media messages, especially in the candlelight vigil ads in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?
- How did the protesters identify the movement opponents – such as President Lee, the government, and the mainstream conservative newspapers – in their media messages during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?

To understand these research questions, Chapter 4 focuses on the newspaper ad campaigns during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Between May and July 2008, the protesters conducted online fundraising campaigns for the ads in the two liberal-progressive newspapers, The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun. As a result, a total of eighty-one candlelight vigil ads were put in The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun.

Each candlelight vigil ad was analyzed according to its content and the context surrounding that content using the method of discourse analysis. Frames can be significant units of analysis within a discourse analysis (Entman, 1993, 2003, 2007; Gamson, 1995; Gamson, et al., 1992; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Particularly, discourse analysis has been employed to explore implicit media messages that a framing analysis may miss, focusing on sociocultural contexts as essential to exploring how media messages are both created and interpreted (Dell'Orto, 2008; N. Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 1983).

The author reviewed every page of The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun between May 1 and July 31 in 2008 to identify candlelight vigil ads. Both newspapers provide high-resolution scanned images of newspaper pages in Portable Document Format (PDF) on their websites, and this study used these PDFs to find the
candlelight vigil ads.\textsuperscript{3} The units of measurement included all text and images of the
candlelight vigil ads funded and designed by the participants of the 2008 Korean
Candlelight Vigil. The classified ads that were sponsored by individuals were excluded
because such classified ads were too private to consider as the part of participants’
collective actions.

To describe the process of the newspaper ad campaigns, in-depth interviews
were also used. These in-depth interviews were conducted between June and July 2011.
The author initiated contact with Yoo Si-Min, a former colleague of the author at a
private university in Korea, to ask if he would help recruit participants. In 2008, Yoo Si-
Min ran an online campaign to encourage his colleagues, including the author, to
participate in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Based upon the interview with Yoo
Si-Min, this study used snowball sampling. In total, the author interviewed five
protesters: Yoo Si-Min, who actively participated in the candlelight vigil and provided
funds for the newspaper ad campaigns; Park Geun-Hong, who has been an active
member of an online community about baseball, MLBpark
(http://mlbpark.donga.com) and led the newspaper ad campaign for MLBpark during
the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil; Yeom Seung-Sik, a current The Hankyoreh
journalist; Kim Mi-Hwa, who led the newspaper ad campaign for an online book club,
Aladin (http://www.aladin.co.kr); and Shin Dae-Chul, a graduate student and an activist
of Christian Association for Interactive Researches on Scripts (CARIOS, an association
for the study of humanities and social science).

\textsuperscript{3} To download high-resolution scanned images of The Hankyoreh pages, go to the
following URL: http://pdf.hani.co.kr/newspdf/pagePdfList.ez
For Kyunghyang Shinmun pages, go to the following URL: http://epaper.khan.co.kr
• Research Question 3: What were the roles of the news media in the identity construction process during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil?
  - What were the media frames in the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the liberal-progressive newspaper, *The Hankyoreh*?
  - What were the media frames in the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the conservative newspaper, the *Dong-A Ilbo*?
  - How did the two newspapers differently define the protesters and their movement through the media frames?
  - What were the similarities and differences between the protesters’ self-identification in the candlelight vigil ads and the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo*?

Chapter 5 examines media frames in the news coverage about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to understand the roles of the news media in the identity construction process. This study particularly focuses on two national print sources, *The Hankyoreh* among the liberal-progressive newspapers and the *Dong-A Ilbo* among the conservative newspapers. *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* have been viewed as representing the two ideological camps in Korea. There has also been a clear divide between the readers of both newspapers due to political ideology (Yeo, 2010, pp. 2, 62-85).

This study first employed quantitative content analysis to identify media frames of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. This study then analyzed both manifest and latent meanings of frames in media coverage about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The author assembled news coverage about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil between May and July 2008 via a digital media archive provided by the Korea Press Foundation (www.kinds.or.kr). For each
newspaper, the following keywords were used to yield the most comprehensive sample: “candlelight vigil,” “candlelight protest,” “the resumption of the U.S. beef imports,” and “Mad Cow Disease.” News summaries, poems, and reviews of books were excluded. Duplicate articles were also excluded. All articles (i.e., news reports, features, columns, and editorials) included were screened to verify that they were fit for inclusion, thus yielding a sample of 453 articles, 318 from The Hankyoreh and 135 from the Dong-A Ilbo.

An emergent coding procedure was followed with two coders reading approximately thirty percent of all news articles covering the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo. The coders were trained by the author to code the sample. Each coder, including the author, read and highlighted words or phrases that were frequently used within the news articles. After the author and coders compared observations and discussed their similarities and differences, coding categories were created. The author then produced an instrument for use in coding all of the news articles about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The news articles were permitted to contain more than one frame. The coders then coded the terms to describe the protesters and the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and frames in each news article.

Reliability was calculated using Cohen’s kappa. Intercoder reliability was assessed for each category, and intercoder reliability coefficient was .88. The Cohen’s kappa coefficient for each variable ranged between .81 and 1.00, which indicated all reliability coefficients were above the rule of thumb size .75 (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 175).
In Chapter 6, this study provides a concluding discussion of the findings by connecting them to the theoretical framework. Chapter 6 also offers limitations and suggestions for future research.

In the following chapter, this study outlines the characteristics of the public sphere in Korea that this study is based on. Chapter 3 particularly focuses on how the process of developing the relationships among social actors – such as the state, the civil society, and the media companies – has influenced the flow of information in the public sphere in Korea and how this process was connected to the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.
CHAPTER 3: THE STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN KOREA

The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was a massive social movement held by Korean citizens against the conservative Lee Myung-Bak government and its policies. The protesters were mostly young liberal-progressives in their twenties and thirties (K. Cho, 2009). In Korea, liberal-progressives are generally described as follows: democratic, highly nationalistic, humanitarian, advocating “a mixed economy or democratically planned economic model that increases welfare, encourages fair participation of all people in production processes, and ensures economic freedom” (Steinberg & Shin, 2006). They also prefer an independent foreign policy and show opposition to the U.S. involvement in the politics of the Korean peninsula (H. Chae & Kim, 2008).

During more than six decades after the liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, Korean liberal-progressives have been marginalized by mainstream politics. Democratization in Korea has been a “conservative process” that failed to include the interests of the progressive or left-wing movements and of everyday citizens into mainstream politics (J. J. Choi, 2005). The state and conservative parties have continuously used the anti-communism or anti-Americanism rhetoric as a justification for their oppression against civil society (K. Cho, 1997; Kraft, 2008). Through a series of historical events – such as Japanese colonization, national liberation, the U.S. military occupation, the foundation of the Republic of Korea, the division of the Korean peninsula, the Korean War and its resultant devastation, a period of economic
development, three decades of military dictatorship, and the transition to democracy—and the ways that the state has dealt with these events, those Koreans born in the 1930s and 1940s have deeply internalized anti-communism and pro-Americanism and equated these ideologies with national security and public safety (N. Lee, 2007, pp. 70-108).

Many efforts to introduce reform and progressive ideologies into the political process in Korea therefore have been viewed as left-wing and pro-communist and thus subversive (Ha, 2008; N. Lee, 2007). The Korean conservatives have argued that it is wrong to criticize the United States. In their opinion, without the longstanding U.S-South Korea alliance, Korea would have never experienced rapid economic growth on its own (Doucette, 2012). These meanings and values have become the basis of Korean conservatism and prevailed in Korean society.

In this process, the mainstream media have colluded with the conservative forces, and this collusive relationship has helped maintain the conservative dominance in the public sphere in Korea. In particular, the conservative forces have used the news media for solving political problems and justifying their suppression of the opposing groups (Chang, 2005; M. J. Park, Kim, & Sohn, 2000). The conservative forces have still reduced the autonomy of the news media vis-à-vis the state and thus provoked their lack of credibility. This historical context can be traced to political and economic structures of the media system, occupational codes and organizational routines of daily journalism, and literary forms that journalists work with (S.-S. Kim, 2002).

The conservative dominance in the news media has hampered the legitimacy of the public sphere and ultimately continued to invite civil society to seek alternative forms of expression and communication. Korean citizens have continuously challenged the
conservative dominant public sphere through developing alternative media system. Particularly, since the Internet emerged as a new platform for social interaction, Korean liberal-progressives have appropriated the Internet to participate in civic actions. This progressive appropriation of the Internet has contributed to the rise and changing characteristics of collective civic action in Korea. The case of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil should be also explained within the broader context of the liberal-progressives’ struggles to transform political power structure in Korean society.

Chapter 3 explores how the process of developing the relationships among the state, civil society, and media system has influenced the flow of information in the public sphere in Korea. This chapter focuses on (1) how the mainstream news companies have colluded with the conservative and business imperatives; (2) how the conservative-dominated media system has helped to extend and rationalize the conservative forces’ domination over the liberal-progressives; (3) how the liberal-progressives have struggled to foster diversity in media discourse through developing alternative media systems; (4) how the liberal-progressives have appropriated the Internet to participate in political actions; and (5) how these processes have been connected to the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

The Birth of Conservatism in the Korean Media System

The Two Military Regimes between 1961 and 1988 and their Control on the Media

In Korea, there is a long-lasting collusive relationship among the state, capital, and media system. Many scholars have made the critique that this collusive relationship
has continued to severely hamper democratic consolidation in Korea (e.g., Chang, 2005; M. J. Park, et al., 2000). These close relationships were developed and reinforced under the rule of two military authoritarian regimes – the Park regime (1961 - 1979) and the Chun regime (1980 – 1988). Ironically, many media companies achieved more social and political power due to media control by this authoritarian political power (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 120).

Under the rule of two military authoritarian regimes between 1961 and 1988, the state wielded enormous power over civil society, and the people barely enjoyed their political rights and civil liberties. The news media were controlled and supervised by the government. The violation of the freedom of press by the military regimes was fundamental due to “the nonexistence of a system of checks and balances in the Korean political system” (Yang, 2005, p. 22). In particular, the news media was viewed as a tool for social integration and control of the public and for achieving rapid modernization.

During his eighteen-year rule (1961-1979), Park Chung-Hee, who came to power through a coup d’état, repressed the news organizations in broad and fundamental ways through the change in the media system. The government imposed severe media restrictions through the Declaration of the State of National Emergency, and Martial Law Decree, which banned “all indoor and outdoor assemblies and demonstrations for the purpose of political activities and speeches, publications, press and broadcasts” (Youm, 1996, p. 55). In addition, the regime forced journalists who were critical of the dictator Park to resign. As a result, in 1975, 134 reporters were fired from the Dong-A Ilbo, and 33 reporters were fired from the Chosun Ilbo (M. J. Park, et
al., 2000, p. 100). Through removing such “obstacles,” the state could weaken the critical functions of the press and control it more effectively.

Park’s dictatorship ended with his death by assassination in 1979. At that time, Korean people believed that the dictator’s death would bring about the recovery of democracy (Yoon, 2010, p. 19). However, Park’s protégés in the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army launched another coup d’état and replaced the Park’s regime with one of their own. In 1980, the new military regime amended the Constitution of the Republic of Korea in order to justify its authority, and as planned, a ROK Army general, Chun Doo-Hwan, became the President of South Korea. Chun and his followers were associated with massive human rights violations, including interrogation, torture, execution, or exile (Yoon, 2010).

Chun Doo-Hwan also severely restricted the press. In July and August 1980, the Chun’s government conducted an unprecedented “Purification Campaign” against the press, “focusing a sweeping structural reorganization of the Korean news media” (Yang, 2005, p. 21). Under the purification campaign, 172 periodicals were banned and approximately 870 journalists were dismissed from their positions (J. C. Lee, 2008). In addition, in November 1980, the Chun regime forcefully merged the newspaper and broadcasting companies, and consequently, only one newspaper organization was licensed to publish a newspaper for each province, except in the Seoul area (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 113). In addition, six major private news agencies were merged into the Yonhap News Agency. Along with this structural reorganization of the mass media, the Chun regime enacted The Basic Press Act of 1980, which was the legal symbol of Chun
regime’s media control. The law justified the government’s censorship and control over newspapers, periodicals, and broadcast media (Youm, 1996).

While the press was used as a tool to justify the governments’ authoritarian rules, the news media gained political and economic power under the protection of the state. In particular, the newspapers played a significant role in the construction of conservative ideology in Korean society. During these regimes, there was no true competition among distinctive political viewpoints (H. Chae & Kim, 2008, p. 78). Only support for government policies was considered legitimate, and thus it monopolized Korean politics. For example, the military regimes saw “the health and security of the nation predicated on cultivating a close partnership with the United States and vigilance against the ever-menacing threat from [North Korea]” (H. Chae & Kim, 2008, p. 77).

Any efforts to introduce ideological elements into the political process that were viewed as left-wing were suppressed by the state “that feared North Korean infiltration and influence, as well as their own loss of power” (Steinberg & Shin, 2006, p. 521).

The military regimes continuously used the existence of North Korea as an excuse for their authoritarian rule. Those who attempted to introduce social reform were harshly dealt with under the Anti-Communist Act and the National Security Act (K. Cho, 1997; Kraft, 2008), and the news media reported this government’s suppressive treatments as an inevitable result to maintain national security (Yoon, 2010, p. 260): These meanings and values have become the basis of the Korean conservative forces’ agenda and prevailed in Korean society. Consequently, the political discourse that the

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4 The Anti-Communist Act (Law No. 643 of 1961) and the National Security Act (Law No. 549 of 1960) were repealed and replaced in 1980 by a new law, also named the National Security Act (Law No. 3318, December 31, 1980), which incorporated most of the Anti-Communist Act (Yoon, 2010).
news media produced in this period became the ideological ground of conservatism in Korean society.

In addition, while many journalists who played watchdog were forced to quit their jobs, the other journalists who did not play watchdog enjoyed their privileges provided by the authoritarian government. In particular, several former journalists of the news organizations played a significant role in the military regimes, and this allowed the news organizations to become another political power. Many former journalists served as government officials, such as press secretaries (J. M. Kang, 2002). These positions were often given to the journalists as rewards for cooperating with the military regimes. The media companies also welcomed the recruitment of their employees to the government because they could provide a direct connection to politicians and officials who may have had high-class information (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 114). For example, Huh Moon-Do, a former Chosun Ilbo reporter, became the Chun regime’s chief secretary and was “the driving force behind the merging and abolition of the media industry in 1980” (J. M. Kang, 2002). A network of power was formed through “these journalist-turned-politicians or bureaucrats, which functioned effectively during periods when there was a transition of power such as during presidential elections” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, pp. 114-115).

Ironically enough, the government’s media suppression also allowed certain media companies to expand their businesses. During these military regimes, the media companies began to acquire the features of an industry, and it was subordinate to political power (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 113). In the 1960s, Park’s regime cancelled the license of several media companies for political reasons (J. U. Kim, 2000), and this
led to oligopolistic market structures in the media industry. A few newspapers used the forced closure of many media companies as opportunities for rapid growth (H. S. Jang, 2008; M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 114). In particular, the three mainstream conservative newspapers – the Chosun Ilbo, the JoongAng Ilbo, and the Dong-A Ilbo (known as the “big three” papers or “Cho-Joong-Dong” in Korea) – monopolized the revenue from the advertising market, which was rapidly expanding with the growth of the national economy (J. U. Kim, 2000).

Collusive Relationships among the Media, Business Imperatives, and Political Power after the Transition to Democracy in Korea

During the two military regimes, Korean progressive groups were continuously challenging the authority and legitimacy of the government. Particularly, student groups, labor unions, religious organizations, and progressive intellectuals played main roles in forming the Minjung Movement in the 1970s and 1980s (S. Kim, 2000, pp. 50-76). Minjung means “common people” as opposed to elites and leaders. Minjung came to “signify those who are oppressed in the sociopolitical system but who are capable of rising up against it” (N. Lee, 2007, p. 5). The progressive intellectuals and student activists of the Minjung Movement attempted to redefine the role of common people and the nature of their community. These new historical interpretations were then “deployed into the public arena through various public forums, seminars, commemoration services, and protests” (N. Lee, 2007, p. 6). The Minjung Movement not only provided the foundation of the progressivism in Korea, but also became the
driving force for the country’s transition from the military regime to the parliamentary democracy in 1987.

In June 1987, Korean citizens’ pro-democratic efforts finally led to the breakdown of the military regime. In that year, students, the opposing party, and citizen groups of civil society forged an alliance and mobilized to demand direct presidential voting (Chang, 2005, p. 927). As the military yielded to their demand, Korea was undergoing a transition to democracy. As a result, direct control over the media by the government through censorship, manipulation and other measures was decreased. The new 1987 Constitution explicitly prohibits censorship of speech and the press while guaranteeing freedom of expression. The Basic Press Act of 1980 was abolished in November 1980 and replaced by the Act Relating to Registration of Periodicals (Periodicals Act) and the Broadcasting Act.

Nonetheless, the chance of transmitting alternative voices from civil society to the political system was still not guaranteed. Although authoritarian rule broke down, the conservatives maintained power in Korean society. President Roh Tae-Woo, who was elected in the first presidential election under the new 1987 Constitution, was the leader of the then-ruling conservative party. Roh was a close comrade of Dictator Chun Doo-Hwan since their days in the military academy. Roh was also “designated as Chun’s successor by Chun himself” (Yoon, 2010, p. 32). The mainstream media supported the Roh government through producing even more conservative discourses to keep their power and property (Chang, 2005, pp. 927-928). In the news coverage in the mainstream media, disagreement with the Roh government’s policies was described as “signs of faltering [democracy] because of resistance from vested interest groups that
managed to transform themselves and survive in the era of democracy” (Chang, 2005, pp. 927-928).

Furthermore, rapid economic growth expanded the power of chaebols and allowed them to gain an influence on the media system. Chaebol refers to South Korean conglomerates of several companies clustered around one parent company. These companies hold shares in each other and are usually managed by one single family based on authoritarian management and centralized decision making. Since the rule of the two authoritarian regimes, chaebols have given political funds to the government “in exchange for monopolistic business privileges” (Jo & Kim, 2004, p. 295). Chaebols have utilized public relations to avoid negative criticism of their close relations with the government and business malpractices; in-house public relations departments have attempted to maintain regular communication channels with the news media to avoid unfavorable coverage (D. Cho, 1997, pp. 67-75). Furthermore, some chaebols run their own media firms, and others use their power over the news media through the provision of advertisement revenues (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 116).

The collusive relationships among the mainstream conservative newspapers and chaebols have been significantly reinforced since 1988 when President Roh Tae-Woo eased regulations on the establishment of periodicals. Although the number of dailies increased from twenty-eight in 1987 to sixty-five in 1988, the competition among the media companies failed to create diverse voices in media discourse (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 116). Rather, the increased number of the media companies facilitated more competition for gaining profits through advertisements. In particular, the existing newspapers, which had enjoyed monopolies on the media industry during the military
regimes, decided to liberalize subscription fees and increase the number of pages to obtain more advertisements. They often delivered newspapers to readers free of charge to boost their circulation. These aspects of unfair rivalry guaranteed the established papers secure advertising revenue but made it difficult for newcomers to enter the market (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 117).

Particularly, the big three conservative papers – the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo* – have joined the rank of chaebols through strategic marriages with chaebols’ families (Figure 1).

![Figure 1](image-url.png)

*Figure 1.* The direct or indirect marital relationships among the big three conservative newspapers and the chaebols in Korea. (“Is Cho-Joong-Dong one family?” *The Hankyoreh*, July 29, 2005)
There are direct or indirect marital relationships among the big three papers and the 30 top chaebols in Korea (G. M. Cho, 2005). Since that time, the big three papers and chaebols have been considered a collective actor “with closely aligned interests and well coordinated strategies, capable of acting concertedly as one” (Han, 2008, p. 2). The conservative dominance in the Korean media system, based on the close relationships with the political establishment and capital, has continuously led to a deep-seated dysfunction, as evidenced in the lack of journalistic ethics, distorted news reporting, and dependence on private relations (S.-K. Park, 1994).

Grassroots Efforts to Foster Diversity in Media Discourse in the 1970s and 1980s

During the period of authoritarian dictatorship and domesticated media between the 1970s and 1980s, the Korean citizens did not remain passive recipients of the news media. Since that time, the oligopoly of the media market and the collusion among the political power, capital, and media owners have contributed to “the growing alienation of the audiences” and consequently to “the rise of the public outcry for more freedom of the press and democratic broadcasting” (Young-Han Kim, 2001, p. 94). Many journalists have continued to struggle to achieve the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the audiences supported the journalists’ resistance and conducted a campaign against the government’s media control. A crucial example is the incident at the Dong-A Ilbo in 1974-5, which led to the dismissal of 134 journalists.

In October 1974, journalists of the Dong-A Ilbo adopted the Declaration on Practicing Freedom of the Press, in which they rejected “outside intervention in press organizations and protested the illegal arrests of journalists by the authorities” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 118). Many groups of Korean citizens – such as college students,
clergy, writers, and professors – supported the declaration and followed it. However, the authoritarian government did not allow it. The government forced the advertisers to discontinue advertising for the Dong-A Ilbo and its two sister media firms, the monthly Shin Dong-A and the Dong-A Broadcasting System (DBS). Although countless citizens supported the Dong-A Ilbo company by placing personal advertisements in the media, the company could not endure its financial difficulties caused by the advertisers’ boycott. The Dong-A Ilbo finally surrendered to the demands of the authoritarian regime by firing all of the journalists who signed the Declaration on Practicing Freedom of the Press and turned its stance to pro-government (M.-Y. Lee, 2008). This incident, however, confirmed the existence of a group of active citizens, “who [fought], in various ways, against the politico-economic power oppressing the freedom of the press and against the abusive media power itself” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 118).

