ABSTRACT

SOURCES OF KOREANS’ COLLECTIVE MEMORIES: GENERATION AND CULTURE

By Young-Hee Song

A growing literature recognizes social dimension of memories from impersonal and collective perspectives (social memory studies). People remember the past not only as individuals but also as a member of groups. In social memory studies, those groups are frequently understood as generation and culture. This study investigates the impacts of generation and culture separately and combined on memory formation. Parallel groups of young and old populations of Koreans living in Seoul, South Korea and Los Angeles in the U.S. were asked two questions: 1. Could you please name the three events in Korean history over the past 100 years that seem to you especially important? 2. Could you explain why it is important? Eight major events were identified by the subjects. Data analyses of the total 216 respondents provided insights into collective memory construction in terms of the importance of not only generational impacts but also distinct sociohistorical characteristics.
A Thesis

Submitted to the
Faculty of Miami University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Gerontological Studies
Department of Sociology and Gerontology

by

Young-Hee Song

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio

2008

Advisor

Glenn W. Muschert, Ph.D

Reader

Suzanne Kunkel, Ph.D

Reader

James Scott Brown, Ph.D
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .............................................................................................................. 1-3

Chapter 1  Introduction .................................................................................... 4-7

Chapter 2  Literature Review ........................................................................... 8-22
  Collective Memory Studies ........................................................................... 8-9
  Generation (Cohort) .................................................................................... 9-10
  Culture ......................................................................................................... 10
  Generation and Culture in Collective Memory Studies .............................. 10-15
  Three Emerging Questions ......................................................................... 15-19
  Koreans as Subjects of Collective Memory Studies .................................. 19-22

Chapter 3  Methods ......................................................................................... 23-29
  Research Questions .................................................................................... 23-24
  Variable Construction ............................................................................... 24-26
  Sample Recruitment ................................................................................. 26
  Data Collection .......................................................................................... 26-29

Chapter 4  Descriptive Results ....................................................................... 30-35
  Sample Profile ............................................................................................ 30
  Analysis of Event Mentioning .................................................................. 30-32
  Analysis of Reason Mentioning ................................................................. 32-35

Chapter 5  Generational Effects on Collective Memories .............................. 36-57
  Generational Effects .................................................................................. 36-38
  Salience of Experiences in Adolescence and Young Adulthood .................. 38-45
  Analysis of Reason Mentioning: Autobiographical Memories and Factual Memories .................................................................................. 45-56
  Conclusion ................................................................................................ 56-57
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 6</th>
<th>Cultural Effects on Collective Memories</th>
<th>58-77</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td>58-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Event Mentioning</td>
<td></td>
<td>59-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Reason: History and Historical Memory</td>
<td></td>
<td>66-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of Immigration</td>
<td></td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>76-77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 7</th>
<th>Effects of Generation and Culture</th>
<th>78-84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Event Mentioning</td>
<td></td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Reason Mentioning</td>
<td></td>
<td>79-84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 8</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>85-93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Timing of Experiencing Events and the Nature of Events</td>
<td>85-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autobiographical Memories and Factual Memories</td>
<td>87-88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Historical Memories</td>
<td>88-89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation or Culture?</td>
<td>89-90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance between Events and People</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Memories and Social Identity</td>
<td>90-91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Studies</td>
<td>91-93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| References | | 94-96 |
|------------||------|

| Appendix | | 97-109 |
|----------||------|
| Survey A (English) | | 98-99 |
| Survey B (English) | | 100-101 |
| Survey C (English) | | 102-103 |
| Survey D (English) | | 104-105 |
| Survey C (Korean) | | 106-107 |
| Survey D (Korean) | | 108-109 |
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1  Korean History Timetable................................................................................... 21
Table 4.1  Subject Profile..................................................................................................... 30
Table 4.2  Most Commonly Mentioned Events and Changes by All Respondents........... 31
Table 4.3  Most Commonly Mentioned Reasons for Given Events.................................. 33
Table 5.1  Comparison of Priority of Event Mentioning by Generation......................... 36
Table 5.2  Most Commonly Mentioned Events By Generation........................................ 37
Table 5.3  Event Choice of the Korean War by Significant Years Group........................ 39
Table 5.4  Event Choice of World Events, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks by Significant Years Group......................................................... 41
Table 5.5  Event Choice of Independence by Significant Years Group............................ 42
Table 5.6  Event Choice of Democracy Development by Significant Years Group.......... 44
Table 5.7  Comparison of Priority of Reason Mentioning For the Korean War by Generation......................................................................................................................... 46
Table 5.8  Reasons Given for the Korean War by Generation........................................ 47
Table 5.9  Reasons Given for Independence by Generation............................................ 49
Table 5.10 Reasons Given for Democracy Development by Generation....................... 51
Table 5.11 Reasons Given for World Events by Generation........................................... 52
Table 5.12 Reasons Given for Japanese Colonization by Generation........................... 53
Table 5.13 Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Generation.......................... 55
Table 6.1  Most Commonly Mentioned Events by Location............................................ 59
Table 6.2  Comparison of Priority of Event Mentioning by Location.............................. 59
Table 6.3  Reasons Given for the Korean War Choice by Locations................................. 67
Table 6.4  Reasons Given for Independence Choice by Location..................................... 69
Table 6.5  Reasons Given for Democracy Development Choice by Location.................. 70
Table 6.6  Reasons Given for World Events Choice by Location.................................... 71
Table 6.7  Reasons Given for Japanese Colonization by Location.................................... 72
Table 6.8  Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Location.................................. 74
Table 6.9  Most Commonly Mentioned Events of the Elder Respondents in the U.S. by Immigration Experiences (Gender, Education, and Years of Immigration)......... 75
Table 6.10 Most Commonly Mentioned Events of the Young Respondents in the U.S. by Immigration Experience (Gender, Years of Immigration, Identification of Cultural Origin, Interaction with Other Koreans, and Place of Birth)........ 76
Table 7.1  Most Commonly Mentioned Events by Generation, Gender, and Location........ 78
Table 7.2  Reasons Given for the Korean War by Generation, Gender and Location......... 80
Table 7.3  Reasons Given for Independence by Generation, Gender and Location.......... 81
Table 7.4  Reasons Given for Democracy Development Choice by Generation, Gender and Location........................................................................................................ 81
Table 7.5  Reasons Given for World Events by Generation, Gender and Location......... 82
Table 7.6  Reasons Given for Japanese Colonization by Generation, Gender and Location........................................................................................................ 83
Table 7.7  Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Generation, Gender and Location........................................................................................................ 83
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

There is an old Korean proverb saying that sincere words can be worth enough to pay off thousands of dollars debts. Although I can hardly thank my committee members enough for their time, work, and encouragement, I hope my sincere words are worth enough to help them look back at the process of working with me as productive and filled, as it has been with me, with delightful memories.

With their own words in my mind, I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Suzanne Kunkel, who is a wonderful listener and careful reader,

who told me “whatever circumstances are, your true essence will not change.”

Dr. J. Scott Brown, who is Asian by marriage,

who asked me to accept and repeat his words that “I am not perfect and I am okay with that.”

and a special thanks to my committee chair,

Dr. Glenn Muschert, who showed bottomless patience with my endless questions,

who told me “what we have to do as scholars is to maximize what we can do.”

Also, I express my gratitude to

My family, the place of ongoing departure and arrival in my life journey,

My country, the endless source of wanders and wonders, and

Upham Hall, my motherland of intellectual birth.

감사 드려야 할 분들이 참 많습니다. 우선 L.A.에서 보낸 지난 여름과 겨울, 세세하게 마음 써 주시면서 늘 보살펴 주신 전명은 선생님 감사합니다. 더불어 설문조사에 협조해 주신 동대문 노인 복지 회관 관계자 여러분과 어르신들에게 감사 드립니다. 또한, 촉박한 일정에 설문조사를 잘 마칠 수 있게 도와 주신 서지현, 홍현기, 이준태, 그리고 동국 대학교 사우회 학생들께 감사 드립니다.
**Preface**

The place to which you feel the strongest attachment isn’t necessarily the country you’re tied to by blood or birth; it’s the place that allows you to become yourself. This place may not lie on any maps.

- Jhumpa Lahiri

I was often asked why I go by Kirsten but not my Korean *real* name, Younghee. Although I usually answer that is because of a practical reason for living in the U.S., my decision to go by Kirsten has a more symbolic meaning to me. As a person who is interested in people’s life stories and memories not only because of personal interests but also academic fascination, I also have my own stories to share. The connection between my names, which represent my self, and my memories led to this thesis.

My earlier years in South Korea were not unhappy but hard. However, it was during the period before I came to the U.S in 2006 when I began to feel unhappy in myself. I found myself often internally debating between what I really wanted and what I thought that I was supposed to want. Unfortunately, it was always the latter that won the debates. Although this was not a new finding since that was the way that I had lived my life, I felt sad about myself for the first time. And that was a new experience. I began to ask myself why I always denied my true wants. I kept thinking how I could make my true wants and supposed-to-wants meet together, so they didn’t have to compete with each other. However, ending this constant debate was not easy for Younghee, the name by which I was known to myself, my family, friends and all others around me.

As Kirsten at Oxford, I have been given two years to be all by myself. That allowed me to look into myself in the past and in the present. While being alone, I have learned to follow where my mind flows without attempting to change the flow to other directions or to make the flow faster; I just let it flow. Of course that required a lot of patience. Meanwhile, I noticed a line, which used to split myself and the world into two, get somewhat blurry. Gradually, I became to spend less and less time struggling to make a decision about where I have to place myself. Instead, I learned to wander around and enjoy a corner of my mind and the world, without standing by myself at one tiny spot or holding my-supposed-to-be-self too tightly.

One of the best and most significant results of letting my mind open and flow is this thesis. In the first year, I was stubbornly resistant to study anything particularly about
immigrants, Korean, Asian, women, or cross-cultural comparison, which my thesis turns out to be all about. I observed other scholars even specialize in topics relevant to their own lives: many women study women, LGBT scholars study LGBT, Blacks study Blacks, immigrants study immigrants, Hispanics study Hispanic, and scholars from other countries study cross-national comparisons. It seemed to me that one might limit their research boundaries through accentuating their socially representative attributes. This is why I was not very enthusiastic when Dr. Muschert handed me an article comparing collective memories of Koreans and Americans. That was an absolutely fascinating article but that was it. Studying Korean immigrants meant doing that which I had criticized about other scholars. I had to keep the promise that I made to myself – I would not study Korean immigrants. At the moment, the line in my mind was still deeply rooted and I was hesitant to cross it. When I was hesitating in front of the line, Dr. Muschert gave me advice that as scholars what we have to do is to maximize what we can do. Finally, I smudged the line. That is why I regard my thesis as a good result of the past two years in my graduate school experience. In getting close to the end of this thesis writing process, his words turned out to be right. While I was working on my thesis, I came to realize that I can wander around anywhere without rigidly making efforts to turn my eyes away from places where Asians, Koreans, immigrants, women and cross-cultural comparisons are studied.