This grassroots power increased the organized media activism in the late 1980s. Korean citizens’ media activism in the early 1980s particularly focused on the campaigns for a critical understanding of the broadcasting media, which was totally controlled by the authoritarian government. These campaigns were led by Christian and Catholic churches and some civic groups; they attempted to educate the citizens and consequently contributed to the increase of public awareness of the problem (Jiyeon Lee, 2011). This movement provided the basis for a boycott movement against the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) in the late 1980s (Young-Han Kim, 2001, pp. 95-97).
In addition, during the 1970s and the 1980s, civic groups and religious groups produced and circulated a diverse form of alternative media. The alternative media – including books, leaflets, discs, and videotapes – were produced without official permits. For example, in 1986, the National Council of Churches (NCC) handed out 50,000 adhesive labels and 10,000 leaflets to people, which said, ‘WE DO NOT WATCH THE KBS-TV’ (Young-Han Kim, 2001, p. 96). These illegal publications functioned as a catalyst for the development of the boycott movement against the KBS-TV reception fee. This boycott movement “not only succeeded in changing the KBS policy on subscription fees and advertisements, but also contributed to the formation of solidarity among the grassroots movements during the nationwide democratization movement in June 1987” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 119).

Since the democratization movement in June 1987, diversity in media discourse has arisen, though in a limited degree, as new alternative media companies attempted to break up the existing conservative oligopoly in the media system. The most significant incident was the establishment of The Hankyoreh. The Hankyoreh was founded in May 1988 mostly by journalists dismissed from the Chosun Ilbo and the Dong-A Ilbo for political reasons during the military regimes in the 1970s and the 1980s. The Hankyoreh was intended to provide an independent, left-leaning, and nationalist alternative to

5 In the Korean context, the term “alternative” has two meanings: first, an attempt by the new media to replace the existing media; second, a more proactive attempt to reform society by constructing counter-arguments that negate the mainstream order (Chang, 2005; J.-S. Im, 2003).

6 As a state-owned “public corporation,” the KBS has been financed by paid advertisement, in addition to a “reception fee,” i.e. a mandatory monthly viewing fee from the viewers. For more details about the boycott campaign against the KBS in the 1980s and its role in democratization in Korea, see Young-Han Kim (2001).
mainstream conservative newspapers (*The Hankyoreh*, 1987). The money needed to start *The Hankyoreh* was collected from approximately 62,000 citizens, and they still own *The Hankyoreh* as shareholders. Along with the foundation of *The Hankyoreh*, several relatively small alternative media companies, such as *Media Today* published by the Association of Media Labor Unions, have also emerged. These alternative media companies have continued to function as “a spokesman for progressive groups” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 120).

**From Top-Down Pressures to Grassroots Efforts for Media Reform during Two Liberal-Progressive Administrations**

**The Korean Financial Crisis and its Influence on the Media System in the Late 1990s**

Following the Roh Tae-Woo administration, Kim Young-Sam was elected to 14th President in 1992. Kim Young-Sam enjoyed much more legitimacy than his predecessor Roh Tae-Woo, since he had no association with the military dictatorship. Hence, Kim named his government Korea’s first civilian government, drawing “a distinction from the previous government although he was elected from the same [conservative] party” (Yoon, 2010, p. 34).

The Kim Young-Sam administration rapidly changed outdated practices prevailing in Korean society. In particular, to acquire memberships in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996, the Kim Young-Sam administration reformed relevant
laws and regulations to fulfill global standards, resulting in financial liberalization and economic deregulation. This rapid reform of the financial system caused an unprecedented economic crisis represented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout in 1997 (Yoon, 2010, pp. 34-37).

In spite of several precursors of the economic crisis, the Kim Young-Sam government continued to announce that the foundation of the Korean economy was still strong as late as mid-1997. The mainstream media also supported the government’s economic policies by downplaying the seriousness of the financial crisis. According to Shim (2002), the mainstream conservative newspapers were, in part, responsible for the economic crisis in the late 1990s as they misled the Korean public by “[continuously painting a rosy picture] about the prospects of the Korean economy” (p. 345).

The economic crisis for which the Kim Young-Sam administration was responsible helped opposition candidate Kim Dae-Jung to prevail in the 1997 presidential election. The success of Kim Dae-Jung was “another boost of momentum for the development of Korea’s democracy” (Yoon, 2010, p. 38). For the first time in modern Korean history, peaceful transfer of political power from the ruling conservative party to the opposition progressive party took place; it was 10 years after the beginning of transition to democracy in 1987.

Although the IMF bailout package imposed enormous difficulties on the country, the new progressive government took advantage from these difficulties to make a fundamental reform in the financial system and business practices and other related areas. The crisis consequently contributed to enhancing transparency particularly in the business system (Yoon, 2010, pp. 37-39). The Kim Dae-Jung government also
adopted the policy for socioeconomic restructuring, saying “it is the only way for the country to survive” (M. J. Park, et al., 2000, p. 122).

Many Korean media companies also faced a challenge for their ownership structure in the restructuring process. Several daily newspapers separated from their mother business groups (i.e., chaebols). In 1998, the *Kyanghyang Shinmun*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Munhwa Ilbo* separated from Hanwha, Samsung and Hyundai groups, respectively. Particularly, after its separation from Hanwha group, the *Kyanghyang Shinmun* changed its ownership structure into the employee-ownership.7 Since that time, all employees, including 240 journalists, have comprised the biggest shareholders of the *Kyanghyang Shinmun*, and the rest has been owned by retired employees and the company (*Kyanghyang Shinmun*, 2005). This separation has led the *Kyanghyang Shinmun* to be more critical of the conservative forces and chaebols (Ahn, 2008).8

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7 The *Munhwa Ilbo* is owned by the Moon-Woo Foundation for Journalism and the Dong-yang Foundation for Culture, which have a total of 61.3% of the company’s stocks. These two foundations were established by Hyundai Heavy Industries. The *JoongAng Ilbo* is owned by the Hong family (44% of the company’s stocks) and CJ Corporation (21%). CJ Corporation was originally part of Samsung group, but separated in 1995. Nonetheless, the two chaebols still keep very close ties to this day. The president of CJ Corporation is the grandson of the former president of Samsung group, Lee Byung-Chull. Many critics have argued that these ownerships may still influence the news reporting of the *Munhwa Ilbo* and the *JoongAng Ilbo* (e.g., S.-S. Kim, 2002).

8 According to its mission statement (*Kyanghyang Shinmun*, 2005), the *Kyanghyang Shinmun* “support[s] the moderate progressive in which [the *Kyanghyang Shinmun*] champion[s] the cause of a better life for the ordinary people since the South Korean government spends less than 8% of its GDP for its social security network. [The *Kyanghyang Shinmun*] support[s] economic policies in favor of small and medium businesses and the Sunshine Policy of engagement with North Korea.”
The Media Tax Audit during Kim Dae-Jung’s Presidency

The Kim Dae-Jung government had an extremely tense relationship with the big three conservative newspapers. In 2001, the Kim Dae-Jung government audited possible violations of tax and fair trade laws among a total of twenty-three media companies. As a result, the National Tax Service and the Fair Trade Commission assessed a total of $388 million in back taxes and penalties against the big three papers (Kirk, 2001b). Consequently, Bang Sang-Hoon (president and owner of the Chosun Ilbo) and Kim Byung-Kwan (principal owner and honorary chairman of the Dong-A Ilbo) went to prison for tax evasion, and An Kyung-Hee (the wife of Kim Byung-Kwan) committed suicide during the investigation. At the same time, the Fair Trade Commission composed a list of several violations of the fair trade act by the big three papers and imposed penalties. The list included “the printing of hundreds of thousands of extra copies as a way to inflate circulation figures and raise advertising prices, forcing newsdealers to take more copies than they [could] sell and asking suppliers of newsprint to donate gifts for company-sponsored events” (Kirk, 2001a). The tax audit seriously damaged the reputation of the big three conservative newspapers (E. H. Shin, 2005, p. 30).

The Kim Dae-Jung government denied any relationship between the tax investigation and the President’s intention of reforming the media; however, the conservatives argued that the tax audit was nothing but a severe violation of press

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9 As a precedent in 1999, Hong Seok-Hyun (president and owner of the JoongAng Ilbo) was also put in jail for two months, “fined $2.65 million and ordered to pay $9 million in back taxes on charges of having evaded taxes against a separate company he [controlled] with other family members” (Kirk, 2001a).
freedom (Kirk, 2001b; K. Lee, 2003). The then-majority conservative Grand National Party and the big three conservative newspapers contended that the government’s motivation behind the tax investigation was to suppress the papers’ criticism against Kim Dae-Jung and his policies. While Kim Dae-Jung carried out new policies that favored the middle- and lower-income classes by enacting new laws and changing previous ones (Yoon, 2010, p. 38), the conservative forces were repeatedly criticizing almost every government policies. In particular, the big three papers showed an extremely negative view towards the government foreign policy towards North Korea. They contended that the tax audit was an attempt to regulate the media as revenge for such criticism (Young-Hie Kim, 2001).

The 386 Generation, the Internet, and the 2002 Presidential Election

Following Kim Dae-Jung, Roh Moo-Hyun was successful in the 2002 presidential election. The 2002 presidential election is one of the most significant events in Korean democracy. In early 2002, Roh Moo-Hyun was nominated by the liberal-progressive Millennium Democratic Party through primary elections. For the first time in Korean political history, these primaries enabled ordinary party members to choose a presidential candidate (Yoon, 2010, pp. 39-40). This political event successfully attracted public attention.\footnote{The Kim Dae-Jung government’s foreign policy towards North Korea is referred to \textit{Sunshine Policy}. This policy broke away from past policies as it aimed at “engaging rather than confronting North Korea through dialogue, exchange, and cooperation” (Yoon, 2010, p. 38). In 2000, Kim Dae-Jung was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize as a result of Sunshine Policy.}

\footnote{As a reaction, the conservative Grand National Party also conducted the primary system but failed to draw broad public attention (Yoon, 2010, p. 40).}
In December 2002, Roh Moo-Hyun defeated Lee Hoi-Chang of the opposition conservative Grand National Party in the presidential election. This result surprised the nation because most presidential campaign polls had shown Roh Moo-Hyun falling behind Lee Hoi-Chang (Jinsun Lee, 2009, pp. 25-26). These two major candidates had “diametrically opposing characteristics, not only in ideological and political stances, but also in personal and family backgrounds” (E. H. Shin, 2005, pp. 27-28). Roh Moo-Hyun was born in a poor farming family. He taught himself law and passed the bar examination in 1975. As a human rights lawyer and an advocate for laborers and activists, Roh Moo-Hyun defended college students and activists who were arrested during the pro-democratic movement, such as the Minjung Movement, in the 1970s and 1980s (Jinsun Lee, 2009; Yoon, 2010). On the other hand, Lee Hoi-Chang was born and raised in an elite family; his father was a public prosecutor. Lee studied law at Seoul National University and became a judge at the age of twenty-five. Lee had a very successful legal career as a judge and became the country’s youngest-ever chief judge of the Constitutional Court (E. H. Shin, 2005). During the Kim Young-Sam administration, Lee Hoi-Chang was the Prime Minister, as well as the head of the conservative Grand National Party. Due to these different careers and histories between the two candidates, the victory of Roh Moo-Hyun was “an unpredictable political drama that people had never experienced” (Yoon, 2010, p. 40).

The election of Roh was even more stunning in light of the fact that the mainstream conservative media fully supported the conservative candidate, Lee Hoi-Chang, during the entire process of the presidential campaign. The big three conservative newspapers (i.e., the Chosun Ilbo, the JoongAng Ilbo, and the Dong-A
Ilbo) severely condemned Roh’s campaign promises (K. Lee, 2003). Korean scholars and critics believed that the big three papers, which dominated the Korean newspaper market with a combined readership of 75-80 percent in 2002, played a crucial role in agenda-setting during the presidential campaign (D. Kim & Johnson, 2006; Jinsun Lee, 2009). The liberal-progressive groups sarcastically called the big three papers “king-makers in presidential elections” (K. Lee, 2005, p. 11). Roh’s victory in the 2002 presidential election therefore served as a warning of the changing landscape of media power in Korea, particularly to the mainstream conservative newspapers.

No one would dispute that Roh owed his victory to the liberal-progressive young voters. Many scholars and critics emphasize the impact of the online activities of the liberal-progressives in their twenties and thirties during the presidential campaign (e.g., D. Kim & Johnson, 2006; Jinsun Lee, 2009). After the presidential election in December 2002, many foreign news media also ran headlines such as “The World’s First Internet President Logs On” (The Guardian, 2003) and “Online Newspaper Shakes up Korean Politics” (The New York Times, 2003).

The role of one group, NOSAMO, which is a Korean acronym for “People Who Love Roh Moo-Hyun,” was particularly prominent during the entire process of the presidential campaign. NOSAMO was an online-based political fan club that supported Roh as a politician and a candidate in the primaries of the Millennium Democratic Party and presidential campaign. The members of NOSAMO were mostly those Koreans in their twenties, thirties, and forties with liberal-progressive political orientations. The members of NOSAMO effectively informed the public through the Internet about Roh Moo-Hyun’s campaign promises, such as support for the Sunshine Policy toward North
Korea and *chaebol* reform. The members of NOSAMO argued that the big three conservative papers misinformed the public through biased reporting and distortion of facts (E. H. Shin, 2005, p. 38). The members used the Internet as their outlet where they could communicate with each other and create “a counteragenda forum against the conservative papers” (Rhee, 2003). Particularly, NOSAMO treated online alternative newspapers, such as the *OhmyNews* and the *Seoprise*, as the outlets that provided a reliable source of news. NOSAMO spread the information via its homepage (www.nosamo.org), bulletin board systems (BBS) of the online media, and web messengers (Jinsun Lee, 2009, p. 26).

Among the members, *the 386 generation* led the NOSAMO’s activities during the entire process of the presidential campaign (E.-G. Kim & Hamilton, 2006, p. 554). Coined in the 1990s, *the 386 generation* refers to those who were in their thirties, entered the universities in the 1980s, and were born in the 1960s. The 386 generation had played a crucial role as the force of student power in the Minjung Movement in the 1980s and the June Democracy Movement that terminated decades of two military regimes in 1987 (p. 553). Members of the 386 generation have been more skeptical of the United States compared with the older generations. This is largely because the U.S. had “backed the same military regimes they had fought against” (G. Fairclough, 2004). Growing into their forties by the 2000s, they began to hold important positions in politics and business.

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12 The influence of the 386 generation can be “comparable to that of the baby boomers in the U.S., many of whose political views were shaped by anti-Vietnam War protests and the civil-rights movement” (G. Fairclough, 2004).
NOSAMO’s success in the 2002 presidential campaign was the result of the long-term process of the appropriation and strategic use of the Internet for social change by the 386 generation. As Clay Shirky (2008) writes, the Internet “[did] not know what it [would be] used for” when it first emerged (p. 157). Considering the social and political conditions of Korea’s recent history, it seems only natural that reform-oriented liberal-progressives would actively appropriate online media to produce and share their opinions and to participate in political actions. Before the 2002 presidential election, the liberal-progressive appropriation of the Internet underwent three phases of development in Korea.

The three phases of the liberal-progressive appropriation of the Internet between the late 1980s and early 2000s

In the first phase, between the late 1980s and early 1990s, the 386 generation, particularly college students and liberal-progressive white-collar workers, began to construct online communities. These online communities became the pioneers of creating Korean web culture. In this period, “386” was the name of the latest Central Processing Unit (CPU) model, the Intel 80386 or i386, developed by Intel. The 386 generation thus also referred to “early adopters of new media technology” in Korea (Jinsun Lee, 2009, pp. 123-124). Between 1985 and 1994, three telecommunication companies – Chollian, Hitel (formerly, Ketel), and Naunuri – first launched their bulletin board systems (BBS) using “PC Tongsin” (Personal Computer Communication), a type of data link protocol used in establishing a direct connection between two networking nodes through a phone line (Jinsun Lee, 2009, p. 81). Since that period, the 386 generation occupied the BBS and established several online
communities based on the network servers that they mainly used and their social and political interests (Chang, 2005; Jinsun Lee, 2009).

These online communities played a pivotal role in setting the initial trend in online communication in Korea (Table 1). Much jargon, which originated or was popularized by these online communities in the 1990s, is now in common use on the Internet in Korea (Jinsun Lee, 2009, p. 107). For example, the members of the online communities started to use an honorific suffix, *Nim*, when referring to each other regardless of age, gender, and social status. The honorific suffix, *Nim*, has been traditionally reserved for elders to show them respect. The usage of *Nim* for every member of the online communities therefore was recognized as a revolutionary action, promoting a non-hierarchical and democratic “netiquette” (net etiquette).

The second phase was characterized by the emergence of online alternative news media, such as the *Ddanzi Ilbo* (www.ddanzi.com) and the *Daejabo* (www.jabo.co.kr). In the late 1990s, these online media actively challenged the mainstream conservative media by creating, collecting, and distributing radical, alternative news, information and entertainment (Joyce, 2007; E.-G. Kim & Hamilton, 2006; Y.-H. Oh, 2004). One of the most significant characteristics of these online alternative media was the use of parodies in their news articles. For example, the *Ddanzi Ilbo* has published a series of parodies of the *Chosun Ilbo*, the most influential conservative daily in Korea, and these parodies were greatly popular among young liberal-progressives (Chang, 2005, p. 929).
Table 1
*Online Communities in the 1990s*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Server</th>
<th>Online Communities</th>
<th>Political Orientations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Hitel (formerly, Ketel)</em></td>
<td><em>Ba-Tong-Mo</em>&lt;br&gt;[The Meeting for Righteous Communication]</td>
<td>Social reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Tonghap-Kwahak</em>&lt;br&gt;[The Integrated Science Club]</td>
<td>Media reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chollian</em></td>
<td><em>Hyun-Chul-Yeon</em>&lt;br&gt;[The Modern Philosophy Forum]</td>
<td>Progressive usage of IT science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hee-Mang-Ter&lt;br&gt;[The Place of Hope]</td>
<td>Moderate social reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Naunuri</em></td>
<td>Chan-Woo-Mul&lt;br&gt;[Cold Springs]</td>
<td>Moderate social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jinbo-Chungnyun-Donghohwe [Progressive Youths]</td>
<td>Radical social reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mae-Ah-Ri&lt;br&gt;[Echo]</td>
<td>Moderate social reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the third phase, in the early 2000s, the online alternative media led ordinary citizens to engage in the act of journalism based on the interactive and participatory form of online communication. Many communication scholars have evaluated these Korean online news media – such as, the *OhmyNews* (www.ohmynews.com), the *Issue Today* (www.issuetoday.com), and the *Pressian* (www.pressian.com) – as pioneers of “citizen journalism,” which is characterized by the use of ordinary citizens as reporters, usually unpaid, in place of professional journalists (e.g., Gillmor, 2006; Joyce, 2007; E.-
Since their beginning, these online alternative news media have provided their own BBS and discussion forums to encourage dynamic interactions among the readers. These BBS and forums are “operated by self-regulatory rules of participants and all can freely express their opinions on the articles published” in the online media (Chang, 2005, p. 930).

In particular, the OhmyNews has been one of the most successful online news media in the world (Gillmor, 2006). The OhmyNews was established in February 2000 with 727 ordinary citizen reporters, but this number increased to 14,000 by October 2001 and to 20,000 by September 2002. In 2002, the majority of OhmyNews’s content was written by these citizen reporters, with contributions totaling more than 150 articles a day (Y.-H. Oh, 2004, p. 33). The founder of OhmyNews, Oh Yeon-Ho, was a former student activist as a member of the 386 generation (Gluck, 2003). In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2003, Oh said as follows:

My generation, the 386 generation, were in the streets fighting in the 80s against the military dictatorship. Now, 20 years later, we are combat-ready with our Internet. … We really want to be part of forming public opinion – and all of us, all of the 386 generation are now deployed with the internet, ready to fight. … In the past, the conservative papers in Korea could – and did – lead public opinion. They had the monopoly. They were against Roh Moo-Hyun’s candidacy. But OhmyNews supported the Roh Moo-Hyun phenomenon, with all the netizens participating. … In our battle between the conservative media and the netizens of Korea, the netizens won. (Gluck, 2003)

From the late 1980s to early 2000s, the 386 generation was at the forefront in the process of adopting and appropriating the Internet for civic engagement. Their activities finally bore fruit in the 2002 presidential election: “Roh Moo-Hyun’s victory.”
Since then, there has been little doubt that the online alternative news media “has edged its way into the public sphere” in Korea (E.-G. Kim & Hamilton, 2006, p. 550). Although this does not mean that the conservative-dominated media system has been overturned, the online alternative news media have contributed to fostering diversity in the media system, combining with the influence of the existing liberal-progressive news media – such as The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun – in public opinion formation. According to an annual survey that examined “the most influential media in Korea” (Sisa Journal, 2004), two online alternative news media (the OhmyNews and the Pressian) and one liberal-progressive newspaper (The Hankyoreh) entered into the top 10 media for the first time, while two major national networks (the MBC and the KBS) and the big three conservative newspapers (the Chosun Ilbo, the JoongAng Ilbo, and the Dong-A Ilbo) were still ranked as the top five influential media in Korea.