Such experiences in everyday life at school and at my own place were not always exciting and enjoyable. Nevertheless, it was fascinating to see myself become more and more comfortable with my own self. Going back to the Lahiri quote in the beginning, for the past two years I was truly happy because Oxford allowed me to become myself, which I named and prefer to be called as Kirsten. And this thesis keeps such a precious memory at Upham Hall in it.
대화를 나눌 사람도 시간도 흔치 않은 이 곳에서, 끊임없는 소통의 대상은 스스로였습니다. 많은 생각이 나고 흔들리는 사이에서 자신을 잃지 않기 위해서는 무엇보다 먼저 마음의 흐름을 찬찬히 지켜보는 법을 배우고 연습해야 했습니다. 그 가운데, 마음속에 가득한 분별심들이 보이기 시작했고, 그것들을 조금씩 마음 밖으로 밀어내는 과정을 이 논문이 담고 있습니다.

공부하는 사람들의 전문영역을 살피다 보면, 여성들은 여성들, 장애를 가진 사람들은 장애를, 흑인들은 인종 문제를, 이민자들은 이민을, 동성애자들은 동성애를 연구하는 경우를 흔히 보게 됩니다. 갓 대학원 생활을 시작했을 무렵, 그러한 경향들이 '소수 문제'가 다수의 관심과 참여의 영역으로 확장되는 데 걸림돌이 되는 게 아니라 생각했습니다. 그리고 연구자들은 스스로도 자신의 연구 영역을 사회적으로 자신이 특정지어지는 분야에 제한되도록 만드는 것이라고 비판했습니다. 결국 이것이 소수자들에 의한 소수문제의 연구가 갖는 한계라고 믿었습니다. 그래서 처음 논문 준비를 시작할 때 한인 이민에 관한 연구는 하지 않았다고 했던 다짐은 어쩌면 당연한 것이었는지도 모릅니다. 그럼 그 다짐으로 인해 무한할 수 있었던 제 연구 영역은 한인 이민에 관련된 것과 아닌 것으로 두 동강이 났습니다. 내 분야를 한인 이민으로 좁히지 않았다는 생각으로 시작된 분별심이 거꾸로 내가 할 수 있는 공부를 한인 이민이 아닌 것으로 좁혀버린 셈이었습니다. 그렇게 고집스럽게 갇고 있던 한 쪽 눈을 뜨게 한 것이 다름 아니라 한국인과 미국인의 '기억'에 관한 비교 논문이었고, 그것을 건너주신 논문 지도 교수님의 말씀이었습니다: 연구하는 사람이 해야하는 일 중 하나는, 자신의 능력을 알고 그것을 최대한으로 이용하는 것이다.

기억과 정체성에 관한 것들에 늘 관심이 있었습니다. 그리고 지난 5월, 두 영역은 "기억의 사회학" 혹은 "사회적 기억"이라는 이름으로 만난다는 것을 알게 되었습니다. 이 논문에서는, 두 동강났던 연구 세계의 한쪽에서 "사회적 기억"이, 다른 한쪽에서 "이민 한인"이 서로 만나 "한국인, 우리'의 기억을 만드는 요소: 세대와 문화"라는 이름으로 합쳐졌습니다. 개인적으로는, 논문을 준비하는 과정을 통해서 마음 속에 있는 수 없는 분별심 중 하나를 극복하는 법을 배웠다는 것에 의미를 두고 싶습니다. 학문적으로는, 완성도로 치자면 부족한 점이 한 두 가지가 아니겠지만, 사회적 기억이 한국과 같은 단일 문화의 나라와 그렇지 않은 나라에서 어떻게 달리 혹은 다르게 작용하는지 이해하는데 보탬이 될 수 있기를 바랍니다.
Chapter 1
Introduction

Remembering our past, carrying it with us always, may be the necessary requirement for maintaining, as they say, the wholeness of self. To ensure that the self does not shrink, to see that it holds on to its volume, memories have to be watered like potted flowers, and the watering calls for regular contact with the witnesses of the past, with friends. They are our mirror, our memory, we ask nothing of them but that they polish the mirror from time to time so we can look at ourselves in it.

*Identity*, Milan Kundera

This study explores sources of Koreans’ collective memories: generation and culture. Memories are not limited to what is happening in an individual's brain or what happened in the past. Rather, they also reflect what is happening in a society and in the present. As Halbwachs argued, “it is impossible for individuals to remember in any coherent and persistent fashion outside of their group contexts [by which] memories are recalled externally” (quoted in Olick & Robbins, 1998, p. 109). Thus, studying memories is not only a matter of the subjective nature of mind but also how we as “social beings” remember the past (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 2). We remember not only as individuals through personal experiences, but also as groups through various memberships of families, organizations, and nations. Contents of individuals’ memories remarkably depend upon group memberships and those are shared by the entire group but not by other groups. Examples include Jews’ remembrance of the Holocaust, Americans’ memories of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and Korean immigrants experiences of the Los Angeles riots in 1992.

In this regard, “memory is not an unchanging vessel for carrying the past into the present; memory is a process, not a thing, and it works differently at different points in time” (cited in Olick & Robbins, 1998, p. 122). This perception of memory as process has emphasized the impersonal, conventional, collective and normative aspects of remembrance (Zerubavel, 1996). With the focus on such social dimensions of memories, academic efforts have evolved around questions regarding how memory processes operate within social environments. While individuals’ memories are influenced by social environments, they are also created and recreated by participation in communal life. Embodying these perspectives, Zerubavel (1996) points out that memories are neither clearly personal nor entirely universal. This middle ground is the location for social memory studies.
These interactions between individuals and social environments occur through various forms of group membership. Social memory studies often conceive them as generation and culture (nation). In order to understand the remembering processes occurring in social environments, on the one hand, great attention has been paid to generation as a fundamental source of memory construction. Being located in a particular historical time period, individuals are likely to share similar experiences in a similar timing with others in their generation. Common experiences in a generation make individuals’ memories distinct from others in different generations. On the other hand, unique cultural (national) origins have been considered as another significant constituent of memory formation. The latter perspective argues that sociohistorical circumstances of a nation have determinant effects in creating collective memories.

A limitation in the literature is that these two concepts, generation and nation (culture), are frequently studied separately. In this globalized century, individuals’ experiences become more diverse and consequently so do sources of their memories. Social changes evolve within generations as well as cultures. Contemporary lines drawn between generations or cultures might or might not be as impervious to the external influences of other generations or cultures as they used to be in traditional societies. However, little analytical attention has been paid to interactions of different generations and different cultures. Also the intersection between generation and culture has been little examined as complementary sources of memory construction. To surmount this limitation, study of emigrants and their counterparts in the homeland can provide insight to fill the niche. The intersection of generation and culture yields evidence not only that generational characteristics can be shared by individuals in different cultural life contexts but also that cultural experiences (current cultural life contexts) can be shared by individuals in different generations. Thus, this study presupposes that the impacts of generation and culture are not mutually exclusive in memory construction.

Further, it seems interesting to look at individuals’ memories from a national perspective. Memories in a heterogeneous country are easily assumed to vary depending on subgroup memberships of race, ethnicity or national origin. This tendency may be also seen in a country whose history is short as one unified nation such as Israel; the nation which consists of immigrants having little in common initially except an identity as Jews, so the sense of being a member of one nation is constantly challenged (Schuman et al., 2003). Then, what can we find if
we turn our attention to a country which is characterized by its homogeneity as well as long history as one nation such as Korea? Korea is (or is believed to be) a starkly homogeneous country which is defined as a “one-blood” nation by its people (Schwartz & Kim, 2002) and the sentiment has continued for the five thousand years of Korean history. In such a country, differences in memories may not be noticed as contested by the members themselves or by other people. Interestingly, however, Koreans are one of the biggest global diasporas following Chinese, Indian, Italian, and Jews (Chonnam National University newspaper, 2006). The South Korea government reports that seven million Koreans (equivalent to 10% of the South Korean population) live in over 178 countries across the world (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2007). Given these characteristics, Korea was expected to help bridge the separation between generation and culture as well as shed light on a previously understudied population.

Based on the literature of collective memories, emerging questions are related to the two substantial sources of memory construction. Regarding the concept of generation, it has been rarely studied if generational effects exist in a homogeneous country. If so, it needs to be understood if generational effects are valid within a single generation whose members have migrated to different countries. The next question is about the concept of culture. Scant attention has been paid to various opinions of sub-cultural groups within a country, and the concept of ‘culture’ in the previous research tends to be limited in the geo-political nation. However, the definition of culture needs to be broadened beyond national borders by considering the cultural dynamics of international migrating populations. These emerging questions are developed and described in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 provides background in collective memory studies and it includes what has been established in two subject areas: generation and culture. In the literature, the main focus was on empirical tests of generational effects on collective memory construction, including various cross-cultural studies revealing generation as a universal source of memory formation. On the other hand, the literature about cultural impacts heavily emphasizes the significance of distinct cultural origin as a source of people’s remembrance. The literature served as a foundation for the research problem, which made it possible to develop the empirical research questions as well as lay out a plan for further study. Chapter 3 clarifies the methods of the current study including variable construction, sample recruitment, data collection, and data analysis technique. Findings are presented in three chapters divided by research questions.
Descriptive findings are elaborated in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 describes generational effects on collective memories. Chapter 6 demonstrates cultural effects on the respondents’ remembrance of the past. Chapter 7 compares the combined impacts of generation and culture on memory construction. Finally, chapter 8 concludes this study with a descriptive summary of the findings and a reflection on the potential contributions of this study to body of knowledge in collective memory studies. The last chapter also addresses the limitations of the current study and suggests future directions for further study.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter provides essential background on collective memories for my research objectives. First, a brief description of collective memory studies will be presented. Then, the two fundamental concepts in studying collective memories (generation and culture) will be reviewed, providing an important chance to get acquainted with the empirical studies which examine the impacts of generation and culture on formation of collective memory.

Collective Memories

Focusing more on collective aspects of memories, collective memory studies include two perspectives on the term ‘collective’: more individualist and more collectivist approaches to the social dimension of memory. The term ‘collective’ in the first case implies the aggregated individual memories of members of a group (Olick, 1999). This individualist approach acknowledges the remembering process can occur in collective ways within communal experiential settings in terms of time and space given through sharing group membership. Here, the core subject is individuals’ collective outcomes of such remembrance are seen as aggregated individuals’ processes. From this point of view, we can distinguish the term ‘collected’ memory from ‘collective’ memory (Olick, 1999).