The Post-386 Generation and Candlelight Vigils as a Collective Action Repertoire

The post-386 generation has succeeded to the leading role of the 386 generation in conducting civic action and social resistance in Korea. Born in the 1970s and 1980s, the post-386 generation is a substantial beneficiary of the nation’s rapid economic growth and democracy. Unlike the 386 generation who fought against the military regimes to achieve democracy, it is only natural that the post-386 generation internalizes democratic values and rejects traditional authoritarian culture, such as the Cold War view, in all aspects of their lives. Collectively, this generation is less ideological (E.-G. Kim & Hamilton, 2006, p. 553). They are thus simultaneously willing to criticize both the U.S. policies and North Korea’s actions. In addition, the
post-386 generation can be characterized by an increased use of, and familiarity with, the ICTs.

The post-386 liberal-progressives have developed a collective generational consciousness through organizing and participating in a series of political and cultural events, such as the street cheering in the 2002 Korea-Japan World Cup soccer match, the 2002 Korean Candlelight Vigil after the deaths of two middle school girls, the 2004 Korean Candlelight Vigil against the impeachment of President Roh Moo-Hyun, and ultimately, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Through these shared experiences, the post-386 generation, particularly the young liberal-progressives, has not only enhanced existing collective action repertoires but also created new forms of online collective action and resistance in Korea. These processes of developing the means, ends, and environment of their collective actions have played a role in constructing and sustaining their collective identity.

**The 2002 World Cup and the Red Devils**

In May and June 2002, millions of young Koreans wearing red T-shirts gathered together in all parts of the country.\(^{13}\) They collectively cheered on the streets for the Korean national soccer team. The “Red Devils,” an online-based fan club for the Korean national soccer team (www.reddevils.or.kr), played a pivotal role in mobilizing collective actions for the street cheering. The Red Devils started with only 200 members in 1997. However, within the one-month duration of the 2002 World Cup, more than

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\(^{13}\) According to Lowe-Lee (2010), 800,000 Koreans came out to the streets for Korea’s match with Poland, 1,500,000 for the Korea-U.S. match and 2,800,000 for the Korea-Portugal match and 4,200,000 for Korea’s quarterfinal with Italy. During the semifinal with Germany team, approximately 7,000,000 Koreans were on the streets.
450,000 became new members of the Red Devils; most new members, as well as the existing members, were those in their twenties and thirties, members of the post-386 generation (Lowe-Lee, 2010). They successfully informed and mobilized a massive number of massive citizens within a short period of time through the Internet (Jinsun Lee, 2009, pp. 14-17). The collective activities mobilized by the Red Devils redefined nationalism to include “a renewed sense of national confidence and pride” (Lowe-Lee, 2010, p. 3). Furthermore, through this shared experience, the post-386 generation, which had been regarded as an extremely egocentric and politically apathetic generation, emerged as a new agent of organizing collective events (Jinsun Lee, 2009; Lowe-Lee, 2010).

**The 2002 Korean Candlelight Vigil after the deaths of two middle school girls**

The post-386 generation also organized the 2002 Korean Candlelight Protest. The 2002 Korean Candlelight Protest from the deaths of two thirteen-year-old girls. In June 13, 2002, an armored military vehicle driven by two U.S. soldiers who were stationed in Korea ran over and killed two Korean middle-school girls, Shim Mi-Sun and Shin Hyo-Soon (GI Korea, 2008). There was a strong desire among many Koreans that the two U.S. soldiers should be punished. However, the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the U.S. and Korea was applied to the U.S. soldiers’ case. The U.S. military court, not under Korean law, acquitted the two defendants on charges of negligent homicide and described the two girls’ deaths as “a vehicular accident” (J. Kang, 2009, p. 173). However, through the Internet, the post-386 generation defined the girls’ deaths as a “national tragedy” in a broader context of historical relationship between Korea and the U.S. and began to severely criticize the remaining “Cold War
politics and U.S. hegemony” in Korea (J. Kang, 2009). To show their opposition to these, the post-386 generation protesters waged nationwide candlelight vigils.

The first candlelight vigil was initiated by one OhmyNews’s citizen journalist, using the name AngMA, who posted an emotional poem on the OhmyNews’s BBS.¹⁴ A few hours after this poem was posted, it provoked a collective response from countless Internet users. The candlelight vigil was held on Nov. 30, 2002 with 15,000 citizens for the first time, and it continued to expand to more than 300,000 by Dec. 14, 2002.

During the 2002 Korean Candlelight Protest, Korean citizens commemorated the girls’ deaths in 57 locations across the nation. Furthermore, the girls’ deaths and the renegotiation of SOFA and the Korea-U.S. relationships were the most crucial issues in the 2002 Presidential election (J. Kang, 2009, p. 172). This political atmosphere helped build strong solidarity among young Korean liberal-progressives, both the 386 generation and the post-386 generation, and this was one of the driving forces underlying the election of the liberal-progressive candidate Roh Moo-Hyun.

Furthermore, since this time, the “candlelight vigil” has become the most popular form of collective civic action for the young Korean liberal-progressives. The young liberal-progressives have held candlelight vigils not only to commemorate memory of victims, but also to express their collective objection to various political issues.

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¹⁴ As the AngMA’s poem drew attention from the news media, he disclosed his own name and identity: Kim, Gibo, a white-collar in his thirties (Jinsun Lee, 2009, p. 19).
The Impeachment of President Roh Moo-Hyun and its Influence on the 2004 General Election

President Roh Moo-Hyun wanted to reform the Korean society on the basis of principle and common sense “by rectifying unprincipled privilege, unreasonable practices, and irregularity by vested interest groups” (Yoon, 2010, pp. 40-41). However, Roh had a difficult presidency from his inauguration in February 2003. The conservative then-opposition Grand National Party had the majority in the National Assembly. In addition, Roh’s own party, the Millennium Democratic Party, struggled to resolve its internal conflict between those close to the previous president Kim Dae-Jung and those who identified themselves more with Roh Moo-Hyun (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 409).

In September 2003, the pro-Roh party members finally left the Millennium Democratic Party and established a new party, the Yeollin Uri Party. As a result, the Millennium Democratic Party turned against Roh and allied with the conservative Grand National Party. This division meant that the anti-Roh alliance formed a “supermajority” in the Assembly of 212 members out of 272 (p. 409). Under the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, a vote of two-thirds or more of the National Assembly is sufficient to “override the President’s vetoes on legislation [(article 53)], expel members of the Assembly [(article 64)], impeach the President [(article 65)], and propose constitutional amendments to be put to national referenda [(article 130)]” (p. 409). Furthermore, in October 2003, some of Roh’s closest aides were arrested on suspicion of accepting bribes from businesses for the Roh’s 2002 presidential campaign, and these events became the targets of severe criticism (The Economist, 2003).
At the peak of a political crisis with few allies in the National Assembly and rapidly decreasing job approval ratings, Roh took a series of actions to find a breakthrough (Y. Lee, 2005). First, in October 2003, he proposed to hold a national referendum on his leadership in mid-December (*The Economist*, 2003). Secondly, Roh agreed to resign if the amount of the bribes that his aides received during the 2002 presidential campaign exceeded one-tenth of the amount of the bribes that the opposing conservative Grand National Party received (Y. Lee, 2005).

Third, at a press conference on February 24, 2004, President Roh openly supported the Uri Party, saying “I expect that the public will overwhelmingly support the Uri Party at the general election of April 2004,” and “I would like to do anything that is legal if it may lead to votes for the Yeollin Uri Party” (S.-K. Im & Kim, 2004). On February 27, 2004, the opposing parties filed a complaint to the National Election Commission, reporting that Roh violated the Election Law that prohibits any campaign activities by public officials in support of certain candidates (S.-K. Im & Kim, 2004). On March 3, the National Election Commission judged that President Roh violated the Election Law and warned him to refrain from additional violations (H. Kim, Choi, & Cho, 2008). The opposing parties, the Grand National Party and the Millennium Democratic Party, demanded a public apology from President Roh for the violation of the Election Law and warned President Roh that he could be impeached (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 411). Although Roh held a press conference and apologized to the public for the scandals that swirled around his close supporters, he refused to apologize for the violations that he made in support of the Yeollin Uri Party at the general election (p. 411).
On March 12, the opposing parties finally passed a motion to impeach President Roh. Among 212 lawmakers of the opposing parties in the National Assembly, 193 voted for the impeachment and two voted against it, while all forty-seven Yeollin Uri Party lawmakers refused to participate in it (H. Kim, et al., 2008). Based on the Constitution, Roh’s presidency was immediately suspended, and the Prime Minster, Goh Kun, took over the duties of the President (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 412).

The impeachment of Roh Moo-Hyun caused a huge public dissent in Korea, with several polls showing that 70 percent of Korean citizens opposed the impeachment (The Economist, 2004). According to the Constitution, the Constitutional Court was “the institution that had the responsibility to resolve this political dispute” (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 412). As the Constitutional Court deliberated, the impeachment vote became the most crucial campaign issue in the upcoming general election in April 2004.

Korean citizens held candlelight vigils across the country to protest the impeachment, and the 386 and post-386 liberal-progressives led these vigils (G. Fairclough, 2004). Between March 12 and 29, a cumulative 1.5 million Koreans (approximately 3.1 percent of all Koreans) participated in the candlelight vigils (H.-W. Jung, 2008, p. 19). Korean citizens demanded that the National Assembly nullify the impeachment and call for an apology from the opposing parties for their decision.

In addition, young Korean liberal-progressives actively supported the “defeat movement” being held by the Citizens’ Alliance for the 2004 General Election (CAGE). The CAGE was organized with more than 290 civic organizations to provide a list of candidates who were considered unfit to be elected. On April 6, 2004, the CAGE published a blacklist of 208 politicians who were targeted for defeat in the 2004 general
election, including 139 lawmakers who had voted for the impeachment of President Roh (J. Kim & Kang-Lee, 2004). Following the CAGE, 193 student organizations also formed the College Students’ Alliance for the 2004 General Election and conducted their own campaigns to vote against the blacklisted politicians (J. Kim, 2004).

The 2004 general election was held on April 15. The liberal-progressive party, Yeollin Uri Party, became the majority of the National Assembly for the first time in Korean history with 152 out of the 299 Assembly seats, while the conservative Grand National Party won 121 seats. The progressive Democratic Labor Party, whose support base was mainly laborers and farmers, also emerged as the third-largest party in the National Assembly. On the contrary, the Millennium Democratic Party, which had been the second-largest party prior to the 2004 general election, “ended up with mere nine seats” in the backlash following its leading role in the impeachment of Roh (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 412).

After the 2004 general election, on May 14, the Constitutional Court announced its judgment rejecting the National Assembly’s motion of the impeachment and reinstating Roh Moo-Hyun. President Roh thereby returned to his office sixty-three days after suspension of presidential authority (Y. Lee, 2005, p. 414). This decision mostly received positive response throughout the country; according to a poll, approximately 84 percent of Korean citizens reported that they agreed with the Constitutional Court’s decision (S.-K. Im & Yi, 2004).
The Roh Moo-Hyun Government’s Effort to Reform the Media System

After the victory of his liberal-progressive Yeollin Uri Party in the 2004 general election, President Roh was able to carry out his progressive platform more actively. A large number of elected lawmakers were part of the 386 generation, and more than ten were former presidents and officers of the nationwide organization, National Committee of University Student Representatives, that had led the pro-democratic movement in the 1980s (N. Lee, 2007, pp. 301-302).15 During their four-year term, the liberal-progressive lawmakers were more nationalistic, more humanitarian, more accommodating toward North Korea, and more skeptical about American-oriented policies.

President Roh directly targeted the Korean press as an institution that he intended to reform. First of all, Roh gave government officials a “not-to-do” list to terminate the old practices between government and press in Korea. For example, Roh ordered that no officials were to subscribe to the “street editions” of the daily newspapers.16 In previous governments, officials “hunted for unfavorable news coverage in street editions and then contacted editors to tell them not to carry such reporting in the morning edition” (K. Lee, 2003). Under the new policy, when a government official found any error in news coverage of the government, challenging the error had to be done “by legal channels, not by negotiating with reporters or editors

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15 Many 386 generation lawmakers in the National Assembly also have belonged to the conservative Grand National Party, whose leaders would have been the protest targets in the 1980s (N. Lee, 2007, p. 302).

16 In Korea, morning newspapers are available as “street editions” on the previous evening.
or doing anything illegal” (K. Lee, 2003). In addition, Roh advised the officials not to provide any favors to journalists and editors so that friendly reports would be written. Cabinet members and government officials were told not to dine or drink with reporters; President Roh argued that in doing this, the government made the press “a powerhouse without responsibility” (Ryu, 2011).

The Roh government and the then-ruling liberal-progressive Yeollin Uri Party also attempted to re-distribute media power and foster diversity in media discourse through enacting related laws. The parliament passed two media related laws in 2005: the Newspaper Law and the Press Arbitration Law. These laws emphasized “the social responsibilities of the media to the general public and respect pluralism” (Sa, 2009a, p. 11). Particularly, these laws aimed to stop the mainstream newspapers from engaging in unfair competition in the newspaper industry (Sa, 2009b). However, the mainstream newspapers filed a petition to the Constitutional Court of Korea, describing the laws as too strict compared to those applied to non-newspaper companies. In 2006, the court ruled that some articles of the laws were unconstitutional, saying the articles were contrary to press freedom and business freedom in that they limited the market share a newspaper could obtain (The Hankyoreh, 2006).

Roh Moo-Hyun continuously struggled to deal with the mainstream conservative newspapers, particularly the big three papers. These conservative newspapers criticized most of Roh’s policies (S.-J. Kim & Kim, 2010). This struggle

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17 The Newspaper Law was a revision of the existing law on the Registration of Periodicals. The Press Arbitration Law combines features of two existing laws – the Act Relating to Registration of Periodicals (Periodicals Act) and the Broadcasting Act – into a single law, dealing with press arbitration and damage relief (Sa, 2009a, p. 11).
already existed since the previous liberal-progressive government. During the tax audit of the media companies during previous Kim Dae-Jung government, Roh condemned the big three papers publicly and argued for “payment of taxes as the rightful cost of doing business” (K. Lee, 2003). During his presidency, Roh claimed that since the conservative newspapers had strayed from reporting fairly, government officials should continue to “engage in controversies” with the newspapers and this interfered with the officials’ works. The Roh governmental bodies made a total of 752 legal claims against the press, a significantly higher number of lawsuits than any preceding government (Chosun Ilbo, 2010). In August 2003, President Roh also filed a $2.5 million lawsuit against four newspapers, including the big three papers, and one opposition lawmaker “for their report that a charge of speculative real estate trading had been brought against him” (K. Lee, 2003). In the lawsuit, Roh Moo-Hyun accused the papers of “comprehensive, persistent, and massive defamation of my character that, not as president but as a human being, caused me psychological agony hard to express in words” (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2004). Although Roh agreed to postpone legal action until finishing his term as President, this lawsuit was the first legal claim against the press made by the President of Korea.

Despite the attempts to remake the media system during the two liberal-progressive governments, the Kim Dae-Jung government and the Roh Moo-Hyun government, the reform of the news media was difficult to accomplish. The majority of news organizations was still seen as part of the conservative sphere and supported the vested interests of the conservative forces. The public opinion about media reform was also mixed. Since the 2002 presidential election, the generation gap in political
orientation has been wider and so it has been in media reform issue. An understanding of the need for media reform was increasing among the younger generation; however, the majority of those Koreans born in the 1930s and 1940s strongly supported the conservative party and read the big three conservative newspapers. In addition, many Koreans did not want media reform to come from the government, fearing that would damage democracy (Sa, 2009a). The mainstream conservative media regarded the top-down pressures for media reform as attempts to regulate the media, and the word “media regulation” often recalled the military regimes and their media control of Korean people’s minds (K. Lee, 2003). Additionally, international organizations separated into opposing sides regarding the role of government in reforming the media system in Korea. For example, while the International Press Institute and the World Association of Newspapers responded negatively to the tax audit of media companies in 2001, the International Federation of Journalists responded positively to it (Sa, 2009a).

The Return to Conservative Rule in Korea and the Emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

In the December 2007 presidential election, the conservative candidate Lee Myung-Bak won the election by a clear majority, beating the rival liberal-progressives on a campaign promising economic growth. During the campaign, Lee Myung-Bak spoke strongly to the public dissatisfaction with the tenure of President Roh Moo-Hyun in which “economic inequality had continued to widen and [become] irregular, casual and temporary forms of work expand” (Doucette, 2010, p. 23). The
conservative Grand National Party and Lee Myung-Bak described the decade of liberal-progressive rule by the Kim Dae-Jung government and the Roh Moo-Hyun government as the *lost decade* of diminished economic growth (Doucette, 2010; Paik, 2007). While the conservative forces effectively constructed clear images of the lost decade through the news frame of the mainstream conservative newspapers and newly-established online conservative news media, the Korean liberal-progressive bloc split into several factions (Paik, 2007).

The split of the liberal-progressive group was largely caused by the policy choices of the Roh Moo-Hyun government. Although Roh began his tenure with ambitious reform plans, he suffered “defeat in most of [his] policy areas” (Doucette, 2010, p. 34). In particular, the decision to dispatch troops to Iraq and the failure of reforms in the labor market and the media system led to tensions between President Roh and the ruling liberal-progressive Yeollin Uri Party, as well as between his government and civil society groups. Many Korean liberal-progressives felt betrayed by Roh Moo-Hyun because his government seemed to reverse its economic philosophy from progressivism to neo-liberalism.\(^\text{18}\) The Roh Moo-Hyun government attempted to privatize public sectors and negotiate a free trade agreement with the United States, while it failed to carry out substantial reform of real estate and education policy (J. J. Choi, 2007). By the end of Roh’s tenure, several liberal-progressive party members and government officials who advocated progressive economic reform resigned and publicly criticized the Roh Moo-Hyun administration (Doucette, 2010, p. 35).

\(^{18}\) Neo-liberal economic policies can be characterized by emphasizing economic efficiency and advocating economic liberalization, free trade, and open markets (Doucette, 2010).
During the 2007 presidential campaign, the conservative camp chose to fight the election on the economic issue and successfully used the Internet to inform the public. After the success of the online campaign of Roh Moo-Hyun in the 2002 presidential election, the mainstream media began to aggressively adopt the ICTs. In particular, the big three conservative papers – the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo* – established the department of online news and started to provide the BBS on their online news websites (Jinsun Lee, 2009, p. 103). In addition, several conservative online news media, such as the *Newdaily* (www.newdaily.co.kr) and the *Dailian* (www.dailian.co.kr), were also established in the mid 2000s. These conservative news media fully supported the conservative candidate, Lee Myung-Bak, during the entire process of the 2007 presidential campaign.

On the contrary, the influence of the online alternative news media, such as the *OhmyNews* and the *Pressian*, on public opinion formation in the 2007 presidential election was relatively decreased compared to the 2002 presidential election. Between 2002 and 2007, every year the number of Koreans who described themselves as regular visitors of the online alternative news media continued to fall (S. Lee, 2007). This is largely because most Internet users have got their news directly from major portal sites, such as *NAVER* (www.naver.com) and *DAUM* (www.daum.net), since the portals launched their own newsgathering system between 2002 and 2003. Most press publishers have competitively sold news articles “to the portals as much as they could sell the one-source multi-use articles” (S. Jang, 2006, p. 185). Since then, Korean Internet users have had free access to almost every news article of any news media, and consequently, the online alternative news media have faced financial difficulties. The
online alternative news media have been losing not only their advertising revenue, but also their influence on public opinion formation, to portal sites.\(^{19}\)

During the election campaign, Lee Myung-Bak emphasized that his government would move from “the age of ideology into the age of pragmatism” \((Chosun Ilbo, 2008)\). However, soon after Lee’s election, it seemed that he had been making false promises. Even the conservative US-based think-tank, the Heritage Foundation, evaluated Lee Myung-Bak as “a conservative candidate with an ideological mandate.” The institution also argued that “his pragmatism [was] simply a rhetorical attempt to avoid association with the old guard in the [conservative Grand National Party] in order to attract younger voters” \((Doucette, 2010, p. 23)\).

As soon as Lee Myung-Bak started his term as the President in 2008, Lee and this conservative party severely condemned the two previous liberal-progressive governments. In their conservative views, the successive liberal-progressive rule had strained a close Korea-US relationship, endangered national security by pursuing the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea, and overlooked economic development by attempting to reform the chaebols.

The Lee government announced that they were going to abolish the legacy of the \textit{lost decade}, starting with consolidation of the Korea-USA relationship. On April 18 2008, the Lee government agreed with the U.S. government to lift the import ban on U.S. beef. This agreement, viewed by many Koreans to be a signal of an unfair deal, caused the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Within his first few months in office, Lee’s

\(^{19}\) In the 2008 annual survey by the Korea Press Foundation, the big three conservative papers and three portal sites were ranked in the top 10 influential media, but no online alternative news media was included \((S. Oh, 2008)\).
approval ratings dropped faster than any predecessors, and top government officials and ministers subsequently resigned (Doucette, 2010, pp. 24-25).

U.S. Beef Imports in Korea before the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

Korea was the third largest export market for U.S. beef until the Korean government banned U.S. beef imports when bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, more commonly known as Mad Cow Disease) was first reported in the United States in December 2003. When President Roh Moo-Hyun expressed his intention to negotiate a free trade agreement with the U.S. in 2005, several officials of the U.S. government made clear that their support of the free trade agreement depended on whether or not the Korean government resumed the U.S. beef imports (H.-T. Shin, 2009, pp. 568-569).