The collectivist approach suggests that collective memory is more than a mere aggregate of individuals’ personal recollections. This perspective stresses that collective memory involves the integration of various personal “pasts” into a single common past that all members of a particular community come to remember collectively (Zerubavel, 1996). From this perspective, individuals’ memories are products of mnemonic socialization through which they learn to see the world and to assign to objects meanings as the same way others have done in the groups to which they belong, namely mnemonic communities (Zerubavel, 1997). This takes places when individuals enter new thought communities such as being born in a particular generation (e.g., baby-boom generation), entering schools, marriage, and immigration. Thus, the collectivist approach is concerned with how objects of memory are selected and represented in collective forms (Schuman, et al., 1998). The core focus is on “varieties of forms through which we are shaped by the past, conscious and unconscious, public and private, material and communicative, consensual and challenged” (Olick & Robbins, 1998, p. 112). This is the place where historic
preservation, public opinions, education, and artistic cultures are discussed as representations of collectivities by which members of a social group keep in touch with the past.

Despite considerable differences in conceiving the nature of ‘collective’ in collective memory, the two approaches seem to fundamentally agree in two aspects. First, both of the perspectives pay attention to the social environment within which memory is situated (Zerubavel, 1996). Second, individuals’ remembering processes can occur together in groups such as families, organizations, sub-cultures and nations. Embracing these two shared points of collective memory studies, it seems reasonable to argue that individuals’ memories are shaped in different contents, forms, and depths depending on group memberships. In collective memory studies, those groups are frequently understood as generations, or as cultures. The following parts of this chapter discuss these two important concepts; generation and culture.

**Generation (Cohort)**

In both gerontological and sociological perspectives, generation (cohort) is an important concept to understand interactions between individuals and social structures. The notion of generation is closely connected to life events and individuals’ experiences in time’s passing and social changes (Morgan & Kunkel, 1998). Mannheim, who acknowledged the social importance of age groups, defined generation as “a group of people born within a specific historical time period, assumed to share consciousness because they were exposed to the same social, political, economic and intellectual environment” (cited in Morgan & Kunkel, 1998, p. 465). Another term for age grouping is cohort, defined as groups of individuals born at approximately the same time in history and sharing a collection of historical life experiences (Morgan & Kunkel, 1998). Corresponding to seemingly similar concepts, Mannheim distinguished a cohort “in terms of its ‘historical-social’ consciousness as a true generation” (Schuman & Scott, 1989, p. 359). However, generation and birth cohort are often used interchangeably in social science (Morgan & Kunkel, 1998).

An important aspect of generation is centered in social events. Depending on generation, there are differences between groups (generational effects) sharing major life events at different points in historical time (Morgan & Kunkel, 1998). However, generation is more than just a collection of individuals born within a few years of each other. While individuals in the same generation are affected by social events in similar ways, the changes in their collective lives can produce changes in the social structure as well (Newman, 2000). In short, generations are not
only affected by social changes but they also contribute to them (Riley et al., 1988). In this sense, generation plays an important role in placing individuals in distinctive life contexts in terms of historical time and cultural space. Researchers in collective memory studies investigate how generational memories are socially constructed and how such memories affect social interactions and attitudes depending on particular historical, social, and economic environments of the period to which individuals belong.

Culture

Another key concept in collective memory studies is culture, which in general terms, is defined as society’s total way of life, including the learned and shared social values, customs, material objects, and symbols (Lindsey & Beach, 2002). Culture has been examined in collective memory studies in two ways. On the one hand, the individualist perspective of collective memory studies has compared the U.S. with South Korea (Schwartz & Kim, 2002), Australia (Spillman, 1997), Lithuania (Schuman, et al., 1994), and Britain (Scott & Zac, 1993). These cross cultural studies have examined whether there are universal aspects of collective memory formation in different cultures.

On the other hand, culture is perceived as a mutual concept in constructing collective memories. In the collectivist approach, memories of the past need not be stored in the minds of individuals but in impersonal sites such as museums and memorials (Zerubavel, 1996). Culture offers a social context for preservation, and at the same time, various products of preservation including symbols, objects, and narratives constitute essential parts of culture. E. Zerubavel (1982), for example, explored social use of calendars for group identities; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991) investigated social discourse surrounding historic preservation through the case of the Vietnam Memorial; and Y. Zerubavel (2005) discussed national memories and encounters of historical figures in Israeli children’s tales.

Despite its broad definition, in collective memory studies culture usually implies a social heritage identified with nations. In all cases, culture is used interchangeably with a country or a nation. Such a definition of culture defined as a geographical area, country or nation in cross-cultural studies has limitations in studying collective memory. This will be more fully discussed in later chapters.

Generations and Culture in Collective Memory Studies
General definitions of generation and culture become concrete when they are employed in particular studies of collective memories. In order to explore how individuals’ memories are formed in collective ways, generation and culture help understand how individuals experience social contexts together through belonging to groups by age, locations, and ancestry.

**Generations.** Schuman and colleagues (e.g., Schuman & Coning, 2006; Schuman & Rodgers, 2004; Schuman, et al., 2003; Schuman & Corning, 2000; Schuman, et al., 1998; Schuman & Rieger, 1992; Schuman & Scott, 1989) have focused on the relationship of generation, cohort and age effects to collective memory construction. The core of the focus is on investigating generational differences in individuals’ remembrance of the past. Schuman conducted surveys to ask respondents to name a few important historical events and give brief reasons for their answers. He found that people in the same generation were likely to name similar historical events for similar reasons. For examples, Schuman and colleagues (e.g., Schuman et al., 1998) examined whether distinctiveness of generational differences in collective memories stemmed from individuals’ adolescence and early adulthood experiences. Known as the ‘significant years (or ‘critical years’) hypothesis’, it assumes events and changes that occur during adolescence and early adulthood play primary roles to structure individuals’ memories and have maximum impacts until their later lives. This hypothesis was supported by empirical studies in different cultural contexts including the U.S (Schuman & Scott, 1989; Schuman & Rodgers, 2004), Japan and Germany (Schuman et al, 1998), Britain (Scott & Zac, 1993), Israel (Schuman et al., 2003), and Lithuania (Schuman et al., 1994).

For example, in an empirical examination of generational effects, Schuman and Scott asked Americans to name “the national or world events or changes over the past 50 years and to explain the reasons for their choices” (1989, p. 359). In this particular study conducted in 1985, the most frequently identified events were World War II and Vietnam War. Interestingly, identification of World War II was relatively high among respondents in their 50s and 60s, whereas nominations of Vietnam War were high especially among those in their 30s and early

---

1Mannheim suggested age range of 17 to 25 as formative years of generational consciousness which is referred to as ‘significant years’ or ‘critical years’ (Mannheim, 1952). Following his generational formation concept, however, later writers seem to perceive such formative years in broader manner like “late adolescence and early adulthood” (Rintala, 1968, p. 93) rather than rigidly apply the specific age range of Mannheim to generational effects on collective memories. In effect, an empirical study addressed “the need to extend the significant years range to earlier than the mid-teens and later than the mid-twenties” (Schuman et al., 1998).
40s. Thus, those who mentioned World War II were 16 to 20 in the beginning and 20 to 24 at the end of the war. This age pattern was also seen among those who named the Vietnam War; 15 to 19 in the beginning and 23 to 27 at the end of the war. The age ranges of the respondents were remarkably close to what Mannheim identified as critical years for generational formation (Schuman & Scott, 1989).

The salience of events experienced during critical years has two manifestations: First, those too young to directly experience a war during their ‘critical years’ were less likely to mention the event. Second, those who were beyond their youth at the time of either World War II or the Vietnam War were also less likely to mention either war because it is overshadowed by earlier events that dominate their memories (Schuman & Scott, 1989, p. 366). A similar pattern appeared when analyzing reasons for the respondents’ choices showing age structuring of memories. Of those who chose World War II as the most important historical event, people who were in their significant years during the war were more likely to recall the event along with their personal experiences. On the other hand, people who did not experience the event in their significant years tended to focus on the attribution of some larger political meaning to it (Schuman and Scott, 1989).

Other variables including education, race, gender, ethnic origin, religiosity, and region were considered in investigating generational effects. Besides age, social stratification variables including education, race and gender were employed in the 1989 study of Schuman and Scott. The findings showed these variables did not significantly affect the distinctive events named by certain age groups in the study (Schuman & Scott, 1989). This sparked questions for others’ studies. Although such variables did not alter the fundamental age impact on individuals’ memories, later studies (e.g., Griffin, 2004) indicated the impacts of such variables. This will be discussed in the following section.

A later study attempted to see if the ‘significant years’ hypothesis was still valid to explain collective memories regardless of the impacts of new events. After Sept. 11, 2001, Schuman and Rodgers (2004) replicated questions asked in Schuman and Scott’s study (1989). The findings of the study confirmed that critical years experiences are the strongest source of people’s memories. Overall, people’s memories tended to remain rather stable although important new events occurred including the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 terrorist events
between 1989 and 2001. This is in part because new events seem to bring back people’s memories from their significant years rather than overwriting them (Schuman & Rodgers, 2004).

In addition to generational differences, there were indications of the impact of historical uniqueness on collective memories throughout the cross national studies (e.g., the U.S., Japan, Germany, Australia, Lithuania, Britain, Israel, and South Korea). For instance, in a comparison study between Lithuania and the U.S. (Schuman et al., 1994), Lithuanians identified important historical events that occurred predominantly in two periods: between the 1940s and early 1950s represented as loss of independence, and the late 1980s with renewed independence. This is different from their American counterparts who chose specific events among subdivisions of events over 50 years period in corresponding with their own cohorts. However, it is important to note that the different contents of collective memories in countries do not undermine the age impact of memory formations (Schuman et al., 1994). Although the significance of the distinctive historical environment is regarded as a crucial backdrop in understanding collective memory, cohort effects are still the most consistent findings throughout the previous cross-national studies. Like the other studies done in the U.S., memories were heavily influenced by the timing of the events in ones’ life course. Therefore, the impacts of cultural distinctiveness and cohort effects on collective memory are complementary rather than conflicting. Placing emphasis on the influences of social environment on memory can be one which benefits from this complementary perspective.