Shortly before the two governments announced their intent to negotiate the free trade agreement in February 2006, the Roh Moo-Hyun government agreed to a partial lifting of the import ban on U.S. beef. The Roh government would allow “the importation of boneless U.S. beef derived from cattle less than thirty months old (believed to be at less risk of Mad Cow Disease)” (H.-T. Shin, 2009, p. 569). According to Act on the Prevention of Contagious Animal Diseases, the terms and conditions of the partial import agreement were implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture in the form of a ministry notification (in Korean, gosi) (p. 569). The Korean law also requires that before any ministry introduces and implements a notification, it must publish the features of the notification to the public and solicit their opinions. The Ministry of Agriculture followed the procedure under the law, and the notification took effect in

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20 Korean Administrative Procedure Act, supra note 2, arts. 41-42.
March 2006 (2006 Notification). The U.S. beef imports resumed, but shortly afterwards, the Roh Moo-Hyun government prohibited the importation again when pieces of bones were found in the imported U.S. beef (S. Lee, 2006). The Ministry of Agriculture held that “the inclusion of bone chips in the imported beef was a violation of the 2006 Notification” (H.-T. Shin, 2009, p. 569). While U.S. exporters requested “reasonable bone chip tolerance” for future shipments, the Roh Moo-Hyun government did not allow their requests (p. 569). The Korean Trade Minister stated that “the beef issue should not be viewed as [a] market access issue, but a national health issue” (Junkyu Lee & Lee, 2005, p. 62). When bone chips were detected again in a shipment to Korea, the Roh Moo-Hyun government ordered a total ban on the U.S. beef imports in October 2007 in response to climbing public concerns about the repeated violations of the 2006 Notification by the U.S. beef exporters (H. Shin, 2007).

In May 2007, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) identified the U.S. as a “controlled risk” country for BSE (United States Department of Agriculture, 2007). Several U.S. government officials used this international validation to urge the Korean government to reopen export markets to the full spectrum of the U.S. beef products. In particular, the United States demanded that “Korea should expand the age limit of the cattle, allow boned meat, and relax the inspection standard so that minute issues like small bone chips do not trigger a suspension of imported U.S. beef” (H.-T. Shin, 2009, p. 570).

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The Beginning of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

As soon as conservative Lee Myung-Bak government began its term in 2008, its approach toward the U.S. beef import issue was rapidly changed. Influential U.S. lawmakers intensified the pressure on the Lee government and warned that they would not support the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) in Congress unless the Lee government resolved the beef import issue (J. Kim, 2008). One day before President Lee Myung-Bak was scheduled to meet President George W. Bush in April 2008, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Korea (2008) announced that the Korean government had agreed with the U.S. government to lift the import ban on U.S. beef.\(^ {22} \) As the implementation of the new U.S. beef import agreement required an amendment to the 2006 Notification, the Ministry published the highlights of the new agreement and sought public opinion based on Korean Administrative Procedure Act (H.-T. Shin, 2009, p. 570).

When the contents of the new agreement were published for the public, they caused a huge dissent within Korean society. The Korean public requested to identify the basis for this significantly sudden shift in policy and asked whether the Lee government had carefully considered public health when it agreed to lift the import ban on U.S. beef and to relax the standards for inspection.

Furthermore, the Korean public’s concerns were intensified due to an episode by an investigative TV program, *PD Notebook*, of the *Munhwa Broadcasting*

\(^{22} \) In February 2008, the Lee Myung-Bak government changed the name of the Ministry from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.
On April 29, 2008, in the episode about Mad Cow Disease associated with U.S. beef, *PD Notebook* reported that Koreans would be more genetically vulnerable to BSE than other ethnic groups. Additionally, *PD Notebook* argued that the Lee Myung-Bak government’s attempt to renegotiate the beef import with the U.S. without citizens’ approval meant a violation of the right to health. This episode gave rise to a huge emotional response in the Korean people. The audiences linked the *PD Notebook* episode on their blogs and discussed it in online forums (W. Shin & Ryu, 2011). In response, the Lee government explained that “the U.S. beef to be imported was the same safe beef that Americans consumed daily and that Korea had to accept the OIE international standard unless objective scientific grounds justified deviation from the OIE guidelines” (H.-T. Shin, 2009, p. 570). Additionally, the Lee government continuously stressed that the new agreement would be a great opportunity.

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23 The *Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation* (MBC) is one of four major national South Korean television and radio networks. *Munhwa* means “culture.” The network is owned by the Foundation of Broadcast Culture, which has 70 percents of the company's stocks, while the Jung-Su Scholarship Association owns 30 percents. The MBC receives no government subsidies, and its income is earned entirely from commercial advertising. Currently, the MBC operates 19 local stations and 10 subsidiaries, with approximately 4,000 employees.

24 In March 2009, Chung Woon-Chun, who was the former Minister of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, and Min Dong-Seok, who was a chief of beef deal negotiator, prosecuted five producers of *PD Notebook* for libel. They claimed that *PD Notebook* tainted their reputation by distorting and exaggerating the facts associated with Mad Cow Disease. However, in January 2010, an appellate court upheld a ruling clearing the five producers of *PD Notebook* of defamation charges. The court acknowledged that some interviews and comments of the host in the episode were either distorted or exaggerated to highlight the risk of Mad Cow Disease, but they fell short of punishing the producers because the intent was not malicious (S. Park, 2010). The court said that the producers were modified some facts within legally tolerable degrees. “The media’s role is watching and criticizing the government. These functions should be guaranteed more strongly when the media deals with an issue that is destined to affect a great number of people,” said Judge Lee Sang-hoon. The judge said that this ruling was based on the presumption that a defamation case involving public figures should be judged by different criteria, interpreting freedom of expression more broadly.
in strengthening the Korean economy (e.g., M.-B. Lee, 2008). However, it failed to ease the public’s concerns.

Korean citizens started to hold candlelight vigils against the U.S. beef imports and demanded renegotiation of the agreement to reduce the scope of imported U.S. beef and to restore Korea’s full right to inspection. The first vigil was started on May 2, 2008, by an online community named People’s Movement to Impeach President Lee Myung-Bak (http://cafe.daum.net/antimb) and a group of high school girls who felt fearful that BSE infected beef would be served on their tables. These first candlelight vigil soon snowballed into a nationwide phenomenon (S. Lee, Kim, & Wainwright, 2010). A candlelight vigil was held everyday for first two months, and as of June 10, 2008, a weekend rally was continued in many different locations across the nation. During this period, a total of approximately one million Korean citizens (about 2 percent of all Koreans) participated in the candlelight protest (Amnesty International, 2008, p. 4).25

During the whole process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, most collective actions were generated from everyday citizens’ participation. The participants consisted of teenagers, college students, office workers, clergy, housewives and their children, unionists, members of several non-political online communities, reservist soldiers, and activist groups (S. Lee, et al., 2010). This composition of the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil differed from many previous movements, such as Minjung Movement in the 1970s and 1980s and June Democracy Movement in 1987, whose

25 There were countless citizens who did not participated in the street protest but did engage in the “online protest” during the entire process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.
main participants had been college students, laborers, and clergy (S. Kim, 2000). In particular, the majority of the participants in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil were young liberal-progressives in their twenties and thirties, namely the post-386 liberal-progressives. One survey of the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil shows that 63.8% of the participants identified themselves as “liberal-progressive,” while 7.3% and 28.9% of the participants identified themselves as “conservative” and “moderate,” respectively. More than two-thirds (66.9%) was between the twenties and thirties (K. Cho, 2009).

In the early stage of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the participants peacefully held the candlelight vigil to show their opposition to the Lee Myung-Bak government’s decision on the U.S. beef imports, and the government also allowed the participants to hold the rally. However, as the government maintained its original plan for the resumption of the U.S. beef imports despite the objection from the public, the Korean citizens’ collective actions gradually extended to a huge movement (An, 2010, p. 154). The participants opposed almost every government policy – such as the liberalization of public education, the Grand Canal project, and the privatization of the public sectors (i.e., water, health care, public enterprises, and public broadcasting) – and voiced their dissatisfaction with the general leadership of newly elected President Lee Myung-Bak (C. Kim, et al., 2010).

At this stage, the Lee Myung-Bak government started considering whether the candlelight protest would potentially undermine public order, so the government labeled the rally as an illegal and violent demonstration. Based on the Assembly and Demonstration Act, the police’s permission for the candlelight vigil was no longer
granted anymore (UN Human Rights Council, 2011, p. 15). Every candlelight vigil was presumably illegal without the permission, and consequently, the Korean government could legally suppress the candlelight vigil.\(^{26}\) On May 13, 2008, the Chief of the Korean National Police Agency, Uh Chung-Soo, said in a press conference that he was willing to use every method of suppression against the protesters (S. Chae, 2008). After this press conference, on May 24, 2008, thirty-six citizens were arrested by the police while they were marching through downtown Seoul. This was the first time the Korean police suppressed the candlelight protest, which had been peacefully going on for twenty-two days, since it began on May 2. In the course of cracking down on the candlelight protest, the combat police officers played a main role. The combat police officers followed orders to attack unarmed citizens and commit violent and cruel actions. The protesters were hit in the face by water cannons fired by the combat police officers from less than 10 meters away and consequently had their eardrums split. They were severely injured due to the subsequent attacks with shields and batons (Amnesty International, 2008, p. 10). The combat police officers also sprayed fire extinguishers toward the protesters’ faces to impair the visibility of protesters during the suppression of the candlelight protest (p. 11). The Lee Myung-Bak government justified this violent

\(^{26}\) Although the Korean law guarantees the right to freedom of peaceful assembly based on article 21 of the Constitution, the government can prohibit peaceful assemblies that are considered likely to disturb public order (UN Human Rights Council, 2011). The Assembly and Demonstration Act provides that any person who desires to hold an outdoor assembly or a demonstration must submit a report to the chief of the competent police station with details regarding the planned event (article 6), who has the authority to ban an assembly or demonstration if it is deemed to pose a direct threat to public peace and order (article 8). Particularly, article 10 of the Assembly and Demonstration Act prohibits outdoor rallies after sunset without permission, except in cases where permission is obtained from the competent authorities.
restriction as necessary to protect national security and national economic development (S. Chae, 2008). From May 24 to August 9, the Korean police made a total of 1,242 arrests, and approximately 2,000 citizens were injured (Amnesty International, 2008, p. 4).

Why did millions of Korean citizens voluntarily join such collective efforts at risk of arrest? How could they sustain their participation and lead the movement to achieve critical levels of support from the Korean public in the long enduring protest? The ostensible initial cause of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was the resumption of the U.S. beef imports. However, at its core root, the emergence and maintenance of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil must be explained within the context of the long-term struggles of Korean citizens, particularly the liberal-progressives, for defining their position in Korean society.

In Chapter 3, this study attempted to describe such struggles, by focusing on the process of developing the relationships among successive Korean governments, civil society, and media system. This process has particularly influenced the flow of information in the public sphere, and consequently, certain political actors have held a dominant position in Korean society through symbolic power – the capacity to shape or transform people’s minds. The mainstream media have developed under the strong connection with the conservative forces and business imperatives, and these relationships have hindered diversity in the media discourse in Korea. Nonetheless, although a large portion of the news media has been still seen as part of the conservative bloc and supported the vested interest groups in Korea, the liberal-progressives have continuously attempted to transform the media system. The 2008 Korean Candlelight
Vigil occurred within this context of an evolving set of ideas about the roles of citizens in the public sphere.
CHAPTER 4: MAKING OF A COLLECTIVE MIND THROUGH THE
NEWSPAPER ADS CAMPAIGNS

During the whole process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, diverse social actors – such as the protesters, the Lee Myung-Bak government, political parties, and media institutions – competed for “voice and power” in the public sphere. The media played a crucial role in this competitive struggle for meaning construction at three levels: First, the media was used as a means by the protesters to achieve their goals in the movement. The protesters were actively employing the media as their means of collective actions, and this led to a new level of grassroots movements in several ways in which their participants mobilize, inform, communicate, and campaign. Secondly, as agents, the news media engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The press was clearly split into opposing sides: one group for the Lee Myung-Bak government and the other for the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Third, as a by-product of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, media activism became one of the main purposes of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The protesters’ efforts to challenge the conservative-dominated media system contested not only the content, or texts, and frames of the conservative news organizations, but the entire complex of social relations and practices through which the media messages were produced and disseminated. All of these media’s roles were connected and interacted in the process of constructing and sustaining collective identity of the protesters of the movement.
Chapter 4 explores how the protesters employed the media as the means of collective actions. This study argues that the process of constructing the action system of the movement was a crucial constitutive part of constructing the collective identity of the protesters. In other words, the collective identity of the protesters was their interactive and shared definition of for what purpose and by which means they would act together. Chapter 4 particularly focuses on the newspaper ad campaigns between May and July 2008. The purposes of these newspaper ad campaigns varied, including showing support for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, criticizing the Lee Myung-Bak government, demanding the citizens’ rights, and showing support for the liberal-progressive newspapers (Table 2). The protesters conducted online fundraising campaigns for the ads in the two liberal-progressive newspapers, The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun. As a result, a total of eighty-one candlelight vigil ads were sponsored and designed by countless citizens, both the candlelighters and those who called themselves supporters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil (Table 3). Among eighty-one ads, forty-two ads (51.9 percent) were sponsored by online communities, such as online fan clubs, special interest groups (e.g., photography, baseball, fashion, online game, etc), and geographically related groups. Twelve ads (14.8 percent) were sponsored

27 This mode of newspaper ad campaigns was not totally unprecedented in Korean history. One significant previous campaign was the Dong-A Ilbo ad campaign in 1975. During the period of authoritarian dictatorship between the 1960s and the 1970s, the Dong-A Ilbo struggled to achieve the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and Korean citizens supported the journalists’ resistance through the newspaper ad campaign. This campaign was initiated by a classified ad “Protect Freedom of the Press” in page eight of the Dong-A Ilbo on January 1, 1975. This ad was placed by former President Kim Dae-Jung, who had been a human rights activist as well as a leader of the liberal-progressives during the military regimes (S.-K. Lee, 2006). Between January and May 1975, a total of 10,352 classified ads were published in the Dong-A Ilbo. Although the Dong-A Ilbo surrendered to the demands of the authoritarian regime by firing all of the journalists who fought for the freedom of press and turned its stance to pro-government, this campaign showed how the media could be used in civil resistance.
funded and designed by university alumni associations or students associations. Twelve ads (14.8 percent) were sponsored by occupation groups, such as teachers, journalists, and doctors. Four ads (4.9 percent) were supported by overseas Koreans. Nine ads were sponsored by civic organizations (11.1 percent). Religious organizations also published two candlelight ads (2.5 percent).

Table 2
The Purposes of the Candlelight Vigil Ads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To demand the citizens’ constitutional rights</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To criticize the movement opponents (particularly, the government)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show support for the liberal-progressive newspapers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show support for the movement</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To urge the audiences to participate in the candlelight vigil</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To inform the audiences about the seriousness of governments’ policies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Sources were multiple coded*
Table 3  
*The Sponsor Groups of the Candlelight Vigil Ads in The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun between 1 May and 31 July 2008*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Hankyoreh (N=42)</th>
<th>Kyunghyang Shinmun (N=39)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online communities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University associations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation groups</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic organizations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Koreans</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The classified ads that were sponsored by individuals were excluded for analyzing because such ads were too private to consider as the part of protestors’ collective actions.

The Newspaper Ad Campaigns during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

From the beginning of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, Korean citizens used diverse forms of ICTs, as well as traditional mass media, both as technologies and as spaces where they mediated their political interests and expressed their objection for the resumption of the U.S. beef import. The use of the ICTs, particularly social media, allowed the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to enjoy considerable autonomy vis-à-vis the movement opponents, such as the Lee Myung-Bak government and the mainstream conservative media. These modes of communication were crucial factors in determining the extent and capabilities of the movement and in explaining how the movement could
reach critical levels of support.

The protesters’ abilities of using technologies became the central nervous system of the entire operation of the movement. A diverse group of citizens started coordinating with each other through social media, particularly online communities and social network sites (SNS), such as Cyworld (www.cyworld.com). During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, 1,318 DAUM’s cafés and 357 NAVER’s clubs about the candlelight vigil or Mad Cow Disease were created (An, 2010, p. 158). Several non-political online communities also played a critical role in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. These online communities were a resource for setting a common agenda and constructing a collective agency. The members of each community were able to search for information about Mad Cow Disease, download diplomatic documents of the U.S. to compare with the Korean government statements, and share their analyses (S. Lee, et al., 2010, p. 362).

Since the first candlelight vigil was initiated by an online community named “People’s Movement to Impeach President Lee Myung-Bak,” social media became the key spaces in which the action system of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was created, criticized, and reviewed. For instance, in the DAUM Agora

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28 Social media is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Social network sites are one of the popular types of social media. Boyd and Ellison (2008) define social network sites as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (p. 211).

29 The DAUM and The NAVER are two of the most popular portal sites in Korea. The DAUM’s café and the NAVER’s club are the portals’ online community services, which are similar to Facebook’s Group service.
(http://agora.media.daum.net), one of the most popular online discussion forum, Korean citizens actively debated “whether to march onto the presidential Blue House and whether to use counter-violence against police” (S. Lee, et al., 2010, p. 364). Traffic on these online sites significantly increased at the each crucial phase of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, for instance, on May 2 when the first candlelight vigil was initiated, and when the Korean police began using violent measures to suppress the candlelight vigil on May 24 (Song, 2011, p. 51). Social media enabled each citizen to reach critical mass and to realize their shared objection to the U.S. beef imports and other government policies.

The protesters’ online activities were also combined with traditional media strategies, especially the newspaper ad campaigns. Although the ICTs could enhance the development of social spaces for the protesters in the public sphere, the protesters needed to create vivid images of “who we are” via mass media. These different forms of media strategies were mutually connected and indivisible process. The online activities alone, without other components of the public sphere, could not shape or transformed the public’s perception toward the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

The newspaper ad campaigns were one of the significant collective actions conducted by the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The protesters used their networks of communication for conducting fundraising campaigns and designing and creating the ads. Many different groups of Korean citizens – including the members of online communities, bloggers, college students, clergy, housewives, laborers, and overseas Koreans – actively organized their own newspaper ad campaigns, as well as online
fundraising campaigns. Through the ICTs, such as BBS and instant messenger, the members of each group interacted with each other to create the candlelight ads.

The First Candlelight Vigil Ad Produced by Soul Dresser

The first candlelight vigil newspaper ad was produced by the members of Soul Dresser (http://cafe.daum.net/SoulDresser), an online community about fashion. This first newspaper ad campaign was initiated by a classified ad, which had been placed by eight bloggers in The Hankyoreh, on February 11, 2008 (Y.-E. Jung, 2008; Figure 1). The bloggers expressed their support for The Hankyoreh in their classified ad. As soon as one member of Soul Dresser shared this classified ad on the Soul Dresser’s BBS and suggested launching such a newspaper ad campaign to show their collective opposition to the resumption of the U.S. beef import, many members of Soul Dresser enthusiastically expressed their support for the suggestion by adding more than 300 comments.

The members of Soul Dresser started organizing the working group that led the newspaper ad campaign. By using the ICTs, the working group collectively designed the newspaper ad and shared it with other members. Furthermore, the working group provided campaign updates and received feedback from other members. In the meantime, the members of Soul Dresser spontaneously raised funds for the ad and after only five days collected approximately 17 million won ($15,000). Almost 100 percent

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30 In early 2008, Samsung, the biggest chaebol in Korea, discontinued advertising for The Hankyoreh in revenge for The Hankyoreh’s reports on corruption in Samsung. When The Hankyoreh faced its financial difficulty caused by Samsung’s boycott, many Korean citizens put personal advertisements in The Hankyoreh to show their support for the newspaper.
of Soul Dressers’ total funds came directly from individual members’ donations. Although these funds were not enough to publish an ad on the front page, *The Hankyoreh* was willing to give Soul Dresser a discount on the ad. Finally, the first candlelight vigil ad occupied the front page in *The Hankyoreh* on May 17, 2008 (Figure 3). The Soul Dresser’s successful candlelight vigil ad campaign not only inspired many other groups to launch their own candlelight ad campaigns, but also became a model for those other campaigns.

![Figure 2](image)

*Figure 2.* The eight bloggers’ classified ad in *The Hankyoreh*. Eight Korean bloggers put an ad to show their support for *The Hankyoreh* on February 11, 2008. In May, 2008, this ad inspired the members of Soul Dresser to conduct a newspaper ad campaign against the resumption of the U.S. beef import.

**The Process of Creating the Candlelight Vigil Ads**

The protesters used one relatively traditional way of media strategies, the newspaper ad campaign. This strategy was facilitated by the protesters’ networks of mass self-communication, that is, networks of communication that “[related] many-to-many in the sending and receiving of messages in a multimodal form of communication that [bypassed] mass media and often [escaped] government control” (Castells, 2008, p. 90). These multiple modes of communication of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil did
not result from the technologies themselves, but from appropriation of the technologies by the protesters to fit their needs, their previous experience, and their culture.