Culture. As another important aspect of collective memory, culture has been examined in cross-national comparisons. These studies provided insight into understanding the significant roles of culture in memory construction, and at the same time left opportunities for further studies. As elaborated above, formation of collective memory was studied in various cultural contexts. While attempting to test generational differences in memories, these studies also took a careful look at the unique historical circumstances of countries in order to examine memory structures of the people and their perceptions to the past. For example, a study of Israeli Jews (Schuman, et al., 2003) considered Israel’s need to unify its citizens and its efforts to create a common sense of history and a collective national identity through commemorations, education, and media representations. The study by Schuman et al (1994) done in Lithuania highlighted the significant role of historical distinctiveness reflected in Lithuanians’ memories during a period of constant political conflicts. In a comparison between the U.S. and Britain (Scott & Zac, 1993),
while it is interesting to see World War II was nominated by the most respondents in both countries, the meaning attached to the war was considerably different in the two countries (Scott & Zac, 1993). Remarkable findings throughout these comparisons well illustrate “not only the rate of social or political change but also the length, uniqueness, and objective impact of events are important” (Schuman et al., 1994, p. 328) in formation of perceptions of the past. This calls researchers’ attention to recognize that historical events or changes are one representation of historical time. Thus, social dynamics, social structures, and patterns of historical events (Schuman et al., 1994) are equally important constituents to shape collective memories along with individuals’ life timing of experiencing such events.

Despite consideration of unique historical environments in those studies, discussion about the cultural effects on collective memory was rather limited. Most studies were originally initiated with the aim to investigate cohort effects on collective memory. Consequently, the foci of analysis and discussion are heavily on “equally striking similarities in the relation of life course to the temporal nature of what is remembered … [despite] the striking differences in the contents of collective memories” (Schuman et al., 1994, p. 330) of the people depending on distinct historical and social circumstances in each country.

Schwartz and Kim (2002) identified the lack of attention to cultural context in collective memory studies. They pointed out that, “The cultural context of memory has never been an important part of sociology’s agenda” (Schwartz & Kim, 2002, p. 210). Previous studies of (collective) memory were rarely completed based on controlled comparative analysis. Empirical cross national comparisons tend to focus on generational differences in memory within each nation rather than on cultural differences between them or on structural factors activating collective memory in different nations (Schwartz & Kim, 2002).

Considering this, Schwartz and Kim (2002) studied cultural origins to explain how memory is structured in collective ways. Thus, they investigated the cultural values by which people judge historic events. They selected university students in the U.S. and South Korea and asked them to name three events in their national history of which they regarded as the most and least honorable. Respondents were also asked to explain their choices. The findings showed that respondents in both countries tended to identify similar events with others in their own group. The students in the U.S. and South Korea tended to share not only a sense of the importance of certain events but also reasons of their choices. The findings of the study demonstrate that
Americans’ sources of judging their history is remarkably related to the conception of an orderly, free, and just society, while Koreans’ sources of connection to their history is self-blame for negative events, resentment toward foreign aggressors, and concern for the international recognition of Korea. Through these comparisons, the discussion goes back to the initial inquiry; the collective memory studies aim to “provide models of human beings using their minds to fix the experiences of their lives within the history of their nation” (Schwartz & Kim, 2002, p. 222). Schwartz and Kim answer the question by stating that “different combinations of culture and experiences lead to different perspectives” (2002, p. 222).

In social science research, scholars can study collective memories in at least two significant ways. On the one hand, generational location in historical time is considered as one of the strongest sources of collective memory formation. On the other hand, specific cultural sites rather than universal dimensions may be examined as the more influential element to constitute collective memory (Schwartz & Kim, 2002). Each approach provides insightful as well as empirical advantages for collective memory studies, but there are remaining questions to be studied.

**Three Emerging Questions**

The previous studies which have tested the significant years hypothesis seem to have limitations by overly focusing on generational effects. What Schuman and his colleagues (e.g., Schuman & Coning, 2006; Schuman & Rodgers, 2004; Schuman, et al., 2003; Schuman & Corning, 2000; Schuman, et al., 1998; Schuman & Rieger, 1992; Schuman & Scott, 1989) attempted to investigate was whether generational effects are the common source of collective memories regardless of different cultural environments. Heavy focus was put on generational differences in subjects’ memories within each culture, albeit cross-culturally. By pursuing this initial inquiry, those studies left little space for cultural differences between countries. This is not to say that no previous scholar has identified the connection between generation and culture in collective memory studies. Indeed one study (Schuman et al., 1994) displays careful consideration of cultural and historical differences in analyzing distinctive patterns of memory construction. Nevertheless, cultural differences are often presented as supportive evidence of “equally striking similarities in the relation of life course to the temporal nature of what is remembered… [despite] the striking differences in the contents” (Schuman et al., 1994) based on different cultural environments. As a result, cultural differences between the compared countries
mostly remained unexamined, as noted by Schwartz and Kim (2002). Moreover, despite attempts to assess the universality of generational effects in collective memory construction, most cross-cultural studies dealt with western countries including the U.S (Schuman & Scott, 1989, Schuman & Rodgers, 2004), Germany (Schuman et al, 1998), Britain (Scott & Zac, 1993), Israel (Schuman et al., 2003), and Lithuania (Schuman et al., 1994). There is only one study examining generational effects in non-western country which was done in Japan. An emerging question that remains is if generational effects are also found in collective memories of people whose cultural and historical contexts significantly differ from those already studied. Widening the geographic boundaries of cross-cultural comparison is necessary to strengthen what the previous studies have found within various cultural settings.

On the other hand, those few studies which examined cultural effects rather overly focused on cultural values in exploring collective memory formation. From this point of view, the second question is drawn from the findings of Schwartz and Kim (2002) regarding the dynamic dimension of culture. In the study, Schwartz and Kim utilized samples (university students) from two countries (South Korea and the U.S.) to examine how these populations use different values to judge their history as sources of pride or shame. What remained unanswered was if the distinctive values of each country are shared by others in different generations within the same country. American university students showed that their judgment of the past heavily relied on the concepts of an orderly, free, and just society. Would other generations in the U.S. share these values to judge American history? The same question might also be asked South Korean populations. Schwartz and Kim contended that different combinations of culture and experiences were the most influential element to characterize how people perceive their own history (2002).

Despite the novel findings, the claim seems to have limitations in the way that two crucial aspects of culture were overlooked. First, culture of a certain nation or country can be experienced in different ways. Depending on birth cohort, members tend to share experiences and values in unique experiential cultural settings which are likely to be distinguished from other age groups. Second, culture evolves over time, as members with differentiated experiences constantly interact with social environments. Such participation of members can contribute to social and cultural changes (Newman, 2000). These dynamic aspects of cultures are not carefully discussed in the study of Schwartz and Kim (2002). Although exploring cultural differences
between the countries were the main focus of the study, the findings tell little about how the
cultural distinctiveness of each country is experienced by other members within each of the
societies. As a matter of fact, Schwartz and Kim conceded that “…students do not represent
Korea’s and America’s university students, let alone their general population…however, the
differences between Korean and American students’ judgments approximates the differences
between judgment of all Korean and American adults” (2002, p. 212). In spite of their
acknowledgment about the limited generalizability of their findings, the attempts of Schwartz
and Kim to discuss their findings based on university student samples to “all Korean and
American adults” seems an unwarranted leap. In order to strengthen the argument of cultural
effects on collective memories, future study needs to pay more attention to various opinions
between sub-cultural groups within a single country: in the case of Schwartz and Kim’s study
(2002), the sub-cultural groups can be different generational groups. Only with such embracing
perspectives on culture, impacts of cultural origins on people’s collective memories can be better
understood.

The third question concerns the oversimplified concept of culture employed in collective
memory studies. Typically, culture is based on individuals’ native born country in collective
memory studies. In most cross-national studies, the term culture appears to be interchangeable
with either a country or a nation. Thus, individuals’ experiences are perceived to be bounded in a
culture based on their native born counties, meaning that most cross-national comparison studies
treat culture as the lifelong contexts where individuals are assumed to spend their time from birth
to death. Such a geographically bounded definition of culture seems to have limitations to
understand this globalized century, as it forces culture to fit within political boundaries. In fact,
people experience various different cross-national cultures through media consumption,
consumption of products and international migration. Considering the effects of globalization
across the world, perceiving culture with a national border seems insufficient to capture how
culture impacts on individuals’ memories in collective ways. Despite this weakness, there are a
couple of studies which do consider international migration. In comparing Lithuania to the U.S
(Schuman et al., 1994), the effects of ethnic differences on collective memory of national
(Lithuanian) and world events were presented between Russians (9%) living in Lithuania and the
majority population (80%) of ethnic Lithuanians. The study identified the subjects as Russians,
but did not specify how long they have lived in Lithuania. Similarly, a study of Israeli’s
collective memories (Schuman et al., 2003) did pay attention to ethic origins. Namely, samples were divided into five groups; specifying the national origin of the respondents and his/her parents (p, 110). Despite these studies’ recognition of people from other national origins, the related findings were not sufficient to draw relationships between immigration experiences and their perceptions of the past. Schuman and his colleagues left a space for further studies about this issue by ending with a statement that “ethnicity is the most difficult…[to] summarize, largely because it does not provide a simple, ordinal scale of more and less, as do education and cohort, nor is it dichotomous, as is gender” (2003, p. 131).

Thus, the way culture is treated in comparative studies needs to be reconsidered in collective memory studies, particularly in the globalized world. Mannheim argued that the generational effect on cultural experience was less distinct in earlier, more traditional societies such as peasant societies. Thus, people experienced less cultural variation, regardless of when they were born (Mannheim, 1952). National culture might be remarkably inclusive of any other forms of subcultures. More, if there is little migration across national borders, it is a reasonable assumption that individuals are likely to experience a culture only in their country of origin. In this case, culture can be seen as lifelong context surrounding individuals within a nation.

However, this may be an insufficient concept of culture for this century. The United Nation reported that in 2005 about 191 million people—3 percent of the world's population—were international migrants (The United Nations, 2006). Considering this massive international migration, it is certain that there are considerable proportions of people who experience more than one nation and consequently more than one culture in their life time. If culture is a limited concept within nations, the challenge is to recognize migrants who share cultural origin with their counterparts in their homeland, but do not live in the same country with them. In the case of migrants, their national origin is an essential part of their cultural identity but their new experiences in the current life location also make up a crucial part of their culture. Implementing the concept of culture used in the previous works, these two populations who remain in their native countries and who migrated to another country would be considered to have different cultures since they live in different countries. But are their cultures really different? This complication raises the need to expand the scope of culture for collective memory studies beyond national borders. Although it is crucial to understand diverse experiences of individuals and groups in globalized life contexts, the scope of culture in conjunction with international
migration has been rarely discussed in collective memory studies. Therefore, culture in the current study is considered as a term embracing both cultural origins and current life contexts which can be either consistent or divergent in individuals’ life time.