Figure 3. The first candlelight vigil published by Soul Dresser in *The Hankyoreh* on May 17, 2008. Soul Dresser, an online community about fashion, put a one-fourth page ad in the front page of *The Hankyoreh* to show their opposition to the resumption of the U.S. beef imports. The success of Soul Dresser’s newspaper ad campaign inspired many other groups to launch their own candlelight ad campaigns. Under the headline, “The Korean Government Must Renegotiate! It’s Your Responsibility! Korean People’s Health is the Top Priority of the Government Obligations,” Soul Dresser appealed directly to the Lee Myung-Bak government to take responsibility for the irrational decision to threaten public health.

As discussed in Chapter 3, in Korea, the media system was developing under the strong connection with the conservative forces, and this collusive relationship continually hindered diversity in the media discourse. Many grassroots efforts to promote social and cultural change in Korean society were often discouraged by the conservative-dominated media system. However, the previous efforts enabled Korean citizens, particularly young liberal-progressives, to realize their abilities of communication networking. In particular, the uses of the Internet and wireless communication became prevailing political routines for young liberal-progressives. Particularly, the nature of social media use by young liberal-progressives was emergent in ways which enabled forms of non-hierarchical coordination of civic engagement in political and cultural collective actions, such as the candlelight vigils in 2002 and 2004.
The origins and forms of the media strategies of the Candlelight Vigil protesters, including the newspaper ad campaigns, were also linked to the history of continuous struggles, current conditions, and everyday political routines. Some major trends of the newspaper ad campaigns therefore revealed the basic cultural patterns of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, and these patterns directly related to the construction of collective identities of the protesters.

*The protesters’ abilities of mass self-communication networking*

The protesters appropriated the platforms of mass self-communication (as defined in Chapter 2, pp. 20-22) to enhance their symbolic power vis-à-vis the movement opponents. The abilities of mass self-communication networking were developing and strengthening the practices of autonomy, including user-generated content (UGC). These abilities were a critical factor in determining the extent and consequences of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

The networks of mass self-communication provided the protesters with the technical means to produce the candlelight vigil ads. In particular, the protesters were empowered by social media that allowed them “perpetual connectivity” (Castells, 2009, p. 348). The protesters used their networking abilities not only to mobilize donations for the ads and create the ads, but also to multiply the impact of the candlelight vigil ads through linking the ads to their blogs and SNS and other websites. These networks enhanced the power and autonomy of the protesters against the movement’s opponents who dominated media discourses in the public sphere in Korea by controlling access to the communication network.
The abilities of mass self-communication networking were enhancing the practices of autonomy for organizing the decision-making structure of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. These elements of the newspaper ad campaigns are often referred to as participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006; Lewis, 2012), which emphasizes “the extent to which end-users feel enabled and encouraged to participate in the creation and circulation of media” (Lewis, 2012, p. 847). Based on participatory culture, to conduct the newspaper ad campaigns, each sponsor group of the candlelight vigil ads spontaneously set up functional, skill-based working groups that led its newspaper ad campaign. According to Park Geun-Hong, who was an active member of MLBPARK (an online community about baseball), each group was able to easily find well-qualified volunteers who could lead the newspaper ad campaigns:

Most groups that conducted the newspaper ad campaigns consisted of many different kinds of Korean citizens from many different socio-economic backgrounds. In MLBPARK, there are all kinds of experts. For example, if a member of MLBPARK has a question about a lawsuit, she or he can easily find a lawyer in the community. If you have a question about New York, you can find a member of MLBPARK who lives in New York. My community is like the Genie’s magic lamp. As soon as she or he posts a question on the MLBPARK’s BBS, several experts who can answer the question will appear in a minute. During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, a lot of members of MLBPARK, – including media artists, advertisers, journalists, copywriters – volunteered for the newspaper ad campaign. The volunteers led the newspaper ad campaign for MLBPARK. (personal communication, June 6, 2011)

The working groups of each sponsor group of the candlelight vigil ads created sub-communities or additional BBS within the larger community solely for organizing the newspaper ad campaign. The working groups of MLBPARK, for instance, opened an additional online community on a portal site (cafe.daum.net/VetoMadBull) and used
it as a social space for discussing the design of the MLBPARK’s candlelight vigil ad. By utilizing the MLBPARK’s BBS, the working groups also shared every decision-making process with other members and got feedback on it (G. Park, personal communication, June 6, 2011).

Although the working groups led the newspaper campaign ads for each sponsor group, there was no hierarchical structure between the working group and other members. In the networks of mass self-communication, every member of the sponsor groups had an equal opportunity to express his or her opinion on the newspaper ad campaigns without interference. They were actively involved in decisions about the content, placement, and objectives of their candlelight vigil ads. The working groups played roles in facilitating the discussion among the members, in collecting and compiling the discussion posts, and in creating the actual candlelight vigil ads based on the discussion (S. Yoo, personal communication, May 26, 2011).

This absence of hierarchical leadership was one of the main trends of other repertoires of collective actions of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Despite the absence of the hierarchical leadership, the protesters spontaneously coordinated massive and rapid candlelight vigils in major cities by using the ICTs, particularly social media. Yeom Seung-Sik, who was a Candlelight Vigil protester, said:

> Although both some lawmakers from the opposition liberal-progressives and leaders of civic organizations often participated in the candlelight vigils, they did not take a leading role in organizing and conducting the candlelight vigils. They were not our [the protesters’] leaders. I believe that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was a social movement of the citizens, by the citizens, for the citizens. In this sense, those politicians who came to the candlelight vigils were just one of millions of protesters. (personal communication, May 30, 2011; emphasis added)
The protesters also used the networks of mass self-communication to strengthen grassroots fundraising activities. Running an ad in nationwide newspapers, including *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, can vary widely in cost, depending on the size, color, and page of the ad. The members of the sponsor groups spontaneously raised funds for running the ads and collectively made decisions about the content and placement of their candlelight vigil ads depending on the amount of the collected funds. For example, about 480 members of MLBPARK collected approximately 11 million won ($10,000) for a one-fourth page color ad in the front page of the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* (G. Park, personal communication, June 6, 2011; Figure 4). On the other hand, 132 members of an online classical music community, Go! Classic (http://www.goclassic.co.kr), raised two million won ($1,750) and published a one-fourth page color ad in page five of *The Hankyoreh* (Hajin, 2008). During the process of the grassroots online fundraising, many working groups of the sponsor groups updated detailed information about their fundraising progress, including a list of the sponsors (i.e., their online names) and the amount of individual donations, to allow the members to track their donations (S. Yoo, personal communication, May 26, 2011).

These decision-making structures of each sponsor group and horizontal communications (i.e., peer-to-peer and social network) were based not only on the networks of mass self-communication but also on the networks of pre-existing trust. Each sponsor group was built and developed around the commonalities among the members, such as initiatives, interests, desires, or occupations (S. Yeom, personal communication, May 30, 2011). Their group activities provided a feeling of solidarity
for each member and then constructed a perception of collective identity. Park Geun-Hong said:

I call myself a citizen of MLBPARK. I believe that the commonality of every community may be a strong sense of belonging, the feeling of being connected and accepted within the community. I play with the citizens of MLBPARK in MLBPARK. I live in MLBPARK……During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, we [the members of MLBPARK] collectively created our candlelight vigil ad, and this gave us a great sense of satisfaction and achievement. (personal communication, June 6, 2011; emphasis added)

This kind of pre-existing shared identities provided the members with a common position in the networks of mass-self communication and networks of trust when they discussed and negotiated with each other for the newspaper ad campaigns.

Figure 4. A candlelight vigil ad of the Kyunghyang Shinmun on May 26, 2008 sponsored by MLBPARK, an online baseball community. The bankbook image contained in the ad provides information about how the members of MLBPARK collected enough money to publish this ad in the Kyunghyang Shinmun, including a list of the sponsors and the amount of individual donations. According to the bankbook image, each member of MLBPARK donated ten thousand won to fifty thousand won (approximately ten dollars to fifty dollars).

The process of determining the ways and means of the newspaper ad campaigns and conducting the campaigns through various forms of communication was consequently grounded in “participatory culture” that was developed and enhanced by
the citizens’ struggles to transform political power structure in Korean society. In the participatory culture, the democratic values and principles – such as autonomy, equality, grassroots participation, horizontal communication, and trust – functioned as the symbolic materials for constructing the collective identities of the protesters, but conversely the constructive process of collective identities enabled the protesters to strengthen the values and principles. In other words, the collective identities, as they were constructed over time, excluded or marginalized certain principles or values just as surely as they embodied and made salient others – in effect, strengthening boundaries of who counted as the protesters. Based on these symbolic materials, the candlelight vigil ads regulated the membership of protesters and identified the requisites for joining the movement and the criteria by which the protesters recognized themselves and were recognized.

In the candlelight vigil ads, three main themes were detected (Table 4). First, the protesters defined themselves as “the representatives of all Korean citizens.” Secondly, the protesters attempted to reset the citizen-government relationship in the candlelight vigil ads. They proclaimed that they were “the master of the government” as well as “the guardian of Korean democracy.” In the ads, President Lee and his government were identified either as “the servant of citizens” or as “the destroyer of Korean democracy.” Finally, the protesters emphasized the importance of productive interaction between the government and the citizens to enhance democratic practices. The protesters were aware of the impact of the conservative-dominated media system on public opinion. In this sense, they equated the mainstream conservative newspapers with “the fundamental threat to Korean democracy.”
### Table 4
*The Main Themes of the Candlelight Vigil Ads*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Candlelight Vigil Ads (N=81)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the protesters as the representative of All Korean citizens</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the protesters as the guardian of Korean democracy as well as the master of the government</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>87.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizing the importance of communication between the citizens and the government to strengthen democratic practices</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Sources were multiple coded.*

**“We Are the Representative of All Korean Citizens!”**

In the candlelight vigil ads, the protesters mainly portrayed themselves as “we,” “Korean people,” “common people,” “the whole nation,” and “the Republic of Korea.”

Although the size of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was quite huge, and the diversity also varied, the protesters were still a relatively small portion in the whole Korean population. Nonetheless, the candlelight vigil ads identified the protesters as the *representative of all Korean Citizens*.

In the first ad of *The Hankyoreh*, for example, the members of the Soul Dresser continuously used “Korean people” as the subject of each sentence. The headline, “The Korean Government Must Renegotiate! It’s Your Responsibility! Korean People’s Health is the Top Priority of the Government Obligations,” appealed directly to the Lee Myung-Bak government to take responsibility for the “irrational” decision to threaten “Korean people’s health.” Furthermore, citing, “Korean People Can Trust the Safety of
the U.S. Beef More Than the Korean Government and Some of Conservative Newspapers,” the ad expressed a severe critical attitude toward both the Lee Myung-Bak government and the mainstream conservative newspapers.

These definitions of the protesters produced commonalities between the protesters and potential supporters. The candlelight vigil ads did not just appeal to the audiences for opposing the U.S. beef imports and other government policies; rather, the audiences were called to act upon shared beliefs in the Korean way of life. The protesters’ newspaper advertising was sending the messages to those “Korean people” who lived in “the Republic of Korea” and shared the same values and beliefs with the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The protesters particularly established commonalities with the potential supporters through conveying specific potential consequences from the Lee Myung-Bak government policies. For instance, the candlelight vigil ads sponsored by social movement organizations, such as *Citizens Against the Imports of U.S. Beef Organization*, attempted to inform the audiences about the seriousness of U.S. beef imports and their negative consequences on “our” everyday lives and to urge the government to take responsibility for its irresponsible actions. On June 27, the Citizens’ Organization Against U.S. Beef Imports published an ad in *The Hankyoreh*: the title of this ad was “The Q&A Session About the U.S. Beef Imports.” Under the headline, “Mad Cow Disease Will Be Served At Our Tables! Withdraw the

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31 On May 2, 2008, twelve civil organizations, such as *People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy*, gathered to discuss the formation of a citizen’s organization against the U.S. beef imports. On May 6, approximately 1,700 civil organizations and groups gathered to form the Citizens’ Organization Against U.S. Beef Imports. This organization was committed to participating along with Korean citizens in their efforts to protest the U.S. beef imports and to urge the Lee Myung-Bak government to develop a plan that kept the health and safety of its citizens in mind.
Agreement!,” the question and answer session of the ad consisted of detailed information about dangerous consequences generated from the U.S. beef imports in Korean society, as well as why Korean people should have been in opposition to the Lee Myung-Bak government. The provided information continuously linked a list of estimated threats of contaminated beef to everyday lives of ordinary citizens, such as the threat to children’s health.

Although the protesters described themselves as “the representative of all Koreans,” they delimited the definitions of the protesters with respect to others in the candlelight vigil ads. These processes of categorization and legitimation were efforts to create sociopolitical boundaries that produced greater cultural resources for the protesters (Gieryn, 1983). In particular, selecting *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* as their advertising media was ipso facto a boundary of the protesters. During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, forty-two candlelight vigil ads were put in *The Hankyoreh*, and thirty-nine candlelight vigil ads were run in *Kyunghyang Shinmun*. Both *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* are intended to provide an independent, progressive, and nationalistic alternative to mainstream conservative newspapers (*Kyunghyang Shinmun*, 2005; *The Hankyoreh*, 1987). In the Korean context, “reading *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*” has been equated with “advocating democratic and progressive values” (S. Yeom, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

The protesters considered these two papers as their “spokesmen.” In many candlelight vigil ads, the members of the sponsor groups clearly stated that they supported the two liberal-progressive newspapers. In particular, the protesters argued
that *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* deserved support because the newspapers were credible, unbiased, and balanced news sources and consequently contributed to the democratic development of Korea (S. Yeom, personal communication, May 30, 2011). For example, in a full page ad of *The Hankyoreh* on June 11, 2008, the members of Miclub (http://micon.miclub.com), an online community to share information about fashion, beauty, and women’s lifestyle, wrote, “This Ad Is Published by Those Sun-Youngs [the nickname of Miclub members] Who Love the Republic of Korea and Support Credible News Media.”

The protesters also tried to delimit a definition of themselves by breaking free from older veterans who had led the previous democratization movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was different from previous movements in the 1970s and 1980s in terms of the ways of protesting against the government. While offline demonstrations during the previous movements in the 1970s and 1980s had been typically accompanied by violent confrontations between citizens and the government, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was unprecedentedly peaceful, though there were violent police reactions. Furthermore, in the Korean context, those older veterans, particularly labor union members, have been framed as “pro-communists” or “anti-government instigators” by the conservative forces that have dominated media discourses. The protesters were concerned lest the mainstream conservative media would treat them as “the veterans or a crowd who was easily instigated by the veterans” (G. Park, personal communication, June 6, 2011). In this sense, the protesters called their movement a “nonviolent resistance,” “peaceful protest,” and “pro-democracy movement.” Through several candlelight vigil ads, the protesters argued that the
participation of the veterans could have diminished the original significance of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and they boycotted the veterans. In a full page ad of The Hankyoreh on June 10, for example, the coalition of several online communities – including 82Cook (http://www.82cook.com), DV Prime (http://dvprime.donga.com), Miclub, PPOMPPU (http://www.ppomppu.co.kr/index.php), and SLRClub (http://www.slrclub.com) – proclaimed: (1) “We Only Use Peaceful Tactics to Accomplish Our Goals”; (2) “We Are Monitoring the Violent Suppression Against Us”; and (3) “We Never Allow Any Political Organizations and Interest Groups to Participate in Our Protest.”

**The Guardian of Korean Democracy and Their Imagined Korea**

The protesters also delimited their membership through identifying themselves as “democratic citizens,” and the Constitution of the Republic of Korea was prominently used as a reference for the identification. Based on the Constitution, the candlelight vigil ads emphasized that the protesters struggled to build a more democratic society and to promote constitutional rights. This identification in the candlelight vigil ads revealed *how the protesters imagined the Republic of Korea*. The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil enabled the participants to think who they were as a nation as well as providing opportunities to transform how they think of themselves. As Benedict Anderson (2006) tells us, if a nation is an “imagined community,” then discourses about Korean people and Korean democracy in the candlelight vigil ads should provide clues about the ways in which the protesters imagined their national
community. The imagined Korea was also an idealized or desirable community as a primary movement goal.

The protesters’ imagined community was embodied and reflected in the images contained in the candlelight vigil ads. In particular, a photographic mosaic ad in The Hankyoreh, which was published by the members of MLBPARK on July 11, 2008, provided a powerful metaphor for the protesters’ imagined community (Figure 5).

Figure 5. “It Ain’t Over Till It’s Over.” The members of MLBPARK published a photographic mosaic ad in The Hankyoreh on July 11, 2008. The image of the praying girl was made up of the photos of the protesters.

The primary image of the MLBPARK ad is a girl holding a lit candle, and the girl’s image embodies the protesters’ imagined community. Particularly, the protesters’ imagined national community is characterized by the feelings or impressions evoked by the image of the praying girl, such as “peace,” “hope,” “purity,” “non-competitiveness,” “potentiality,” “childlike behavior,” “nonthreatening behavior,” and “non-aggressiveness.” Through the role in initiating the first candlelight vigil in May 2008, the word and image of “the candlelight girl” became an icon of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and mostly had positive meanings during the process of the
candlelight vigil, such as “autonomy” “nonviolence,” and “playfulness” (Yi, 2009). In the ad, the girl in white is earnestly and peacefully praying with closed eyes; she looks innocent and hopeful. With the headline of “It Ain’t Over Till It’s Over,” the girl’s facial expression is resolute and thoughtful. The girl may have big potential or a dream, but it can only be fully realized if she is growing up in an appropriate environment, in an atmosphere of continuous caring, support, and understanding.

The girl’s image is made up of hundreds of pieces of images of the members of MLBPARK who participated in the newspaper ad campaign. The fact that the individual pixels appear as the primary image tells us about the ways that the protesters imagined their national community. Every individual pixel – which represents the members of the protesters’ imagined national community, namely, Korean citizens – is the same size and has its own color and an address which corresponded to its coordinates in the primary image. Each pixel plays an equally important role in shaping the primary image in the ad. Hundreds of individual photos appear to blend together and form the primary image of the praying girl. If some pixels are stuck or dead, they will cause the primary image to display improperly. In the protesters’ imagined national community, all members shall be equal before the law, and there shall be no discrimination in political and social life on account of social status and occupations. The protesters’ imagined community does not deny and repress social differences among the individual members, and all the members will play their own roles in the process of realizing the imagined community.

32 The image of “the candlelight girl” was popular among the protesters. It was widely circulated on stickers, leaflets, posters, and T-shirts (Yi, 2009).
In this sense, the protesters called themselves the “guardian” of Korean democracy as well as the “master” or “employer” of the Korean government. These delimited definitions of the protesters were quite different from those of the previous movements in the 1970s and 1980s. While the previous movements in the 1970s and 1980s had strongly demanded a constitutional amendment to give the citizens more rights and to end the military rules, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil supported the current constitution, which had been amended in 1987, and conversely required the government to obey the constitution. The candlelight vigil ad published by Miclub can be good examples. The Miclub’s ad in The Hankyoreh on May 29 started with a quotation from the Constitution; it quoted Articles 1 of Chapter 1 of the Constitution: “The Republic of Korea Shall Be a Democratic Republic [Clause 1], Not a Corporation,” and “The Sovereignty of the Republic of Korea Shall Reside in the People, and All State Authority Shall Emanate From the People [Clause 2]” (Figure 6).

During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, Article 1 was used as the words of the most popular protest song titled “Article One of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea.” The underlying message was that the constitutional and democratic rights resided with the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the protesters, not with the movement opponents.

In the candlelight vigil ads, “the guardians of Korean democracy” stood in opposition to or conflict with the Lee Myung-Bak government, the then-ruling

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33 The song “Article One of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea” was written by Yoon Min-Suk. Although he had composed this song protesting the impeachment of President Roh Moo-Hyun in 2004, it became popular nationwide during the process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil (B. Kang, 2012).
conservative Grand National Party, and the mainstream conservative newspapers. These movement opponents were portrayed as “the destroyers of Korean democracy,” “the suppression of democratic rights,” “disobedient servant,” “darkness,” “miscommunication,” “violence,” and “injustice” in the candlelight vigil ads. On July 5, 2008, for instance, an online community about pregnancy and babies, The Mothers Who Live in Busan (http://cafe.daum.net/busannmom), published a candlelight vigil ad in *The Hankyoreh*, and the headline said, “The Night Will Never Win Where the Light Is.” These ads attempted to link these opponents’ identities to significant threats to Korean democracy and the Korean way of life.

*Figure 6.* The candlelight vigil ad published by Miclub both in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*. The members of Miclub quoted Articles 1 of Chapter 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea in this ad.
“Listen! Obey the Nation’s Order!”

It is important to note that the protesters did not question the principle of representative democracy itself. Rather, they listed the qualifications of their representatives. The protesters particularly emphasized the importance of productive interactions between the government and the citizens to strengthen democratic practices. “Good listening” as an essential part of being a qualified leader was also stressed. The protesters argued that the ordinary citizens as the master of the Republic of Korea must participate in society’s problem-solving and respond to the public issues, and these must be reflected in the public policies, including the resumption of the U.S. beef imports. For instance, the Miclub’s ad of *The Hankyoreh* on June 11 opened with a strong order: “Listen Carefully! Obey the Nation’s Order!” In this ad, the protesters stressed potential damages from several government policies, such as the resumption of the U.S. beef imports, the Grand Canal project, the privatization of public sectors, and the liberalization of public education. Arguing, “Please Stop Everything You [the Lee Myung-Bak government] Want to Do! A Master Does Not Need a Disobedient Servant,” this ad established the protesters as the master of the Korean government or the employer of President Lee Myung-Bak (Figure 7).

In their caricature ad of *The Hankyoreh* on July 19, 2008, the members of Go! Classic also portrayed President Lee Myung-Bak as an “Incapable Conductor of an Orchestra [the Republic of Korea]” (Figure 7). Through emphasizing the role of a conductor in an orchestra to create a beautiful harmony, the ad directly urged President Lee to “Communicate with the Korean People.”
Figure 7. The page seven of The Hankyoreh on June 11, 2008. The members of Miclub published a full page ad in The Hankyoreh on June 11. This ad established the protesters as the master of the Korean government while identifying the Korean government and President Lee Myung-Bak as the servant of the citizens.
In the caricature ad of Go! Classic, the members of the orchestra were depicted as members of diverse social groups, including a high school girl, a salary man, a housewife, a nun and a monk, showing a sad or angry expression. They demanded President Lee Myung-Bak’s serious reflection on his job as the Chief Executive of the Republic of Korea and stressed the importance of communication with citizens: “Your Job as Conductor Is to Get the Orchestra to Act Together. You Must Be Open to All Viewpoints. You Must Seek Input of All Kinds from All Places. You Will Be Fired If You Do Not Interact with Us.”

*Figure 8.* The candlelight vigil ad published by Go! Classic in *The Hankyoreh* on July 19, 2008. Go! Classic depicted President Lee Myung-Bak as an incapable conductor of an orchestra in this ad.

Chapter 4 explored how the protesters conducted the newspaper ad campaigns and how they self-identify in the candlelight vigil ads in the two liberal-progressive newspapers. In the candlelight vigil ads, the democratic values and principles functioned as the symbolic materials for constructing the collective identities of the protesters, and particularly the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was symbolically
connected with the Constitution of the Republic of Korea. The protesters also required the government to obey the constitution. The underlying message was that the constitutional rights resided with the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and its protestors, not with the movement opponents. In this way, the protesters defined themselves as “the representatives of all Korean citizens,” “the master of the government,” and “the guardian of Korean democracy.” On the contrary, the movement opponents, such as President Lee and the mainstream conservative newspapers, were identified as “the threat of Korean democracy” or “the suppression of democratic rights.”
CHAPTER 5: FRAMING THE 2008 KOREAN CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

While the Lee Myung-Bak government and the protesters struggled to exercise political influence over the public, Korean newspapers split into opposing sides. This struggle was clearly reflected in the protesters’ preference for certain newspapers: they supported two liberal-progressives newspapers – *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* – and also condemned and boycotted the “big three” conservative newspapers – the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. As active agents, these news media engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for the protesters and their movement, and this influenced the process of the construction of collective identities of the protesters.

Chapter 5 examines media frames in the news coverage of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to understand the roles of the news media in the identity construction process. This study especially focused on two national print sources, *The Hankyoreh* among the liberal-progressives newspapers and the *Dong-A Ilbo* among the big three conservative newspapers. *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* have been viewed as representing the two ideological camps in Korea. There has also been a clear divide between the readers of both newspapers due to political ideology (Yeo, 2010, pp. 2, 62-85).

This study analyzed a total of 453 news stories of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, and the number of news stories in *The Hankyoreh* (N=318) was approximately 2.5 times more than those in the *Dong-A Ilbo* (N=135). This framing analysis aimed to explore the meanings of texts and images – including news reports, columns, editorials,
features, and cartoons – in the news coverage about the candlelight vigil, the strategies of the newspapers’ framing, and the purpose of the framing. The detailed methods used for this framing analysis have been described in Chapter 2 (pp. 26-28).

News Media Frames of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

Naming of the Protesters and their Movement

The terms to describe the participants and their movement used by The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo were different. The dominant terms used by the two newspapers are displayed in Tables 5 and 6.

In The Hankyoreh, the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil were described as citizens (45%; in Korean si-min) and Koreans (16.7%; in Korean kook-min). Particularly, The Hankyoreh often used “ordinary citizen” as the headline of each article. For example, the headline of an article from The Hankyoreh (May 2, 2008), “Ordinary Citizens Elevate Democratic Principles,” directly portrayed the protesters as a group of ordinary citizens. Youth was another term used by The Hankyoreh, especially in news coverage published in May, the earlier part of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Other terms included participants (4.1%) and demonstrators (2.2%). In The Hankyoreh, with the number of protesters decreasing in the latter part of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the term “demonstrators” was used.
Table 5
Frequency and Percent of News Stories Containing Each Term to Indicate the Protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>The Hankyoreh (N=318)</th>
<th>Dong-A Ilbo (N=135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>143 (45)</td>
<td>12 (8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koreans</td>
<td>53 (16.7)</td>
<td>8 (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>20 (6.3)</td>
<td>6 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelights</td>
<td>40 (12.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>13 (4.1)</td>
<td>10 (7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrators</td>
<td>7 (2.2)</td>
<td>25 (18.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rioters</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instigators (or interest groups)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>27 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowd</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal-progressives</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human beings</td>
<td>2 (.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not specified the protesters’ identity</td>
<td>58 (18.2)</td>
<td>44 (32.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sources were multiple coded.

In the news coverage of The Hankyoreh, the term “candlelight” was continuously used to indicate the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil: Candlelight Vigil, Candlelight Demonstration, Candlelight, Candlelight Festival, Candlelight Revolution, Candlelight March, and Candlelight Mass. In the process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, “candlelight” became the word to indicate both the protesters and their movement in the news coverage of The Hankyoreh. In particular, more than one-
third of *The Hankyoreh* articles in July 2008, the latter part of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, used “Candlelight” to simultaneously describe the group of protesters as well as their movement. For instance, on July 25, *The Hankyoreh* ran a headline stating that “The Candlelights in Custody Sent a Message to the Candlelights Who Gathered in the Square and Street” and published a feature story about protesters who were kept in custody as a result of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

### Table 6
*Frequency and Percent of News Stories Containing Each Term to Indicate the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Hankyoreh (N=318)</th>
<th>Dong-A Ilbo (N=135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight Vigil</td>
<td>218 (68.6%)</td>
<td>40 (29.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight Festival</td>
<td>27 (8.5%)</td>
<td>2 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight Demonstration</td>
<td>35 (11%)</td>
<td>48 (35.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight</td>
<td>34 (10.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight Revolution</td>
<td>9 (2.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight March</td>
<td>5 (1.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Demonstration</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>17 (12.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Protest against U.S. Beef Imports</td>
<td>6 (1.9%)</td>
<td>30 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight Mass</td>
<td>3 (.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Sources were multiple coded*
In contrast, the *Dong-A Ilbo* described the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a group of instigators (20%) or demonstrators (18.5%). In Korean society, the word “demonstrators” (in Korean, *si-we-dae* or *si-we-ggoon*) has carried a negative connotation because it has been connected with previous pro-democracy movements in the 1970s and 1980s and particularly associated with violent conflict between combat police officers and citizens. The closely related term, “rioters,” was also used to describe the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil (4.4%). Other descriptions included citizens (8.9%), Koreans (5.9%), and youth (4.4%). However, these terms were often employed when the *Dong-A Ilbo* divided the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil into two different groups: instigators and ordinary people. In the news coverage of the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the words “citizens,” “Koreans,” or “youth” were used to indicate those who were contaminated by the politically motivated instigators. For example, on June 27, a *Dong-A Ilbo* editorial ran the headline “The Candlelight Vigil Protests Become Anti-Government, Illegal Protests.” In these articles, the ordinary people, who participated in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, were described as an “ignorant,” “unconscious,” and “immature” crowd who were easily manipulated by political interest organizations. For example, a *Dong-A Ilbo* editorial on July 2, 2008, addressed its readers as follows:

> Everyone knows that the *People’s Association for Measures Against Mad Cow Disease* and some media, such as some liberal-progressve news media and Internet portal sites, are mainly responsible for spreading false and unfounded information on

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34 According to Park (2010), the Lee Myung-Bak government intentionally used the word “habitual demonstrators” in many official government documents when it described the participants of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Park argues that such descriptions became a violation of fundamental human rights in Korea.
U.S. beef imports. … It is heartbreaking to see not a few ordinary citizens be fooled by their seditious fraudulence. (“Citizens Should Discern Lies and Demagogy,” Dong-A Ilbo, July 2, 2008)

The Dong-A Ilbo relied on “Candlelight Demonstration” (35.6%) and “Candlelight Vigil” (29.6%) to describe the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The Dong-A Ilbo, however, used the word “Candlelight Vigil” when it argued that the peaceful candlelight vigil turned into a violent one. In this case, the Dong-A Ilbo often employed the word “Illegal Demonstration” (12.6%) when it portrayed the violent protest as contaminated. “The Protest against U.S. Beef Imports” was another frequently used description (22.2%). In this case, the Dong-A Ilbo confined the purpose of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to the matter of the U.S. beef imports and made light of other movement goals. More specifically, in the news coverage of the Dong-A Ilbo, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil’s purposes other than the opposition to the U.S. beef imports were deemed as “impure” and “contaminated” ones.

Comparing the Media Frames of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo

The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo framed the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in very different ways (Table 7).

Dominant Frames of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh

Four major frames emerged from the analysis of the news coverage of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh: the protest 2.0 frame, the all Korean’s will frame, the pro-democracy movement frame, and the victimization frame.
Table 7
*Frequency and Percent of News Stories Containing Each Frame of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in The Hankyoreh and the Dong-A Ilbo*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>The Hankyoreh (N=318)</th>
<th>Dong-A Ilbo (N=135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Koreans’ will (showing the participants to be representative)</td>
<td>221 (69.5%)</td>
<td>3 (2.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Democracy movement</td>
<td>149 (46.9%)</td>
<td>2 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization (emphasizing violence associated with the movement opponents, especially police officers)</td>
<td>103 (32.4%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protest 2.0 (emphasizing the newness of the movement)</td>
<td>46 (14.5%)</td>
<td>1 (0.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securitization</td>
<td>3 (0.9%)</td>
<td>83 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegitimization (categorizing the movement into negative social categories)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>76 (56.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative consequences</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>28 (20.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Sources were multiple coded*

**The all Koreans’ will frame**

The “all Koreans’ will” frame was the most dominant frame in the news stories of *The Hankyoreh* (69.5%). In this frame, *The Hankyoreh* stressed the diversity of participants in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. It often provided the detailed portrayals of the protest scene in downtown Seoul and emphasized the broad diversity of the participants. This trend continued in *The Hankyoreh* with words identifying the whole Korean population, such as “all Koreans.” In particular, in the news coverage of *The Hankyoreh*, “all Koreans” were depicted as those who willingly and voluntarily
initiated the movement against the Lee Myung-Bak government and collectively supported it. For instance, on May 27, the headline of an editorial in *The Hankyoreh* was: “Listen to the Voice of Koreans.” An editorial on July 7 was also started with the headline of “Surrender to the Koreans.” In addition, several articles of *The Hankyoreh* informed its readers about the seriousness of U.S. beef imports and its negative consequences in “our everyday lives” and urged the government to take responsibility for its “irresponsible actions.” In particular, these articles continuously linked a list of estimated threats of contaminated beef to the “everyday lives of all Koreans.”

In the “all Koreans’ will” frame, the citizens stood in opposition to or in conflict with the Korean government and President Lee. The movement opponents, especially President Lee, were described not only as those who were not to be trusted and were stubborn and arrogant, but also as those who did not listen to the Korean people. For example, on May 25, *The Hankyoreh*’s main headline was “The Lee Myung-Bak Government Covers its Eyes and Ears, and It Makes the Candlelight Vigil Protesters Angry.” The editorials of *The Hankyoreh* on May 8, May 19, June 2, June 9, and July 12 also had the headlines of “The Value of Trust,” “Loss of Trust,” “Failure to Listen,” “President Lee’s Stubborn Attitude Fuels the Candlelight Vigil,” and “No Change in the President’s Arrogance,” respectively.

Many articles in *The Hankyoreh* framed the limited communication between the government and citizens as the root cause of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In particular, the big three conservative newspapers – the *Chosun Ilbo*, the *JoongAng Ilbo*, and the *Dong-A Ilbo* – were identified as the main “obstacles” to active communication between the government and citizens in the news coverage of *The Hankyoreh*. The
Hankyoreh strongly insisted that the news media must maintain their independence from the political system. For example, a The Hankyoreh’s feature article on May 10 addressed its readers as follows:

Tens of thousands of Koreans opposed to the U.S. beef imports gathered once again at the Cheonggyecheon Plaza in Seoul on May 9. … The biggest reason would appear to be the lack of public confidence in the government. … The Lee government misread public opinion. The government does not understand how public sentiment is formed and how it spreads. It put too much confidence in the strength of the conservative media as symbolized by the so-called “Cho-Joong-Dong,” – the Chosun Ilbo, the JoongAng Ilbo, and the Dong-A Ilbo – three papers that were thoroughly left out of the whole flow of public discussion as it formed and spread over the Internet. It is only natural that the government was unable to read the direction public sentiment has been moving in. (“President Arrogance Contributed to Continued Protest,” The Hankyoreh, May 10, 2008)

Figure 9. “A Political Deaf.” This cartoon, which was published in The Hankyoreh on July 7, 2008, illustrated the limited communication between President Lee Myung-Bak and the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In this cartoon, President Lee ignores the demands of the protesters and banned the protesters from gathering by using the buses. The mad cow, which is depicted as the closest friend of President Lee, asks President Lee. “Are you planning to go this way without communication with the people for five years of your presidency?” President Lee, however, cannot listen to the mad cow’s remark, saying “What? I can't hear you!” (“A Political Deaf,” The Hankyoreh, July 7, 2008).
The pro-democracy movement frame

In 46.9 percent of news stories, The Hankyoreh used the pro-democracy movement frame. This frame emphasized that the participants struggled to build a more democratic society. The newspaper described the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as the process of the realization of participatory democracy in Korean society. In the pro-democracy movement frame, The Hankyoreh articulated the legitimacy of the candlelight vigil, and the participants were mainly identified as the “master” of the Lee Myung-Bak government or the “guardian” of Korean democracy. On May 5, 2008, the editorial of The Hankyoreh severely criticized the Lee government’s incompetence in the negotiation. Under the headline, “The Korean Government’s Dangerous and Miserable Idea,” the editorial consisted of detailed information about the rights to freedom of assembly enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Korea and confirmed the legitimacy of the candlelight vigil. In this article, The Hankyoreh described the candlelight vigil as “the maturest form of democratic protest.” Furthermore, an editorial of The Hankyoreh on May 3 also argued that “each Korean citizen has the right to freedom of assembly and the freedom of choice and expression,” and therefore “the Lee government should not forcefully suppress the citizens’ peaceful protest.”

Quoting the Constitution of the Republic of Korea was a prominent pattern of the news coverage about the candlelight vigil in The Hankyoreh. During the candlelight vigil, the Lee Myung-Bak government considered the candlelight vigil likely to undermine public order, and the government labeled the rally as an illegal and violent demonstration. The Hankyoreh condemned these violent acts of the Korean government
as infringing on the right to freedom of assembly of Korean citizens guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea: “All citizens enjoy the freedom of speech and the press, and of assembly and association” (*The Hankyoreh*, May 5, 2008, p. 1). The title of a column of *The Hankyoreh* on May 28 was “Have You Ever Seen the Tear of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea?” Through personifying the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, this article not only criticized how “the Lee Myung-Bak government violated constitutional rights,” but also equated the participants with the Constitution itself. Another editorial of *The Hankyoreh* on June 10 also reported the following:

The participants wanted to confirm that they are the masters of this country. … The people want to go beyond those formal procedures and see the realization of substantive democracy. In other words, Koreans are not going to let the President have his way while ignoring the will of the people. This government needs to take serious note of the fact that the most popular protest song at the candlelight vigil is “Article One of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea.” … Today, across the country, one million people are expected to hold candles high. Their demand is simple: this government should listen to the voices of the people and follow their demands, and this is “democracy.” (“June Struggle, Candlelight Revolution,” *The Hankyoreh*, June 10, 2008)

In the pro-democracy movement frame, the movement opponents were portrayed as “the suppression of Korean democracy,” “the violation of the Constitution,” and “the remnants of the authoritarian regimes.” *The Hankyoreh* attempted to link the opponents’ identities to significant threats to Korean democracy. In particular, in the news coverage in *The Hankyoreh*, the two military regimes between the 1960s and the 1980s were primarily used to portray the movement opponents. On
May 26, for instance, an article in *The Hankyoreh* reported that there were growing concerns that the Lee government reversed the democratic progress that Korean society had made. This article described the Lee government as the “authoritarian government” that attempted to “control civil society and social movements with an authoritarianism” and equated the rules of the Lee government with those of the Park Chung-Hee and the Chun Doo-Hwan regimes.

![Figure 10. “Big Loser.” This cartoon was published in *The Hankyoreh* on May 26, 2008. In the cartoon, the protesters shout slogans against President Lee Myung-Bak: “Down with Dictatorship! Impeach Lee Myung-Bak!” In the left-hand corner, the readers see the phrase “gaining little but incurring a big loss,” but here it is also a pun which states “gaining the mad cow but incurring a big loss.” (“Big Loser,” *The Hankyoreh*, May 26, 2008; emphasis added)](image)

**The victimization frame**

In 32.4 percent of news stories in *The Hankyoreh*, the victimization frame was used. The victimization frame was mainly used in July 2008, the latter part of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil; 52.7 percent of all articles published in July relied on the victimization frame. This frame contained descriptions of violent suppression of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In the victimization frame, *The Hankyoreh* presented the participants as weak or helpless or as victims of violence. The news stories
containing the victimization frame also treated the issues of human rights violations and use of violent measures by the combat police officers. In particular, the movement opponents, particularly President Lee and the combat police officers, were described as those who were exercising authority in an arbitrary manner.

The past events as a source of historical analogy. In the victimization frame, two past events, the Gwangju Democracy Movement in 1980 and the June Democracy Movement in 1987, were primarily used to portray the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and its protesters. These two past movements have been considered as the pivotal democratic movements that changed the history of modern Korea (Choi, 2005). During the two movements, the Chun Doo-Hwan regime suppressed the citizens. As a result, hundreds of citizens were massacred and many more suffered physical, emotional, and psychological injuries. The Hankyoreh attempted to make the past events relevant to the current issue by using the narratives and images of the past as tools to analyze the cause of the current situation and predict the outcome of it. A feature story on May 26 was a crucial example:

In a clear sign of a setback in progress toward democracy, the combat police officers beat protesters and forcefully arrested them in the early morning on May 25 and 26 to disperse a street rally after a candlelight vigil was held to oppose the planned resumption of the U.S. beef imports. Democratic achievements, obtained by the Koreans since the pro-democracy uprising in June 1987, have gradually been undermined. Human rights have been suppressed by authorities resuming investigations into members of the civilian population. … Where the law ends, the politics of intervention begins. (“Lee Administration Reversing Democratic Achievements,” The Hankyoreh, May 26, 2008)
In the victimization frame, the stories of some historical figures who had been killed during the past democracy movements also overlapped with the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. On July 1, for example, an editorial of The Hankyoreh addressed its readers as follows:

“State violence” was one of the key terms in defining the history of the Republic of Korea in the 1980s. Violence on the part of state force and in the name of law and order began with the Gwangju massacre. It continued in the torture death of Park Jong-Cheol and when Lee Han-Yeol was killed after taking a direct hit from a tear gas canister, which was fired in his direction parallel to the ground. Eventually this violence was brought to an end because of national resistance. Twenty years later, police trampled on citizens lying in the street trying to prevent a clash. Apparently stomping on them was not enough, so they chopped them down with the outside corners of their shields and beat them with their police clubs. The non-violent pacifism citizens had wanted so much was similarly trampled on. The incident signaled complete and brutal violence by the police. The clock of Korean democracy was suddenly set back to the violent 1980s. ("Abuse of Power, Threat to Democracy," The Hankyoreh, July 1, 2008)

*Figure 11. “Another Gwangju.”* The black-and-white photo on the left is one of the most famous images of the Gwangju Democracy Movement. This image shows the military regime’s use of violence in the movement. The cartoon on the right was put in The Hankyoreh on June 30, 2008. This cartoon is a re-drawing of the photo on the left with one important exception. In the cartoon, the armband reads, “The Lee Myung-Bak Police.” (Photograph of the Gwangju Massacre, BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/752055.stm; “Another Gwangju,” The Hankyoreh, June 30, 2008)
The protest 2.0 frame

Among the stories in *The Hankyoreh* analyzed, 14.5 percent relied on the protest 2.0 frame. In this frame, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was portrayed as a new level of grassroots movement, focusing on several ways in which its participants mobilize, inform, communicate, and campaign. In particular, *The Hankyoreh* emphasized the newness of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in three aspects: its widespread use of Web 2.0 as a means of political action, its festival-like atmosphere, and the crucial role of youth in the process of the movement. For instance, on July 2, 2008, a feature article of *The Hankyoreh* was started with the headline of “Digital Age Gives New Meaning to Teen Power.” *The Hankyoreh*’s main headline on May 14 also stated that social network sites contributed to promoting participation, particularly protest behavior among youth. This article called Korean youth “2.0 generation” and emphasized its differences between the 2.0 generation and the previous generation, such as the 386 generation, in terms of media habits. Several historical events, such as the Minjung Movement and the June Struggle in 1987, were used by *The Hankyoreh* to emphasize these distinctive features of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. An editorial of *The Hankyoreh* on June 10 was a good example:

Today, June 10, marks the 21st anniversary of the June Struggle in 1987. … Now, just over two decades later, we meet another June Struggle. The candlelight protests that were inspired by the American beef affair have continued now for more than a month, and have become the most serious crisis situation since June 1987. *The original June Struggle and the current candlelight vigil are completely different.* … *From the beginning, the candlelight protest has created a festival-like atmosphere.* On the front lines there have been tug-of-war entanglements with police, but to the rear people have been singing and dancing. (“Beyond June Struggle, Candlelight Revolution,” *The Hankyoreh*, June 10, 2008; emphasis added)
In short, the liberal-progressive newspaper, *The Hankyoreh*, framed the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a “new” level of “pro-democracy” movement generated by “the representatives of all Korean citizens.” In *The Hankyoreh*, the movement opponents, such as President Lee Myung-Bak and the combat police officers, were defined as those who abused their authority to oppress the “helpless” protesters. These media frames were very much in line with those in the protesters’ candlelight vigil ads in *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, as analyzed in Chapter 4.