**Research Questions.** Noting these limitations in previous studies, it becomes possible to lay out a plan for the current research. The three analytic questions in this study are:

1. Does generation have formative effects on individuals’ memories? If so, how does the timing of historical events in individuals’ lives influence the salience of their memories about those events?
2. Do memories constructed in earlier ages persist despite considerably different cultural experiences in later years, such as international migration?
3. What are the combined effects of generation and culture in collective memories?

**Koreans as Subjects of Collective Memory Studies**

To fill the gap in previous works, Koreans were chosen as subjects of this study for two reasons. Although Korean history dates back 5000 years ago, it is primarily the past 100 years which have shaped the current Korean political and economic system. Regarding its sociohistorical structure, Korea appears to provide a unique setting to study roles of generation and culture in collective memory formation in two aspects. At this point, it will be helpful to look over Korean history briefly in order to bridge understandings between what studying Koreans can contribute to this field.

The last Korean dynasty was ended in 1910 by the Japanese colonization which lasted until 1945. After the defeat of Japan in World War II, Korea regained independence in 1945. During the turbulent time following post independence, the southern part of Korea was under control of the U.S. and the northern part was under control of the Soviet Union. This temporary division was officially declared in July 1948, and in the same year the two Koreas established their own governments. Two years later in 1950, the Korean War took place and it lasted for three years. In 1953, two Koreas signed an armistice agreement and since then the war has been under ceasefire.

Having overcome the national turmoil of colonization and the Korean War, South Korea began industrialization and modernization in the early 1960s and began to change its image as one of the poorest countries in the world in the 1980s. At the center of the drastic economy
development, there is a controversial figure, President Park Chung-Hee who started his period by military coup in 1961 and ended by his assassination in 1979.

During the industrialization and modernization period, three bloody democratic protest movements occurred in 1960 (April 19th, Student Anti-Authoritarian Government Movement), 1980 (May 18th, Gwangju People Democratic Protest Movement), and 1987 (Jun 10th, Democratic Protest Movement). After, South Korea hosted two major international sporting events (Seoul Olympic Game in 1988 and Korea-Japan World Cup in 2002). Along with constant democratic protest movements by public, the first civil government was established in 1993. Steady economy growth faltered in 1997 along with economic crisis all across Asia at the time, and it brought an International Monetary Fund Emergency Loan to South Korea. Tension between North and South Korea was eased in the late 1990s and the first Inter-Korea Summit Talks were held in 2000.

Much of the last century has been directly experienced by Korean elders. Also many parts of the historical events have not been actually terminated so they constantly get involved in public discourse to determine Korea’s present and future. Consequently, young members experience the events through the extended impacts in the present time. From this point of view, the past is always the present in Korea. Major events mentioned in this section are summarized in Table 2.1.
Another promising aspect of studying Koreans is related to the migration population. In the U.S., Korean immigrants have a relatively shorter history than other ethnic groups such as African American, Chinese, and Japanese. Following the Immigration Act in 1963, the Korean immigrant population began to increase. Thus, most of elder Korean immigrants are likely to be born and grew up in Korea while young immigrants either were born in the U.S. or came to the U.S. at an early age. For example, in a 2005 United States Census Bureau survey, an estimated 973,780 Koreans in the U.S. were foreign-born. Korean Americans that were naturalized citizens numbered at 530,100, while 443,680 Koreans in the U.S. were not American citizens (U.S. Census, 2005).
In considering the characteristics of these populations, they can be divided into four groups by generation and culture; young and elder Koreans in South Korea and in the U.S. While all these four groups share a common cultural ancestry, Koreans in each country share the present cultural contexts with a different generation and each generation in two counties share historical time (generation) with their counterparts in different culture. An especially interesting aspect of these populations is that both elder populations’ lives were considerably rooted in South Korea until their adolescence or young adulthood, while young generations in two countries have little or no shared time in the same country. These combined elements of generations and cultures within Korean population are the second promising point which makes them as a suitable subject to understand interrelated roles of generation and culture in collective memory studies.
Chapter 3  
Methods

In this study, South Koreans’ collective memories were explored by conducting questionnaire surveys. The data were collected in Seoul, South Korea and Los Angeles, the United States. The data collection in South Korea began on December 18, 2007 and finished on January 11, 2008, and the data were gathered in the United States from January 17, 2008 to February 10, 2008.

Research Questions

Testing Generational Effects: Does generation have formative effects on individuals’ memories? If so, how does the timing of historical events in individuals’ lives influence the salience of their memories about those events? I first ask whether there are generational differences in Korean subjects’ collective memories. If there are, a subsequent question is if sources of the differences are driven by respondents’ experiences during adolescence and young adulthood, a question based on the ‘significant years’ hypothesis. The first testable hypothesis in this study is whether young and elder generations show similarities in their remembrance of Korean history with their counterparts in different countries. From the previous works of Schuman and his colleagues, it is expected that Korean elders who spent their adolescence and young adulthood years in Korea will tend to name similar historical events in Korean history although they live in different countries now. In addition, if young respondents show similar patterns of collective memories in two countries, it will also support the ‘significant years hypothesis’ (Schuman & Scott, 1989). Although the young respondents do not share the current cultural life contexts each other, they experience Korea with their birth cohorts in the present which is their ‘significant years’ period. Empirical study will test whether generational effects have stronger impacts on collective memories than the current cultural life contexts.

Testing Cultural Effects: Do memories constructed in earlier ages persist despite considerably different cultural experiences in later years, such as international migration? The second analytical question examines the cultural effects of collective memories between respondents in two countries. Cultural experiences are neither always consistent with individuals’ native countries nor is always based on geographical boundaries, such as residence in a country. Rather, memory is conceived as a process which is changeable in connection between the past and the present (Olick & Robbins, 1998). Therefore, this study examines
whether older generations in each country share more in common with their younger counterparts than with the members of their own generation living elsewhere. This will test whether the current cultural contexts more strongly affect memory construction than generations.

**Connecting Generational and Cultural Effects:** What are the combined effects of generation and culture in collective memories? The third analytical focus explores the connections between generational and cultural effects. I hypothesize that Korean elders in South Korea and the U.S. may show greater similarities compared to the younger groups in both countries. If this is the case, Korean elders might retain their collective memories formed in their significant years although their current cultural contexts are different. On the other hand, the young samples in both countries might not share their memories about Korea although they are the same birth cohorts. This finding would highlight the generational and the current cultural contexts as both influencing development and maintenance of collective memories.

**Variable Construction**

The samples were selected from two locations by a convenience sampling: Seoul, South Korea and Los Angeles, the United States. In order to measure effects of generations and cultures in collective memory formation it was necessary to consider variable construction in four aspects.

**Cultural Origin.** Persons of Korea ancestry were included in this study in order to control the possible effects of ethnic differences on memory formations. This was expected to increase the ability to measure generational and cultural effects with ethnicity controlled. Thus, “Koreans” were defined as those who have both grandparents and parents of Korean origin. Those who were adopted in American families were not counted even if both their biological parents and grandparents were Koreans.

**Age.** Age is employed as a dichotomous variable indicating two generations: young and elder. For the young generations, the age range of the sample was first developed by borrowing Mannheim’s age range for generational formation; age from 17 to 25 (Schuman & Scott, 1989) which is referred as to ‘significant years’, or ‘critical years’. According to Mannheim, late adolescence and early adulthood which he defined from 17 to 25 are “the formative years during which a distinctive personal outlook on politics emerges” (p, 359). In examining ‘significant years’ hypothesis, the previous studies implemented somewhat broader term ‘late adolescence and early adulthood’ to imply significant years rather than adhered the exact age range
designated by Mannheim. Indeed, one empirical study suggested to extend the significant years age range from earlier into the mid-teens and later than the mid-twenties (Schuman et al., 1998). In this study, minimum age 18 for the sample was set for the aim to expand the comparison study of Schwartz and Kim (2002) conducted with university student samples. For this purpose, the youngest age in university is expected to be 18. Twenty-nine years old was set as the upper limit for the younger generation because that is commonly used as a maximum age range of young adulthood in gerontology. Expanding Mannheim’s age range, this study set the age range of sample from 18 to 29.

For the elder generations, 65 years old is a minimum age for this study. Setting a minimum age has methodological significance in order to test the ‘significant years’ hypothesis and the cultural contexts. Subjects were required to have shared their significant years in similar cultural contexts (in Korea) and then diverged into two different cultural contexts (either South Korea or the U.S). In looking at Korean immigrants in U.S history, Korean immigrants began to increase following immigration legislation in 1963. Regarding this historical factor, the age range of elder immigrants, who came to the U.S around 1963 after passing their significant years (age of 17-25) in Korea, lies between 62 and 69. Within this age range, 65 was set as the minimum for elder samples because the typical retirement age in both countries is considered as 65 and older. Also, age 65 is employed as a criterion to entitle persons to social services for elders. For this reason, subjects in research sites (senior centers and senior apartments) were expected to be 65 years and older.

Locations. In order to measure the impact of the current cultural contexts, two cities (Seoul, South Korea and Los Angeles, California, USA) were chosen as research sites. Both are metropolitan cities so there are consistent populations moving in and out. Presumably, there are diversities among Koreans in terms of migration experiences such as home towns, motivations for migration (to Seoul or to the U.S), and duration of migration (in Seoul or in the U.S), political preferences and practices. Diversity issues in collective memory were also addressed during another literature review. A question was raised in the cross-cultural comparison study of Schwartz and Kim (2002) between South Korea and the U.S. In the study, the samples were drawn from a particular city of each country (Masan in South Korea and Athens, Georgia in the U.S.). This sampling is hardly expected to include diverse populations within groups. Regarding sampling location in South Korea, Masan is located in southeastern part of South Korea and
shows very low rates of population migration. Most importantly, in South Korea, regional divisions have significant roles to split people in different social experiences and political preferences, although it has been somewhat mitigated in recent years (Lee, 2004). It seems rather problematic to use a sample from one region to represent culture of the countries. For this reason, the two metropolitan cities selected here are expected to give better opportunities to reduce the type of bias Griffin (2004) pointed out by selection of regions in studying collective memories.

In order to measure generational and cultural effects on collective memory, an assumption needs to be made that immigrant populations have access to what has been happening to Koreans in Korea and the U.S. This is expected to prevent immigrant respondents from excluding certain social issues and events due to a lack of information. By having this assumption, it is expected that immigrants have a compatible range of events to be selected with their counterparts in South Korea. Access to such information can occur through various forms of mass media consumption such as television and radio broadcasting systems, newspapers, magazines, films, Internet access, and interaction with other Koreans. In considering the relatively rich media influence and high density of Korean immigrants (Lee, 2004), Los Angeles was selected as a research site.

**Immigration.** Timing of immigration is also a crucial factor in the study for both age groups in order to maximize differences in experiences between the past and the present cultural contexts. Young subjects who came to the U.S. for university education or jobs after graduating from a university in South Korea, or who temporarily stay in the U.S., including exchange students, were not considered as relevant for this study. Second, elders who immigrated to the U.S. after passing their retirement age (age of 65) were not included.

**Sample Recruitment**

Sites for sample recruitment were selected by consideration of samples’ age ranges. The elder samples were recruited from senior centers and senior apartments in Seoul, South Korea, as well as in Los Angeles, in the U.S. The younger samples were recruited from universities in Los Angeles, and Seoul. The overall sample recruitment process was identical in both countries.

**Data Collection**

---

2 Compared to the national average migration rate of 18.1%, migration rate of Masan is relatively very low marking 4.9% (Korea Census, 2005).
Survey Questionnaires were administered to the four sample populations between December 18, 2007 and February 10, 2008. In considering respondents’ convenience, in-person interviews with structured questionnaires and self-administered surveys were conducted depending on survey situations.

Survey Questionnaires. The survey questionnaire is divided into two parts. For the first part, basic demographic questions were designed slightly different considering characteristics of each subject group. Basic demographic questions include gender, year of birth, and education. Education was only asked for elder subjects since most of young subjects have not completed their education yet. Other questions related to immigration experiences including year of immigration, place of birth, cultural identity as either Korean or American, and interaction with Koreans were only asked to respondents in the U.S.

The second part of the questionnaire was to explore Koreans’ collective memories. For this aim, the questionnaire replicated historical event and reason mentioning questions which were developed (Schuman & Scott, 1989) and has been tested by Schuman and his colleagues. The event mentioning questions is

There have been a lot of national and world events and changes over the past 50 years-say, from about 1930 right up until today. Would you mention one or two such events or changes that seem to you to have been especially important. There aren’t any right or wrong answers to the question-just whatever national or world events or changes over the past 50 years that come to mind as important to you. (IF ONLY ONE MENTION, ASK: Is there any other national or world event or change over the past 50 years that you feel was especially important?) (Schuman & Scott, 1989, p. 363).

A follow up question for reason mentioning is

“What was it about _____ that makes it seem especially important to you?”
(Schuman & Scott, 1989, p. 371)

In one study, Schuman et al. (1998) demonstrated the relevance of asking about historical event in investigating how individuals’ memories are constructed in collective ways.

“We use the term “collective memories” in the plural,…The plural “memories” indicates that our research elicits the memories of samples of individuals, whereas most studies of collective memory are concerned with how “objects” of memory are represented in some collective forms….At the same time, retention of the word

---

3 The questionnaires were designed at double sided prints written in Korean and English at each side, minimized inconvenience for participants. The original questionnaires written in Korean and English are included in the Appendix.
“collective” reflects our continued focus on national collectivities by the questions we ask and the theoretical population we attempt to represent for each country. In this way our research remains connected to social science writing that deals with “group, institutional, and cultural recollections of the past….” (Schuman, Akiyama, and Knauper, 1998 p. 429)

The current study replicates the survey technique of historical event mentioning and reason mentioning for the given events with some wording modifications which were necessary for Korean subjects of the current study.

Like most other studies, the time range was given rather than defined by respondents. This is in order to “focus on recent events that have a reality different from the more mythic objects that have been the subject of other important studies” (Schuman et al., 2003, p. 107). Thus, the current study limited respondents’ opinions within the past 100 years out of the roughly 5000 years of Korean history. In order to implement previous studies’ questionnaires for a Korean population, it was necessary to modify the time range of ‘the past 50 years’ in the study of Schuman & Scott (1989) to ‘the past 100 years’ for this study. Such time range modification has been already employed in Israeli Jews’ collective memory studies (Schuman et al., 2003) to include the origin of Israel and related events which are significant parts of Israeli history. Similar with Israel’s case, if the range for the present study is set as the past 50 years, it excludes significant major Korean historical events including Japanese colonization period (1910-1945), Independence (1945), territorial division (1945) and Foundation of South Korean government (1948). Considering this Korean historical circumstances, the developed questions for the questionnaire in this study were,

Could you please name three important Korean historical events over the past 100 years? Please explain why.

Data Analysis Technique. The focus of this study is to examine the impacts of generation and culture on the subjects’ responses to the survey questionnaire. The relationships of generation and culture to the respondents’ opinions were tested using t-tests and logistic regression analysis. Conducting t-tests helped understand the statistical meaningfulness of mentioning rate differences between two groups (the young and the elder sample in Chapter 5, and the South Korea and the U.S. sample in Chapter 6). The test results revealed that the mentioning differences between the two groups are statistically significant in some event and reason categories, but not always. Data were also tested by logistic regressions including gender
for each analysis; generation and gender in Chapter 5, and location and gender in Chapter 6. Although gender is not a main focus of this research, it has been an important part of the previous studies for control purposes (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989, and Schuman et al., 1994). By controlling for gender it was possible to compare the sizes of the generational as well as cultural effects on the respondents’ answers independent of gender effects. In addition, conducting logistic regressions controlling for gender made it possible to capture generational as well as cultural relationships of the subjects’ mentioning in some categories which were not found by t-tests. Details of data analysis results are presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.
Chapter 4
Descriptive Results

Sample Profile

Three analytical questions about Koreans’ collective memories were tested by using a convenience sample in Seoul, South Korea and Los Angeles, USA. Table 4.1 shows the subject profile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age - Mean</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19-27</td>
<td>18-28</td>
<td>65-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32 (50.8%)</td>
<td>24 (52.2%)</td>
<td>39 (60.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31 (49.2%)</td>
<td>22 (47.8%)</td>
<td>25 (39.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>5 (7.8%)</td>
<td>1 (2.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>11 (17.2%)</td>
<td>7 (16.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>14 (21.9%)</td>
<td>6 (14.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>18 (28.1%)</td>
<td>14 (32.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>15 (23.4%)</td>
<td>14 (32.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1 (1.6%)</td>
<td>1 (2.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total sample size is 216. Divided by generation, the number in the young sample is 109 and 107 in the elder group. Divided by location, 127 subjects were drawn from South Korea and 89 from the U.S. Comparing subjects in the two countries, the mean age of sample in the U.S is 1.7 and 2.5 years older in young and elder group, respectively, than in South Korea. The gender composition of the samples is comparable in both generations and locations except elder samples in the U.S., where female subjects are approximately 30% more than males. Regarding education, it was only asked to the elder subjects, because the young respondents have not yet completed their education.

Analysis of Event Mentioning

The interview question asked respondents to name three of the most important Korean historical events, and then to give reasons for their choices. Each of the respondents was reminded to give all three events. After reminding, in cases that respondents were not able to
give more than one or two events, non-responses were recorded as ‘Don’t know.’ The 14 events given by 216 respondents are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Highly Mentioned Events and Changes by All Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>% 1st Mention</th>
<th>Number 1st Mention</th>
<th>Number 2nd Mention</th>
<th>Number 3rd Mention</th>
<th>Combined Number</th>
<th>% of Respondents Mentioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Korean War</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Independence</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Democratic Protests</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- World Events</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Japanese Colonization</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Period of President Park</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- IMF Emergency Loans</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Inter-Korea Summit Talks</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidental Election 2008</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruptions</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with the US</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base N</td>
<td>(216)</td>
<td>(216)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The first column represents percentage of each event mentioned for the first answer divided by the total (N=216).
2. The last column indicates percentage of each event mentioned at least once divided by the total (N=216). This ‘percentage of respondents mentioning’ will be used for later analysis.
3. Each of three event mentioning responses is not mutually exclusive.
4. The first top eight events with a symbol (·) mentioned by more than 7% of all the respondents are considered as “major events” for later data analysis
5. Don’t Know: If only one or two mentioned, respondents were reminded to give all three. Only those who were not able to give more than what they had already mentioned were counted to the “Don’t Know” category.

Most Koreans identified the Korean War as the most important Korean historical event (71.8%) followed by Independence (42.6%). The first column of Table 4.2 indicates percentages of the events given at first by respondents while the last column shows the percentages of mentioning the events divided by the total number 216 respondents regardless of mentioning orders. For example, 27.8% of 216 respondents mentioned the Korean War for the first events while 72.2% mentioned other events. And 71.8% of the entire respondents named the Korean War at least once for the first, the second or the third event while 28.2% did not mention the event at all. The frequency order of the event mentioning in the first and last column is mostly consistent except for the cases of Democratic Protests and Japanese Colonization. Democratic
Protests is only the seventh for the first mentioning (1.9%) whereas it is the third for at least once mentioning (28.2%). This is reversed with Japanese Colonization; 19.4% for the first mentioning and 25.5% for at least once mentioning. For later data analyses, the percentages of the last column were used because this is what others have done in similar survey data analyses. Among the 14 events listed in the Table 4.2, the first 8 events (the Korean War, Independence, Democratic Protests, World Events, Japanese Colonization, Period of President Park, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks) mentioned by more than 7% of subjects were considered as major events for later data analyses. In other cases, there are too few cases to perform meaningful statistical analysis.

In coding events given by respondents to 16 categories including 14 events, Miscellaneous, and the Don’t Know category, making a judgment was necessary. It was rather straightforward to code the Korean War, IMF Emergency Loan, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks since respondents mostly used common terms to refer to those events. On the other hand, Democratic Protests was created to include three specific democratic protest movements (April 19th in 1960, May 18th in 1980, June 10th in 1987) and mentioning of democracy development in general. World Events includes the international events first held in South Korea such as Seoul Olympics (1988), Daejeon EXPO (1993), Nobel Peace Prize award for President Kim, Dae-Jung (2000) and Korea-Japan World Cup (2002). Coding Independence and Japanese Colonization required judgments as well. Respondents frequently recognized Independence and Colonization as continuous periods rather than clearly distinguishing them. For example, one response mentioned “reclaiming sovereignty from Japan after colonization”. Judgment was made by following-up comments either about Independence or Colonization. Period of President Park is another complicated category to code. The period began and ended with two specific events; May 16th of Park, Jung-Hee’s military coup in 1961 and Park, Jung-Hee’s assassination in Oct. 26, 1979. This code also represents respondents’ personal experiences, specific government policies, and broader concepts of economy growth during this period.

Analysis of Reason Mentioning

Schuman and Scott stated in their data survey analyses which the current study replicated that “since there is a high correlation between an event being mentioned at all and its being mentioned first, […] our analysis will treat each major category dichotomously: mentioned at all or not mentioned” (1989, p. 364).
There was no particular guide for respondents to mention corresponding reasons for their event choices. For analysis, reasons given for the 8 major events were categorized. Reasons varied in forms from short phrases to lengthy descriptive sentences. In order to code, all the mentioned reasons for each event were first classified by themes and divided into subcategories. Then, each respondent’s answers were coded into the final subcategories. Due to the various lengths and complex contents, one respondent’s reasons for one event could be categorized into as many as three different codes. Table 4.3 summarizes coded reasons for the eight major events.