**Dominant Frames of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the Dong-A Ilbo**

In the news stories of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the *Dong-A Ilbo*, three main frames were detected: the delegitimization frame, the securitization frame, and the negative consequences frame.

**The securitization frame**

The securitization frame was the most dominant frame in the *Dong-A Ilbo* to describe the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. This frame appeared in 61.5 percent of all the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the *Dong-A Ilbo*. In the securitization frame, the *Dong-A Ilbo* sought to produce a consensus about the movement by portraying it as an existential threat to social order and thus justifying the government’s imminent actions to eliminate the threat.

In this frame, the movement opponents, such as President Lee and conservative politicians, appeared as securitizing actors who attempted to legitimate the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a threat to Korean society. In the *Dong-A Ilbo* articles containing the securitization frame, these securitizing actors played a role in identifying the
movement as a threat to “the rule of law” and “representative democracy.” An article published by the Dong-A Ilbo on June 28, for instance, cited a statement made by Lee Hoi-Chang, who had been the former chief judge of the Constitutional Court as well as the former head of the conservative Grand National Party: “We are deeply concerned about non-violent candlelight vigils turning into violent demonstrations. …Violence undermines the rule of law. …Law enforcement authorities should not be challenged” (“Lee Hoi-Chang Lambastes Violent Protesters,” Dong-A Ilbo, June 28, 2008).

The government’s use of violent measures to crack down on the candlelight vigil was thus justified in the name of protecting social order. On May 14, for instance, an article of the Dong-A Ilbo included a quote from the Chief of the Korean National Police Agency, Uh Chung-Soo: “The candlelight vigils were illegal demonstrations that were not given permits to protest in downtown Seoul. We’ll definitely crack down on the protest and punish the organizers” (“Police to Punish Candlelight Vigil Organizers,” Dong-A Ilbo, May 14, 2008).

In the securitization frame, the protesters were often portrayed as an “irrational” and “violent” crowd. In particular, the Dong-A Ilbo connected these characteristics of the protesters to their widespread use of the Internet to obtain political information. In the Dong-A Ilbo articles, the web was portrayed as a “risky” and “potentially dangerous” space in terms of its lack of the regulatory and gate-keeping mechanisms of mainstream news media. The web was thus defined as a “rumor mill” or “informational

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35 According to Buzan, Wæver, and Wilde (1998), security actors are defined as “actors who securitize issues by declaring something, a referent object, existentially threatened” (p. 36) and can be expected to be “political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups” (p. 40). Referent objects are “things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival” (p. 36). In the news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, “the rule of law” was described as the most significant referent object.
quagmire,” while the protesters were positioned not as rational, conscious citizens but as “potential victims,” at risk of being duped by false information, of being encouraged to engage in “violent acts,” and of threatening social order. In an article in the *Dong-A Ilbo* on July 10, for example, the members of the Korea Medical Association argued that an Internet rumor about Mad Cow Disease initiated the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Seoul National University Hospital director Seong Sang-Cheol said, “People should trust us. We are the doctors. They [The protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil] have circulated false rumors through the web. Now please go back to your jobs” (Biz Leaders, Doctors Eat U.S. Beef to Allay Fears,” the *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 10, 2008).

In the securitization frame, the *Dong-A Ilbo* contended that citizens should pay more attention to the politicians whom the citizens elected. The *Dong-A Ilbo* also argued that the politicians as well as the mainstream conservative newspapers played a crucial role in creating “more reliable” political information and thus maintaining social order, while Internet rumors may disturb social order. The *Dong-A Ilbo* finally pushed for the government to take control of the Internet to protect social order in Korean society. A *Dong-A Ilbo* editorial on June 13 was a significant example:

As democracy can lead to a “tyranny of the majority,” the Internet can fall into that trap. It is impossible that the government or established media can control the flow of information on the Internet. … Rumors or false information on the Internet have enormous negative impact on society. (“Digital Populism,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 13, 2008)
Figure 12. “Internet Rumors Attack Social Welfare Organizations.” This cartoon was published in an article of the Dong-A Ilbo on July 17, 2008. In this cartoon, two Internet users on the left-hand side are blaming a social worker. The Internet users believe that the social worker’s organization is funded by the members of conservative civic organizations who are opposed to the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. However, the Internet users are forced to make decisions quickly and superficially because they were deceived by the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil who spread false information via the Internet. (‘Internet Rumors Attack Social Welfare Organizations,’ Dong-A Ilbo, July 17, 2008)

The delegitimization frame

Among a total of 135 stories in the Dong-A Ilbo, 76 articles (56.3%) relied on the delegitimization frame. In this frame, the Dong-A Ilbo categorized the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a negative social event. The framing devices used by the Dong-A Ilbo to delegitimize the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil included (a) the use of past events as a source of historical analogy and (b) the use of rhetoric that was originally produced by the protesters.

The past events as a source of historical analogy. The Dong-A Ilbo also used the narratives of the past to delegitimize the current event, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In the news coverage of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in the Dong-A Ilbo, one past event, the 2002 Korean Candlelight Vigil (hereafter the 2002 Vigil), was
primarily used to portray the candlelight vigil and its protesters. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the 2002 Vigil arose as a result of the deaths of two thirteen-year-old girls who were hit and killed by an armored military vehicle driven by two U.S. soldiers in Korea. The 2002 Vigil was a source of historical analogy that helped the *Dong-A Ilbo* to interpret the cause and outcome of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

In order to apply the “lessons of history” to interpret the present event, the *Dong-A Ilbo* constructed a meaning for the 2002 Vigil first. In the news stories, the 2002 Vigil was mainly described as an “anti-American, pro-North Korean protest.” The *Dong-A Ilbo* explained that civic and political organizations had aggravated anti-Americanism and used it for achieving their political goals during the 2002 Vigil. For example, an article in the *Dong-A Ilbo* on May 5, 2008, reported as follows:

The vigils are leading to fear of a repeat of 2002, when such events stoked anti-U.S. sentiment following the deaths of two schoolgirls at the hands of the U.S. military. … After a U.S. court found two U.S. servicemen not guilty, Koreans unleashed their anger. Civic and political organizations demanded the revision of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and many extremists joined the movement, spreading anti-U.S. protests across the country. … The left-wing groups identified the accident as “the murder of Korean middle school girls by U.S. forces” and formed a National Response Committee to lead the candlelight vigil during the whole process of the presidential campaign, dividing voters between anti-U.S. and Pro-U.S. camps. … The candlelight vigil [i.e., the 2002 Vigil] was the most crucial issue in the 2002 Presidential election as it caused an ideological confrontation between liberals and conservatives in Korean society. … “The incitement of left-wing is likely to cause ideological division by exploiting the people’s emotions rather than finding solutions,” an expert said. “We seriously need to talk about solutions for the national interest.” (“Anti-U.S. Beef Vigils Feared to Escalate,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 5, 2008)
When the *Dong-A Ilbo* employed the 2002 Vigil analogy, the focus was on the present, namely the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The 2002 Vigil was often characterized by a short and consistent list of key details. The delegitimization frame used by the *Dong-A Ilbo* therefore did not provide the readers with much opportunity to reevaluate the past. In other words, the narratives of the past were conclusively represented as a known *fact* rather than as a refutable construction, as indeed it must be for the delegitimization frame to function.

In the news stories containing the delegitimization frame, the *Dong-A Ilbo* used the definition of the 2002 Vigil to identify the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Through drawing strong parallels between two candlelight vigils, the *Dong-A Ilbo* linked the identity of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to anti-American and pro-North Korean sentiment. This close connection between two events helped the readers to shape the perception of identity of the current event, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. An article in the *Dong-A Ilbo* on June 12 provide a good example:

According to the association and police on Wednesday [June 11, 2008], future rallies are expected to include continuous small scale candlelight vigils combined with massive demonstrations in observance of historic events such as the anniversary of the death of two high school girls (Mi-Sun and Hyo-Soon) crushed to death by a U.S. armored vehicle to spark a blaze of anti-Americanism of the past. This is based on the belief of protest organizers that the current demonstrations could backfire given that they paralyze traffic and cause inconveniences to ordinary citizens. (“Time to Return to Our Daily Lives,” *Dong-A Ilbo*, June 12, 2008)

In the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the identity of the “instigators” was linked to a certain time period, the governments of Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun. For the Korean conservatives, these two governments have been considered “a period of leftist
aberration” (Doucette, 2012, p. 4). The Dong-A Ilbo continuously portrayed President Roh not only as an “incapable” and “irresponsible” leader, but also as “a symbolic figure of anti-American, pro-North Korean, and far-leftist politicians in Korea.” By linking the “instigators” of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil closely with the two governments, the Dong-A Ilbo made them appear to be a problematic and irresponsible group of people.

**The rhetoric of purity.** In the delegitimization frame, the Dong-A Ilbo often divided the protesters into two different groups: instigators and ordinary citizens. In particular, the Dong-A Ilbo deployed the rhetoric of “purity” and “contamination” as the criterion for distinguishing a “good” protest from “bad” one. The rhetoric of purity can be defined as the protesters’ desire to frame their activism as an ideal practice of democratic citizenship that makes no concessions to conventional politics (Yi, 2009). As analyzed in Chapter 4, the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil distinguished themselves from the politically motivated groups and older veterans who had led the previous democratization movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The protesters called their movement a “nonviolent resistance,” a “peaceful protest,” and a “pro-democracy movement,” and they mainly identified themselves as “Koreans,” “democratic citizens,” and “common people.” The protesters were concerned that the participation of political organizations and veterans could have diminished the original significance of their movement, and they boycotted the organizations and veterans.

The protesters’ discursive logic of “pure” was hijacked by the Dong-A Ilbo and rhetorically altered to control the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The Dong-A Ilbo used the rhetoric of purity for delegitimizing the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight
Vigil. In the news coverage in the Dong-A Ilbo, the ordinary citizens’ protest against the U.S. beef imports was framed as a “pure-hearted” reaction. The Dong-A Ilbo then argued that the “pure,” “good,” and “democratic” protest turned into a “violent,” “bad,” and “illegal” one because the ordinary citizens were contaminated by the anti-American (in Korean, ban-mi) and pro-North Korean (in Korean, jong-buk) groups. The conservative newspaper showed great concern that the ordinary citizens were spoiled by the politically motivated instigators. For example, the Dong-A Ilbo’s editorials ran headlines such as “Candlelight Vigils Turn into Anti-Government Rallies” (June 3, 2008), “Voices Behind Candlelight Vigils” (June 12, 2008), “Socialist Liberals Trying to Smother Democracy” (June 18, 2008), “The Candlelight Vigil Protests Become Anti-Government, Illegal Protests” (June 27, 2008), “Citizens Should Discern Lies and Demagogy” (July 2, 2008), and “Leftist Forces Failed Attempt” (July 12, 2008).

The ordinary citizens, who participated in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, were continuously described as an “ignorant,” “unconscious,” and “immature” crowd who were easily manipulated by the instigators. Particularly, the Dong-A Ilbo emphasized that these ordinary citizens could not make astute judgments about whether or not the information that they were exposed to was true. A Dong-A Ilbo editorial on July 2, 2008, provided a particularly crucial example as follows:

Everyone knows that some political organizations … are mainly responsible for spreading false and unfounded information on U.S. beef imports. Then, what is their intention? Is it because they wholeheartedly want to secure public food safety and promote national development? Unfortunately, it is becoming clear that their real intention is to overthrow the Lee Myung-Bak administration, rather than resolve public concerns over U.S. beef safety. … Some politicians and leftist groups have joined the bandwagon to protect their vested interests and hamper the administration. … It is
heartbreaking to see not a few ordinary citizens be fooled by their seditious fraudulence. … Citizens should also play a pivotal role to correct the current situation. … If the citizens chime in with distortions and falsities while sitting on their hands, someday they may see the nation’s future fall on the wrong hands. (“Citizens Should Discern Lies and Demagogy,” Dong-A Ilbo, July 2, 2008; emphasis added)

In July 2008, the latter part of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the Dong-A Ilbo heavily used the delegitimization frame particularly by showing every protester (i.e., both the instigators and ordinary citizens) to be violent. Among the 38 stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil that appeared in the Dong-A Ilbo in July, 31 stories described the protesters as “lawbreakers” who provoked violence and disrupted the social order. On July 19, for example, the Dong-A Ilbo identified the protesters as those who played a “war game” and enjoyed violent acts:

Police faces another round of clash due to a “war game” played by some violent protesters who reappeared in 19 days. Later on July 17 and in the early morning on July 18, about 50 people led an extremely violent rally of armed protesters. … The protesters who hid their faces with masks and caps destroyed the iron nets and glasses of police buses, using metal pipes, hammers, fire shooters and slingshots. … It was revealed that they fully planned and prepared for the violent protest. … According to police, metal pipes that symbolize violent protests appeared four times over the past two months during which candlelight vigils were held on and off. (“Guerilla Protesters Play Violent Game,” Dong-A Ilbo, July 19, 2008)

The negative consequences frame

The negative consequences frame was used in 28 news articles (20.7%) of the Dong-A Ilbo articles. In this frame, the Dong-A Ilbo emphasized possible negative
influences of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil on (1) children or teenagers and (2) the domestic economy.

“Bad for your children.” As mentioned in previous chapters, teenagers played a crucial role in the process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, especially the beginning of the movement. In the negative consequences frame, the Dong-A Ilbo showed a great concern for the academic success and mental health of the “youth protesters” that could have been influenced by their protest activities; these youth protesters were too “immature” to engage in political activities. In particular, the youth protesters were depicted as “impetuous” mobs who were not able to make a correct judgment on a complex issue, including the resumption of the U.S. beef imports. On May 6, for instance, an article of the Dong-A Ilbo reported as follows:

A worried housewife in Incheon whose child attends a high school said, “An actress who wrote on her blog that she would rather eat poison than U.S. beef has been positively described as “politically conscious” among teenagers. … Journalism professor Ahn Dong-geun at Hanyang University showed concerns over these teenagers, saying, “They passively get a lot of false information via the Internet. They cannot make a rational decision over the information. It seems that they are swept away in the mob mentality.” (“Candlelight Vigils Pose Problems,” Dong-A Ilbo, May 6, 2008)

The Dong-A Ilbo also urged its readers to control their children’s relationships with other protesters in the protest sites because the majority of protesters were obviously inclined toward the “left.” In the negative consequences frame, the grown-up protesters were identified as those who were willing to persuade the youth protesters to be the leftists.
Economic consequences. The negative consequences frame also presented the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in terms of the economic consequences that it would have on the country and other citizens. The news stories of the Dong-A Ilbo containing this framing device relied heavily on the local merchants who owned a store in downtown Seoul. In a news story of the Dong-A Ilbo on June 24, a local merchant complained that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil caused immense economic losses, saying, “Because of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, my life is harder than it was during the 1997 financial crisis” (“Time to Focus on People’s Livelihoods,” Dong-A Ilbo, June 24, 2008). Another Dong-A Ilbo article on June 17 also included a quote from the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Businesses: “Many small businesses are in serious difficulty due to the prolonged candlelight vigils. … The government and the protesters should focus on revitalizing the domestic economy” (“Small Firms Urge United Effort for Economic Revival,” Dong-A Ilbo, June 17, 2008).

This frame also provided the “economic collapse scenarios” potentially caused by the movement, including loss of foreign investment in domestic companies and of tourism revenue. The news stories of the Dong-A Ilbo frequently included explicit or implicit references to various statistical data as a means of highlighting the economic consequences of the Korean Candlelight Vigil. Under the headline, “Candlelight Demonstration Costs Korean Economy 2 Trillion Won [$ 1.8 billion],” an article of the Dong-A Ilbo on July 9 provided several statistical data produced by the Korea Economic Research Institute.
The Battle for Framing the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil

During the whole process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the news media as active agents engaged in the construction of meanings for the movement and its protesters. These media companies competed with each other to shape or transform the public’s minds in the public sphere. To understand this competing process, Chapter 5 focused on analyzing frames employed when covering the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil in two national print sources, *The Hankyoreh* and *the Dong-A Ilbo*.

Through identifying the frames adopted, this study attempted to understand how the two newspapers differently defined the movement and its participants. This study found that the alignments of news frames of the two newspapers generally corresponded with the protesters’ attitude toward each newspaper during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil considered *The Hankyoreh* as their “ally,” while they boycotted *the Dong-A Ilbo*. The liberal-progressive newspaper, *The Hankyoreh*, generally showed a favorable tone toward the movement and its protesters through relying on the all Koreans’ will frame, the pro-democracy movement frame, the victimization frame, and the protest 2.0 frame. On the contrary, the conservative newspaper, the *Dong-A Ilbo*, negatively described the movement by focusing on the securitization frame, the delegitimization frame, and the negative consequences frame. Through these news frames, these two newspapers symbolically interpreted the same event in different manners and described this interpretation in very different ways. While *The Hankyoreh*, for instance, portrayed the political participation of youth as
leading to a more participatory, democratic society, the *Dong-A Ilbo* identified the youth protesters as those who were too immature to participate in political activities. In addition, *The Hankyoreh* emphasized that the widespread use of Web 2.0 as a means of political action led to a new level of grassroots movements. On the contrary, the conservative *Dong-A Ilbo* considered the Internet as an “informational quagmire,” and the protesters were described as potential victims at risk of being duped by false information.

There are several possible causes for the differences in news frames between the liberal-progressive newspaper and the conservative newspaper. One obvious factor is the sociopolitical positions of the two newspapers in Korean society. *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* have been viewed as representing the two ideological camps, the liberal-progressives and the conservatives, respectively. Although the press has not been owned by political parties in Korea, *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* has backed in a more or less stable condition the liberal-progressive party and the conservative party, respectively, because of historical traditions. There has also been a clear divide between the readers of both newspapers due to political ideology (Yeo, 2010, pp. 2, 62-85).

The sociopolitical positions of the newspapers provided interpretive frames through which both *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* defined details of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The two newspapers particularly connected the collective identities of the protesters with values and norms that their readers have shared and been concerned about: in *The Hankyoreh*, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was defined as the ideal of Korean liberal progressivism, and in the *Dong-A Ilbo*, it was portrayed as a threat to Korean conservatism. Both newspapers used those media frames
that may be able to link the message to the pre-existing knowledge or belief in their readers’ mind. These different media discourses on the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and its protesters consequently provided clues about the ways that the liberal-progressives and the conservatives imagined their idealized national community, respectively.

In The Hankyoreh, the protesters were dominantly described not only as “ordinary citizens” who were voluntarily initiating and leading the non-violent movement, but also as “democratic citizens” who were exercising and protecting their constitutional rights. In addition, The Hankyoreh identified the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a new level of pro-democracy movement in the several ways in which its participants mobilize and communicate. In the frames of The Hankyoreh, ordinary democratic citizens stood against the movement opponents, especially President Lee Myung-Bak and his government, who were responsible for undesirable consequences on Korean democracy. The Hankyoreh particularly urged the Lee Myung-Bak government to communicate with the citizens. These frames adopted in the news stories of The Hankyoreh were consistent with what the protesters expressed in their candlelight vigil ads, as analyzed in Chapter 4.

The Republic of Korea as the imagined community was described in the discourse of the liberal-progressives (i.e., the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and The Hankyoreh) not as revolutionary or radical, but as the embodiment of democratic values, principles, or rights granted by the Constitution of the Republic of Korea. They included liberty, equal opportunity, anti-discrimination, equity, equality, and individual right to participation. In their imagined Korea, constitutional safeguards must be in
place to protect the rule of law and prevent violations and possible interruption of the
democratic order. Based on the Constitution, the liberal-progressives contended that the
sovereignty of the imagined community shall reside in the people themselves. They
claimed that the rule of people should be superior to the rule of the government officers,
such as President Lee Myung-Bak, because these officers were hired by the people and
were obliged to their “master,” the people. In this way, the liberal-progressives
symbolically linked the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil to the Constitution of the
Republic of Korea, and they ultimately argued that they were acting in the best interest
of their country. In particular, the liberal-progressives considered democracy not just as
a result but as a process; their imagined community was a national community that must
steadily pursue “the roads towards democratic consolidation.” Such a process should
involve continual investments, and they argued that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil
was a form of such investments. In addition, the protesters also articulated that the
liberal-progressve newspapers, *The Hankyoreh* and the *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, deserved
their support because the newspapers were credible, unbiased, and balanced news
sources and consequently contributed to the realization of their imagined community.