### Table 4.3
Most Commonly Mentioned Reasons for Given Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Korean War (n=155)</th>
<th>Independence (n=92)</th>
<th>World Events (n=57)</th>
<th>Period of President Park (n=40)</th>
<th>IMF Emergency Loans (n=20)</th>
<th>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (n=16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Division (63, 40.6)</td>
<td>Regaining Sovereignty (86, 93.5)</td>
<td>Getting Known in the World (41, 71.9)</td>
<td>Economy Growth (24, 60.0)</td>
<td>Improved Relationship with North (12, 75.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ideology Conflicts (50, 32.3)</td>
<td>Colonization Experience (7, 7.6)</td>
<td>Koreas’ Unification (11, 19.3)</td>
<td>Unacceptable Military Takeover (8, 20.0)</td>
<td>National Suffering (8, 40.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotion (30, 19.4)</td>
<td>Emotion (6, 6.5)</td>
<td>Koreas’ Unification (11, 19.3)</td>
<td>Emotion (3, 7.5)</td>
<td>Significance as the First Attempt (5, 31.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>War Experiences (26, 16.8)</td>
<td>Large Impacts (14, 15.2)</td>
<td>Getting Known in the World (41, 71.9)</td>
<td>Large Impacts (3, 7.5)</td>
<td>Family Reunification Event (1, 6.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>War Damages (26, 16.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flashbulb Memories (3, 7.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fratriocide (26, 16.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large Impacts (17, 11.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Split of Families (10, 6.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World History (4, 2.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic Protests (n=61)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Democracy Development (47, 77.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lives Lost (23, 37.7)</td>
<td>Koreas’ Unification (11, 19.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flashbulb Memories (4, 6.6)</td>
<td>Economic Benefits (8, 14.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotion (5, 8.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improve relationships with Japan (3, 5.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese Colonization (n=55)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of Sovereignty (27, 49.1)</td>
<td>Economy Growth (24, 60.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National Suffering (20, 36.4)</td>
<td>Unacceptable Military Takeover (8, 20.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotion (12, 21.8)</td>
<td>Emotion (3, 7.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experiences (10, 18.2)</td>
<td>Large Impacts (3, 7.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large Impacts (9, 16.4)</td>
<td>Flashbulb Memories (3, 7.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cause (Self-blame) (3, 5.5)</td>
<td>Ended dictatorship of President Rhee (2, 5.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cause (Self-blame) (3, 15.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Koreans’ Unification (1, 5.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Numbers in parenthesis of each row are the percentages of respondents who gave the reason among those who mentioned the event.
2. Each respondents’ reason mentioning could be counted as many as in three categories, thus each reason category of an event is not mutually exclusive.

Numbers in parenthesis are the percentages of respondents who gave the reason among those who mentioned a certain event. For example, 40.6% of those who named the Korean War (n=155) gave division as a reason for their choice. Since reason categories for one event are not
mutually exclusive, the total percentage of reason mentioning of the each event is not summed up to 100%.

Like the process of coding events, it was also necessary to make judgment in classifying explanations for respondents’ event choices. For example, the second most common reason for mentioning the Korean War is Ideology which embraces contradictory opinions about the war. One group perceived the war as triumph of the South and democracy over the North and communism. The other group saw the war as a failure to overcome ideological conflicts between North and South. Another group saw the war was conceived as Koreans’ national sacrifice for ideological conflicts during the Cold War. Despite clear contradictions in these perceptions of the war, these various reasons were classified in the same code, Ideology. Due to the limited number of respondents, it did not seem practical to break them into further subcategories. This is not only the case for the Korean War but rather commonly confronted throughout other events. The presented classification of the given reasons in Table 4.3 helps provide a general understanding of respondents’ choices for the given events.

Interestingly, respondents showed many agreements in reason mentioning for their event choices. For five out of the eight events, the first reason was given at remarkably higher rates than others. In the case of Independence, 93.5% of the respondents identified its significance as Regaining Sovereignty from Japan. This number far exceeds any other reason categories. Similarly, reasons for Democratic Protests are concentrated in the first category named Democracy Development (77.1%). A majority of the respondents voted for World Events because these events helped Korea become better known in the world (71.9%). Sixty percent of the respondents think Period of President Park was important because of the great economy growth during the years. Lastly, 75% of the respondents agree the Inter-Korea Summit Talks was important because of its large potential for improved relationships with North Korea.

On the other hand, respondents’ choices for the Korean War, Japanese Colonization, and IMF Emergency Loans were comparably divided into the first and the second reason categories. In the case of the Korean War, reason mentioning rates were evenly divided between Division (34.2%) and Ideology Conflicts (32.3). The respondents identified Japanese Colonization as an event with Loss of Sovereignty (43.6%) and National Suffering (36.3%). Lastly, IMF Emergency Loans was associated with not only its Large Impacts (50%) but also National Suffering (40%).

These preliminary data analyses helped draw an overall picture regarding how the
respondents characterize the Korean history over the past 100 years. Table 4.2 and 4.3 lay out the respondents’ remembrance of the Korean historical events and their opinions, respectively. They show the varieties of events in terms of time, lengths, and characteristics of the events. Looking at how mentioning proportions are spread out across the events allows us to get a sense of how events are recognized in terms of their significance.

The next step for this study is to investigate the impacts of generation and culture on the respondents’ memories of Korean history. This attempt will be carried out by dividing data by generations (young and elder) and locations (South Korea and the U.S.). Finally, the combined effects of generation and culture will be examined in the last part of data analysis. By doing so, analysis will shed light on the sources of collective memories, whether generation, culture or both.
Chapter 5

Generational Effects on Collective Memories

Generational Effects

The first analytical question for this study is if there are generational differences in the respondents’ memories of the past 100 years of Korean history. In order to examine this question, the most commonly mentioned events were divided by two generations; a young (age of 18-28, n=109) and an elder (age of 65-89, n=107) group. Afterwards, statistical tests were conducted and this allows for comparison of generational priorities of the events across the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Young (n=109) (%)</th>
<th>Elder (n=108) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (1950-1953)</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Events (1988 and 2002)</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>Independence (1945) 53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence (1945)</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>Democratic Protests (1960, 1980, and 1987) 30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (2000)</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (2000) 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of President Park (1961-1979)</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>IMF Emergency Loan (1997-2000) 0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the most interesting patterns shown in the Table 5.1 is the Korean War is placed as the first choice of the event mentioning in both generations (58.1% of the young and 85.0% of the elder respondents). However, the event marked in the second rank differs in the two groups. The young respondents placed World Events as the second important Korean historical event (45.0%) whereas their elder counterparts chose Independence (53.3%). Such an important event for the young subjects, World Events, was only mentioned by 7.5% of the elders and ranked near the bottom of the event list. Democratic Protests and Japanese Colonization seem to take comparable places in both groups by being ranked in fourth and fifth among the young subjects and third and fourth among the elder subjects, respectively. Followed by Japanese Colonization, the young respondents chose IMF Emergency Loans (18.3%) while the elders selected Period of President Park (29.9%). Comparing the event priority, these two events have rather different meaning in two groups. IMF Emergency Loans is the sixth important Korean historical event for the young respondents (18.3%), whereas there is no elder respondent who chose this event. On the contrary,
Period of President Park is ranked at fifth (29.9%) in the elders’ event choices, but the event was placed at the bottom of their younger counterparts’ (8.3%). In the case of Inter-Korea Summit Talks, the event is marked near the bottom of the list in both groups. However, the young generation (13.8%) far more recognized the event than their elder counterparts (0.9%).

In order to look into statistical significance of the respondents’ event choices, the eight major events and the Don’t Know category were analyzed by t-tests and logistic regressions. Test results are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2
Most Commonly Mentioned Events By Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Young</th>
<th>Elder</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Korean War</td>
<td>64 (58.1%)</td>
<td>91 (85.0%)</td>
<td>1.79***</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independence</td>
<td>35 (32.1%)</td>
<td>57 (53.3%)</td>
<td>0.46*</td>
<td>-0.66**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Democratic Protests</td>
<td>28 (25.7%)</td>
<td>33 (30.8%)</td>
<td>-0.68**</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• World Events</td>
<td>49 (45.0%)</td>
<td>8 (7.5%)</td>
<td>-2.27***</td>
<td>-0.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Japanese Colonization</td>
<td>23 (21.1%)</td>
<td>32 (29.9%)</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Period of the President Park</td>
<td>9 (8.3%)</td>
<td>31 (29.0%)</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-1.61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• IMF Emergency Loans</td>
<td>20 (18.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inter-Korea Summit Talks</td>
<td>15 (13.8%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>-4.25***</td>
<td>-1.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>6 (5.5%)</td>
<td>2 (1.9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Election 2008</td>
<td>4 (3.7%)</td>
<td>4 (3.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>8 (7.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>2 (1.8%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruptions</td>
<td>3 (2.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with the US</td>
<td>3 (2.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>11 (10.1%)</td>
<td>7 (6.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>20 (18.3%)</td>
<td>18 (16.8%)</td>
<td>-1.27***</td>
<td>-0.76*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Events with a symbol (*) are the major events mentioned by more than 7% of respondents.
2. + p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
3. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (logistic regression)
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

According to the t-test results, the differences of event mentioning between two age groups are statistically significant in six events. The elder samples more frequently mentioned the Korean War (p<.001), Independence (p<.01), and Period of President Park (p<.001) than the younger group. On the other hand, IMF Emergency Loans (p<.001), World Events (p<.001), and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (p<.001) were more often mentioned by the younger subjects than their elder counterparts.

Generational relationship to event mentioning tested by logistic regression is consistent with t-test results for the top four major events. Controlling for gender, the elder respondents were more likely to consider the Korean War (p<.001) and Independence (p<.05) as parts of the
important Korean history but less likely to mention World Events (p<.001) and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (p<.001) than their younger counterparts. Generational relationships were also found in mentioning Democratic Protests and the Don’t Know category although the percentage differences of mentioning between the two groups were not statistically significant according to t-tests. In both cases, the elder respondents were less likely to mention Democracy Protests (coefficient = -0.68, p<.01) and fall into the Don’t Know category (coefficient = -1.27, p<.001).

Another interesting finding is seen in IMF Emergency Loans. Simply by looking at the percentage of mentioning the event, generational relationship seems clear since 18.3% of young subjects addressed it while there was no single elder subject who perceived it as an important event. T-test results also indicate the difference of mentioning percentage is statistically significant (p<.001).

Overall, the test results support that generation has impacts on the respondents’ memories of the past by demonstrating the distinct event mentioning patterns of the two different groups.