The conservative *Dong-A Ilbo*, however, also attempted to frame the collective
identities of the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil based on the values
about which the Korean conservatives have been concerned. The *Dong-A Ilbo*’s frames
were in accordance with the conservative Lee Myung-Bak government’s stance toward
the protesters and their movement. As the government considered the movement likely
to undermine national security and public order and labeled the rally as an illegal and
violent demonstration, the conservative *Dong-A Ilbo* described the participants of the
2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a group of demonstrators or rioters who were swayed by the anti-government, anti-American, and pro-North Korean instigators.

For the conservatives, this rhetoric of anti-American and pro-North Korean has been used as a powerful interpretive device that has enabled them to frame the meaning of complex sociopolitical events. In particular, this rhetoric has been related to how the conservatives have identified their national community. Many critical Korean intellectuals have contended that the Republic of Korea as the conservatives’ imagined community has been deeply rooted in the experience of Japanese colonization, the U.S. military occupation, the division of the Korean peninsula, the Korean War, the dictatorship, and rapid industrialization (e.g., J. J. Choi, 2005, 2007). This has residual effects in Korean society, such as the dominance of the chaebols (i.e., Korean conglomerates) in the economic system, the conservative-dominated media system, and the survival of Cold War ideology and social regimentation in the post-Cold War age. A large portion of the conservatives still believed that, without the longstanding U.S-South Korea alliance, South Korea would have been absorbed by North Korea (J. J. Choi, 2005; Doucette, 2012).

In this sense, the conservatives have considered the sequence of democratic reforms since the democratization in 1987 – especially during the two liberal-progressive governments between 1997 and 2008 – as a threat to their control over the country and the economic sector. Particularly, the conservatives have sought to delegitimize the drive for democratic reform by “tarring the [liberal-progressives] with a chimera of left nationalism that labels even mild policy innovations as the product of a Korean left that seeks its guidance from North Korea” (Doucette, 2012). In the news
stories of the mainstream conservative media, including the *Dong-A Ilbo*, the anti-American and pro-North Korean rhetoric has been continuously used as a significant justification for the forceful suppression of many pro-democracy movements (K. Cho, 1997; Doucette, 2012; Kraft, 2008).

During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the conservative *Dong-A Ilbo* also quoted several past events, especially the two liberal-progressive governments, in order to link the collective identities of the protesters to anti-American and pro-North Korean sentiments. In its conservative view, for example, the two liberal-progressive governments’ Sunshine Policy toward North Korea was directly considered as an element of risk in the Korea-US alliance. Although the present event, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, was open to various alternative interpretations, the *Dong-A Ilbo* claimed that the driving force behind the movement was the anti-government, anti-American, and pro-North Korean sentiment, based on the evidence constructed from the narratives of the past events.

On the other hand, the same historical events were employed by the liberal-progressive newspaper, *The Hankyoreh*, in a directly opposite manner. In the news stories of *The Hankyoreh*, the two liberal-progressive governments were described as one of the most significant events in the Korean democracy. The two liberal-progressive governments were considered as inheriting the tradition of previous democratization movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The values and philosophies underlying the historical events used as symbolic materials to interpret the present event, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In addition, in the news stories of *The Hankyoreh*, the former dictators’ violent suppression against the democratization movement in the 1970s and
1980s was employed as interpretive tools to analyze the cause of the current situation and predict the outcome of it. President Lee Myung-Bak and his government were often described as *remnants* of the military rules.

Both *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* consequently used the historical contexts to explain “how we got here.” The appearance of a similarity between the present and the past events did not simply exist, but it was constructed in the news coverage of both *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo*. These past events functioned as devices for framing the “real” identities behind the current dilemma. According to Edy (2006), historical contexts are often constructed by news media “without violating the norms of objectivity despite having powerful interpretive potential” (p. 94). The power of these historical contexts is established, in part, from the claim that “the past events are factual accounts of what really happened” (Edy, 1999, p. 73). The historical events, as well as the ways in which the readers of each newspaper interpreted the historical events, were selected and connected to each other while others were omitted by the two newspapers in order to explain the present issue, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

In addition, the conservative *Dong-A Ilbo* divided the protesters into two different groups, instigators and ordinary citizens, in order to undermine the significance of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, both the protesters and their allies, such as *The Hankyoreh*, called the movement a “pure” pro-democracy movement. This rhetoric of “purity” was co-opted by the *Dong-A Ilbo* and rhetorically altered to control the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The ordinary citizens who participated in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil with “pure” intentions were identified as those who were converted to illegal and undemocratic
mobs as they were manipulated by the anti-American and pro-North Korean instigators. Ironically enough, the protesters’ vision of their activism as “pure” could result in sustaining the logic of the movement opponents’ framing as an act of separating contaminants from the rest of the population. In this way, the conservatives were able to define the movement as an existential threat to social order and domestic economy. This framing process finally helped to justify the government’s violent measures to crack down on the “threat” in the name of protecting the country. Although these frames adopted by the *Dong-A Ilbo* were largely arbitrary, they may have functioned as a firm foundation for the conservative readers’ understanding of the current dilemma.

The frames adopted by both *The Hankyoreh* and the *Dong-A Ilbo* could have had enough power to stimulate support of or opposition to the sides in the political issue, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. As Entman (2003) explains, “those frames that employ more culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence” (p. 417). Both newspapers also used those words and images which have long been noticeable, memorable, and emotionally charged in Korean society. Conversely, the repetitive use of those powerful framing devices in the news coverage about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil clarified how the news media self-identified. In other words, the systematic use of such frames indicated how each news media perceived its sociopolitical position and role in Korean society.
CHAPTER 6: THE MAKING OF THE 2008 KOREAN CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the process of constructing the collective identity of the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and the role of the media in the identity construction process. The media particularly played significant roles both as a means by the protesters to achieve their goals in the movement and as agents engaging in the construction of meaning for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Based on a theoretical framework combining Manuel Castells’s (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009) theory of communication power and Jürgen Habermas’s (1984, 1989, 1996, 2006) concept of the public sphere, this study conceptualized the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as the process of the symbolic power struggle among various actors in order to construct the meaning of the protesters and their movement in the public sphere in Korea. This study then investigated (1) how the process of developing the relationships among social actors – such as the state, the civil society, and the media companies – has influenced the flow of information in the public sphere in Korea, (2) how this process was connected to the emergence of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, (3) how the protesters conducted the candlelight ads campaigns, (4) how the protesters identified themselves as a collective actor in the candlelight vigil ads, and (5) how the news media engaged in the production of meaning for the protesters and their movement.

The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was a massive social movement generated by Korean liberal-progressives against the conservative Lee Myung-Bak government and its policies. The struggle between the liberal-progressives and the conservatives or
the citizens and the government has continued in the public sphere during more than six
decades after the division of Korea in 1945. This landscape of the public sphere in
Korea has developed out of a series of conflicts and cleavages rooted in Korean history.
A large portion of the news media has not maintained its independence from the
political and the economic systems, so they have often failed to provide the link
between civil society and political center. Ordinary citizens thus have not easily
participated in society’s problem-solving and responded to the issues articulated in the
public sphere.

Nonetheless, many citizens, especially the liberal-progressive groups, have
continuously led the movement for media reform against conservative hegemony. In
particular, they have not remained passive recipients of those news media. Rather,
citizens have selected and supported “our” news media which have been viewed as
credible, unbiased, and balanced news sources. The reform-minded citizens have also
been at the forefront in the process of adopting and appropriating diverse forms of
alternative media for civic engagement. They have been transforming into a more active
and autonomous force in the Korean society, and consequently, an understanding of the
need for media reform has been increasing among the public. The 2008 Korean
Candlelight Vigil also occurred within this context of an evolving set of ideas about the
role of ordinary citizens in the public sphere. The meanings that were produced by those
previous struggles – such as the meaning of the Republic of Korea, the meaning of
Korean democracy, and the meaning of the news media – also functioned as the
symbolic materials for constructing the collective identity of the protesters during the
process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.
The process of constructing the meanings for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil can also be understood in the process of symbolic power struggles among the various actors in the movement. Both the protesters and the opponents of the movement actively engage in shaping or transforming the public’s mind. Each actor in the movement actively used the media as their means of influence and persuasion. The news media companies were also active agents in constructing meanings for the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The conservative mainstream news media severely hampered the protesters seeking recognition from the public. Through framing the collective identity of the protesters based on the values about which the Korean conservatives have been concerned, the conservative news media helped to justify the government’s violent measures to crack down on the movement in the name of protecting the country. On the other hand, the liberal-progressive news media tried to positively shape the meaning of the movement in the public sphere.

In particular, the results of this study show that a mutually beneficial relationship existed between the protesters and the liberal-progressive newspapers during the whole process of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Through the newspaper ad campaigns, the protesters not only supported the liberal-progressive newspapers, The Hankyoreh and the Kyunghyang Shinmun, but also increased visibility of their movement. In the candlelight vigil ads in the two liberal-progressive newspapers, the protesters defined these newspapers as credible, unbiased, and balanced news sources. In their news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the liberal-progressive newspapers also emphasized that the protesters were acting in the best interest of the country. This symbiotic relationship was clearly revealed in two ads, which were
published by the journalists of *The Hankyoreh* in the newspaper’s own space on June 11 (Figure 13) and 21. In these two ads, the journalists of *The Hankyoreh* not only expressed their gratitude to the protesters for their support, but also urged the readers to put more candlelight vigil ads in *The Hankyoreh* and to subscribe to *The Hankyoreh*. In the ad of *The Hankyoreh* on June 21, citing “The Power of Koreans! The Power of Truth!”, the journalists also self-identified as the truth as well as an ally of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

![Image of a candlelight vigil]

*Figure 13. The ad published by the journalists of *The Hankyoreh* in the newspaper’s own space on June 11, 2008. In the ad, the journalists of *The Hankyoreh* not only expressed their gratitude to the protesters for their support, but also urged the readers to put more candlelight vigil ads in *The Hankyoreh* and to subscribe to *The Hankyoreh*.***

The symbiotic relationship between the protesters and the liberal-progressive newspapers could have provided the movement’s source of interests, values, and actions and ultimately led to the construction of a unified actor that we can call the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In both the candlelight vigil ads and the news stories of the
liberal-progressive newspapers, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was identified as the embodiment of these democratic values, principles, or rights granted by the Constitution of the Republic of Korea. Based on this collective identity, the protesters defined the requisites for joining the movement and the criteria by which they recognized themselves and were recognized. The collective identity of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil not only rejected the traditional definitions of the relationships between the citizens and the government, but also ensured adequate representation and addressed deficits in democratic decision-making. Put otherwise, this growing public opposition to the rules and system of Korean society can be understood as a symptom of institutional deficits in democratic decision-making about the citizens’ everyday lives. Recognizing the collective identity of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil – and outlining its distinctive perspective on the role of citizens in the Republic of Korea – therefore clarifies the nature and the extent of the contradictions between existing discourse produced and sustained in the conservative-dominated media system and the increasingly vocal demands of the reform-minded citizens. These meanings that were produced during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil will also become the embryo of a new resistance and thus function as significant symbolic materials for shaping or transforming existing values and norms in society.

The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil’s Effectiveness

Did the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil succeed or fail? Did the frames adopted by the news media really shape or transform the public’s minds about the 2008 Korean
Candlelight Vigil? Did the protesters successfully transform existing values and norms in and introduce alternative cultural codes into Korean society? Have the meanings that were produced during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil been sustained or changed in the flow of information in the public sphere? It is not easy to answer any of these questions. This is because I was “dealing not with a thing, but with a process continuously activated by social actors” (Melucci, 1995, p. 62). In other words, in this thesis, I did not attempt to apply the criteria of truth to judge whether the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil succeeded or failed and whom the protesters were. Rather, this thesis provided an account of the symbolic power struggle constituting a collective actor, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. In this sense, this study used the collective identity of the protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a lens for analysis, not a reality in itself. I hope that the analysis conducted here will be used as a lens for future investigations of the questions addressed above.

Nonetheless, there is some significant evidence of the effectiveness of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Public opinion data suggest that the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil was effective in persuading a large part of the population. On June 5, 2008, sixty-five percent of Koreans not only agreed with the views of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil but also supported the methods of the protesters (Realmeter, 2008). According to a poll in The Hankyoreh on July 7, 2008 (S.-K. Im & Lee, 2008), however, while seventy-two percent of Koreans agreed the views of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, sixty-five percent of Koreans opposed the methods of the protesters, such as street marching. Only twenty-eight percent of Koreans supported the methods of the movement in this poll.
However, the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil has not caused any significant change in government policies and behavior. The 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil ended in August 2008. Despite the massive protest during more than three months, U.S. beef imports resumed on July 1, 2008. Between May and August 2008, more than 1,200 protesters were arrested, and approximately 2,000 citizens were injured. The movement opponents continued to argue that “while the protesters’ hearts are in the right place, their violent methods and inability to offer alternatives undermine their cause” (Y.-C. Kim, 2008). While the majority of the public continued to support the views of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the conservative Lee Myung-Bak government has rushed to dismantle and obstruct the liberal-progressive bloc (Doucette, 2012). Most reform efforts of the two former liberal-progressive presidents Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun have been discontinued. Both the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea and economic reform have been halted. The Ministry of Unification restructured. The Ministry of Gender Equality, the National Human Rights Commission, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have lost most of their budget and mandate (The Hankyoreh, 2010b). On the contrary, the National Intelligence Service and the National Security Law have increasingly been employed to investigate liberal-progressive activists and NGOs (The Hankyoreh, 2010a). For example, on June 30, 2008, police investigators raided the office of the People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD; Korea’s largest NGO) and the office of the Solidarity for Korean Progress

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36 Many liberal-progressives politicians, including the two former presidents Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun, and civic organizations have criticized the political use of the National Security Law and called for the abolition of the law. Furthermore, in 2004, Amnesty International officially called for the law’s repeal (Kraft, 2008).
(SKP) based on the National Security Law (H.-J. Choi, 2008). The conservative politicians and intellectuals have argued that this reaction can be described as “a project to cleanse the state of the leftist legacy of previous reform governments” (Doucette, 2012, p. 4).

In addition, the struggle between the conservatives and the liberal-progressives in the public sphere has been intensified since the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. The Lee Myung-bak government has attempted to deregulate the media industry. A Broadcasting Act passed in 2009, which allows investment by chaebols and newspaper companies in the broadcasting sector. As a result, each of the big three conservative newspapers – the Chosun Ilbo, the JoongAng Ilbo, and the Dong-a Ilbo – obtained a broadcast license on December 31, 2010, and they were launching new “comprehensive programming channels” (in Korean Jong-Pyeon) on January 1, 2011. The Lee Myung-Bak government has also extended its power over major national networks. Since Lee’s inauguration, three former aides of President Lee Myung-Bak have been appointed as presidents of three major national networks – the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS), the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), and the Yonhap Television News (YTN) – over the objections of journalists who have sought to maintain these media companies’ editorial independence. These heads of the networks have imposed a bias in support of President Lee Myung-Bak and his policies (J.-Y. Choi, 2012).

Korean citizens, especially the liberal-progressive groups, have severely criticized that the Lee Myung-Bak government has violated freedom of expression. Freedom House, a U.S.-based international NGO, downgraded South Korea's media freedom rating from “free” in 2007 to “partly free” in 2011 (Freedom House, 2011).
According to Freedom House (2011), since the inauguration of President Lee Myung-Bak, “South Korea has experienced a noticeable decline in freedom of expression for both journalists and the general public.” Frank La Rue, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, also undertook an official mission to the Republic of Korea in May 2010 and reported as follows:

[The] Special Rapporteur expresses his concern that since the candlelight demonstrations of 2008, there have been increased restrictions on individuals’ right to freedom of opinion and expression, primarily due to an increasing number of prosecutions, based on laws that are often not in conformity with international standards, of individuals who express views which are not in agreement with the position of the government. (UN Human Rights Council, 2011, pp. 1-2)

Many journalists have continuously fought to achieve the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the liberal-progressive citizens have continued to support the journalists’ resistance. A total of approximately 1,300 media workers of the MBC were on strike for 170 days (January 30 – July 17, 2012). This strike at the MBC has become the longest in media history in Korea (J.-Y. Choi, 2012). In addition, the journalists of the KBS, the YTN, the Yonhap News Agency, and the Kookmin Ilbo also went on strike in 2012. Between 2008 and November 2012, 448 journalists have been penalized for writing critical reports about government policies, as well as for their roles in advocating for press freedom. In particular, seventeen journalists were fired from the MBC (8), the YTN (6), the Kookmin Ilbo (1), and the Busan Ilbo (2) during Lee Myung-Bak’s presidency (Y. Choi, 2012).37 During this series of strikes, the journalists

37 The seventeen journalists who were fired during Lee Myung-Bak’s presidency (2008...
enjoyed considerable public support through petition drives, candlelight vigils, and fundraising concerts (J.-Y. Choi, 2012).

The liberal-progressive groups, both the journalists and ordinary citizens, have appropriated diverse ICTs for the movement for media reform against conservative hegemony. Particularly, the “podcasting phenomenon” began in 2011. The liberal-progressives have employed or modified the communication artifacts and practices of podcasting to challenge and alter the conservative-dominant media system. The Korean Top 10 podcasts for September 2012 on iTunes were heavily dominated by those podcasts criticizing the conservative Lee Myung-Bak government, the then-ruling conservative Saenuri party, or the mainstream conservative news media. Among these Top 10 podcasts, several podcasts, such as the Newstapa and the BalNews, have been created by the current or former journalists who have been fired or demoted from the KBS, the MBC, and the YTN. The Newstapa, for example, is an independent, non-profit broadcast that produces “investigative journalism” in the public interest, and it is led by Lee Geun-Hang, the former MBC producer (The Newstapa, 2012). This employment and appropriation of the podcast should be also explained within the broader context of Korean liberal-progressives’ struggles to transform the political power structure in Korean society.

- 2012) have still not been re-employed. Today is October 21, 2012.

38 On February 13, the conservative Grand National Party changed its name into the Saenuri Party. The 2012 general election was held on April 11. The conservative Saenuri became the plurality of the National Assembly again with 152 out of the 300 Assembly seats, while the liberal-progressive Democratic United Party won 127 seats.
Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study have implications for understanding how collective identity is constructed during social movements and what roles the media play in the identity construction process. First, social movements are efforts to change power relationships through constructing or transforming the meanings for the movements and their participants. In any power relationship, there is a possibility of resistance from those who are subjected to power, as guided by “their emotional and cognitive capacities in their interaction with each other and with their environment” (Castells, 2009, p. 300). The case of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil demonstrates that social movements can be one of the crucial forms of such resistance. The liberal-progressive protesters of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil attempted to change their identities, which had been given by the conservatives to sustain and rationalize their dominance over the liberal-progressives. Castells (2004) particularly defines this type of enforced identity as legitimizing identity (pp. 6-9). Social movements are, in this sense, the process of denying the legitimizing identity, constructing alternative identities, and by doing so, seeking the transformation of power structure in society.

Secondly, in order to construct alternative identities, social movements need to redefine the meanings around legitimizing identity, which are deeply embedded in the history, culture, and collective memory of social actors. These meanings are particularly shaped and sustained in the news media. For the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil as a collective actor, these meanings were particularly organized and sustained around the identities of Korean liberal-progressives (e.g., anti-American, pro-North Korean groups)
in the mainstream conservative news media. In other words, the mainstream conservative news media provided “building materials” for the legitimizing identity of the liberal-progressives. The conservative news media particularly used the pre-existing knowledge or belief in their readers’ mind as framing devices in their news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil.

Diverse communicative actions performed by the protesters during social movements play a crucial role not only in challenging pre-existing values, practices, and discourses, but also in creating and introducing alternative meanings of these cultural codes. During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the protesters were engaging in diverse forms of communicative actions – including conversing with other protesters, newspaper advertising, and online social networking. In addition, they had a cooperative relationship with the liberal-progressive newspapers, and this relationship helped to compete with the movement opponents in the public sphere. These protesters’ communicative actions can be understood as the process of redefining and re-imaging historical and cultural meanings around themselves so as to be useful for denying the legitimizing identity and for constructing an alternative identity.

Finally, the ways of framing social movements in the news stories can reflect power relationships – both existing and desired – among the competing actors of society. The case of the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil reveals that the media system is a system of power, the place where social actors compete and negotiate for “voice and power.” Whether social movements successfully construct the identity for the protesters is also directly connected to their competing ability to influence the public’s minds in and through the media. Simply put, the media are “the ground for power struggles”
During the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, the spaces of newspapers were filled with those media messages which came from the actors in the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil – such as the protesters, the government, and the news media and their audiences – as well as from their relationships, interactions, and conflicts among each other. The present analysis of media frames about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, in this sense, can be understood as a lens for exposing the landscape of power relationships among actors in Korean society.

**Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

Some limitations of this study provide directions for future research. First, this study did not investigate the protesters’ use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and its influence on the identity construction process during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil, except for the process of online fundraising for the newspaper ad campaigns and the process of designing and creating the candlelight vigil ads. The protesters used many different forms of the ICTs, including social network sites, personal blogs, and online discussion forums. As Lievrouw (2011) explains, those ICTs can also play a role in “the conversion of people’s shared ideas, identities, and interests into collective action that aims to change prevailing social, cultural, and political conditions” (p. 149). Secondly, this study did not examine the roles of alternative online news media, such as the *OhmyNews*, in the identity construction process during the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil. Through adapting the values and practices of professional journalism, these alternative media have attempted to
transform the content and production of the news and to renew their role as a brake on the mainstream conservative media. These alternative media may have also provided coverage of under-reported news stories about the 2008 Korean Candlelight Vigil and information sources from an oppositional perspective.


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