Salience of Experiences in Adolescence and Young Adulthood

An extended question of generational relationships on collective memory is whether the generational impacts stem from salient memories of individuals’ adolescence and young adulthood, namely significant years. In order to examine significant years’ impact on the respondents’ memories, five events especially showing age impact (by logistic regression) were considered for further analysis; the Korean War (coefficient=1.79, p<.001), Independence (coefficient=0.46, p<.05), Democratic Protests (coefficient=-0.68, p<.01), World Events (coefficient=-2.27, p<.001), and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (coefficient=-4.25, p<.001). Also, one additional event, IMF Emergency Loan was included in the analysis. It was not possible to statistically test age impacts of the event mentioning of IMF Emergency Loans in the previous analysis. However, this was because of its perfect mentioning division by generation (compared 18.3% of the young respondents to 0% of the elder respondents) rather than no generational relationship. For this reason, disregarding the case of IMF Emergency Loans for the further data analysis seems less insightful.

Dominant Imprint of the Korean War: Table 5.1 and 5.2 reveal that the Korean War has the most significant imprint to Koreans’ memories regardless of generations, although generational relationship was found by statistical test in a positive direction. All the elder subjects in this study were born before the Korean War took place in 1950. The youngest
subjects of the elder group were born in 1942 and the oldest subjects were born in 1923. Regarding the significant years range (age of 17-25) defined by Mannheim, the respondents who were born between 1925 and 1933 in the beginning of the war (1950) and those who were born between 1928 and 1936 in the end of the war (1953) fall into the age range. The respondents in the significant years group make up 45.1% of the elder sample who mentioned the event (n=91). Comparing the mentioning rate, 87.2% of the significant years group chose the Korean War, whereas 83.3% of the respondents in non-significant years group (see Table 5.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Choice of the Korean War by Significant Years</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant Years Group</td>
<td>Non-Significant Years Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (n=91)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within the event</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within a group</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coefficients</strong></td>
<td><strong>Significant Years</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.85***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (logistic regression)

Mentioning rate between the two groups doesn’t seem to be very different. However, statistical tests captured that the significant years experiences are strongly related to the event mentioning. According to logistic regression results, the significant years group is more likely to mention the war than non-significant years group (coefficient=1.85, p<.001). This finding is consistent with the previous studies regarding war related events. In the 1989 study (Schuman & Scott), the event mentioning rates of World War II and Vietnam War showed a clear peak at the respondent groups who spent their significant years during either of the wars. Comparing previous studies, the finding of the current study well suits the significant years hypothesis.

On the other hand, the young generation, whose oldest members were born in 1979 (far after even the postwar time), also chose the Korean War as the most important Korean historical event. If their elder counterparts ‘remember’ what they directly experienced during the time, these young subjects might ‘recognize’ the significance of the event through indirect experiences in the present which is their significant years. Indeed, it has to be noted that the war technically has never ended, but has been under ceasefire for more than a half century until the present time.

---

5 Schuman and Corning (2006) paid attention to the distinction between two forms of memories; recall and recognition. While recall is the memory which is called for spontaneously, recognition is judged memories by relative applicability. However, these two terms are used interchangeably other than in this section.
The Korean War is certainly an ongoing event which is a subject of various attentions including schooling, news media, popular culture, and historic preservation. In this national circumstance, the young generation is widely exposed to impacts of the war.

Seemingly, there is no generational difference among the respondents in terms of the importance of the war. This might be because the Korean War plays a role giving historical experiential settings for adolescence and young adulthood experiences to both generations through different time periods; its real happening and its extended influences. In this sense, findings of the Korean War seem to explain quite well that people tend to have salient memories which they experience during their adolescence and young adulthood.

_Age Relation to Recent Events._ Table 5.2 shows clear generational relationship that the elders were significantly less tended to mention recent events controlling for gender, as the coefficient of the World Events and Inter-Korea Summit Talks are both in a negative direction (coefficient = -2.27 and -4.25, respectively). In addition to the generational relationship tested by logistic regression, it is interesting that mentioning rates of recent events were disproportionately distributed in the young respondents. World Events is ranked as the second most important event by the young respondents. The mentioning rate of the event far exceeds Independence and Democratic Protests which are definitely conventional topics of Korean history. Also, 18.3% of the young respondents voted for IMF Emergency Loans and 13.3% for Inter-Korea Summit Talks, while there is none and only one elder respondent for each category, respectively. It is very interesting to observe that such important events for the young generation in Korean history do not seem to matter as much to the elder generation.

Regarding the significant years hypothesis, 42.2%, 7.3% and 31.2% of the young respondents fall into their significant years range (age of 17-25) in the year of the World Cup\(^6\) (2002), IMF Emergency Loans (1997-2000), and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (2000), respectively. Table 5.4 shows mentioning rates by significant years groups and logistic regression test results of the three events.

---

\(^6\) The World Event category includes four international events; Seoul Olympic Game (1988), Daejeon EXPO (1993), Nobel Peace Prize of President Kim, Dae-Jung (2000), and Korea-Japan World Cup (2002). However, only World Cup was considered in analyzing data for the significant years hypothesis because there are too small number of respondents in other events among the young samples.
As shown in Table 5.4, there was no relationship found between the event mentioning and the significant years experiences in all three event categories. In the case of World Events, 42.9% of the respondents who mentioned the World Event were in their significant years in the year of the World Cup (2002). Comparing the mentioning rate, significant years groups slightly more (45.7%) chose the event than non-significant years group (44.4%). However, logistic regression test results indicate that there is no significant relationship between the event mentioning of World Event and the significant years experience (coefficient=.03, p=.93). In the case of IMF Emergency Loans, the respondents in non-significant years group more frequently selected the event than others in their significant years (12.5% and 18.8%, respectively). Also, non-significant years group of the Inter-Korea Summit Talks chose the event far more frequently than their significant years counterparts (2.9% and 18.7%, respectively). In both cases, it was not possible to test relationships between the event mentioning and the significant years experiences due to small sample sizes.

However, it is necessary to pay attention to the nature of these events in interpreting this

---

7 However, if young generation in South Korea is divided into two groups by Korean history curriculum amendment for public high school education in 2002, far greater number of respondents in after-amendment cohort mentioned Inter-Korea Summit Talks than before-amendment cohort (34.1% and 4.5%, respectively). The new history education curriculum emphasizes Korean modern and contemporary history which had been paid little attention before. Especially, perspectives about North Korea are substantially changed from major threat to a partner. Also national efforts to mitigate tension between two Koreas are more highlighted (Kim, et al., 2007).
finding, especially the cases of IMF Emergency Loans and Inter-Korea Summit Talks. The year of these two events are signified as a starting point of constant societal changes in the economy and the political system in South Korea. Sequential impacts of these events have been substantially extended until the present. Therefore, it seems reasonable to claim that the young respondents (age of 18-28) who mostly are in their significant years today, if not precisely Mannheim’s age range of 17-25, experience these events through their extended impacts in the present.

**Age Relation to Older Events.** In contrast to the young sample, the elders’ memories are strikingly predominated by events of the earlier part in the past 100 years (Table 5.1). Especially, their event selections are highly concentrated in the first two choices: the Korean War exclusively occupied (85%) historical significance of the elder respondents. More than half of the elders also agreed to rank Independence (53.3%) in the second place of Korean history. Also, Japanese Colonization was more frequently mentioned by the elder respondents than their younger counterparts (29.9% and 21.1%, respectively). Interestingly, Period of President Park (29.9%) was recognized as importantly as Japanese Colonization among the elder respondents, whereas there is little attention to the event in the young generation (8.3%).

Of the four events which were mentioned more often by the elders, the Korean War and Independence were tested to examine the significant years hypothesis. This is because these were the events which showed age association to the event mentioning in the earlier analyses. Since the test result of the Korean War was discussed in an earlier section, Independence is only described in this section. The respondents who were in their significant years in 1945 of Independence include those who were born between 1920 and 1928. This age cohort consists of 28.1% of the elder sample who mentioned the event (n=57).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Choice of Independence by Significant Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant Years Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence (n=57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within a group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001 (logistic regression)

Comparing the mentioning rate shown in Table 5.5, a greater number of the significant years
cohort voted for the event than none significant years cohort (72.7% and 48.2%, respectively). However, this difference is only marginally statistically significant (coefficient=.90, p=.07). Despite this statistical test result, it seems hasty to conclude this finding is not supportive of the significant years hypothesis or broadly the importance of adolescence and young adulthood experiences. Instead, the nature of this event needs to be noted when interpreting the finding. After the day when Korea’s independence was declared (August 15, 1945), this event was accompanied by turbulent post-independence periods followed by division of North and South Korea (July, 1948) and the Korean War (Jun, 1950). Thus, Independence and the sequential events were likely experienced at some points of the elder subjects’ adolescence and young adulthood years even though the timing of Independence itself did not exactly match to the age range of the significant years (age 17-25).

**Don’t Know.** The elder respondents’ mentioning pattern of the Don’t Know category seems to reflect their event mentioning patterns which are heavily concentrated on a few events. In fact, almost all the Don’t Know cases of the elder respondents were from those who gave first and/or second event but ‘have no more to remember’ for second or third, whereas the young subjects tend to fall in the category with two or three Don’t Know answers\(^8\). This seems to support a preceding study (Schuman & Scott, 1989) that those who were beyond their adolescence or young adulthood at the time of certain events are less likely to mention them. Schuman and Scott interpreted that such tendency might be because “it is overshadowed by earlier events that dominate their memories” (p. 366). According to the explanation of Schuman and Scott, the recent events such as World Events, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks do not seem to be a part of their memories.

**Democratic Protests**

Statistical tests revealed that the elder subjects were less likely to mention Democratic Protests than their younger counterparts (coefficient=-0.68, p<.01) whereas the mentioning rates of the event are rather compatible between the two generations (25.7% of the young and 30.8% of the elder sample) (see Table 5.2).

The event category of Democratic Protests includes three major democratic protest movements occurred in 1960, 1980, and 1987. The elder respondents got through all the three

---

\(^8\)The respondents who were not able to give at least one event are 3.33% in the elder group and 26.7% in the young group.
movements. However, in order to examine the significant years hypothesis, it was necessary to take out the earliest one in 1960 since that is the only event which allows to divide the elder sample into two groups; the significant years group and none significant years group. In the case of other two later democratic protest movements, all the elder subjects passed their significant years so it was not possible to compare impacts of the significant years experiences on the event mentioning. Respondents who were in the significant years range (age of 17 and 25) in 1960 are those who were born between 1935 and 1942. These subjects make up 54.5% of the elder sample who mentioned Democratic Protests (n=33). Comparing the two groups, it seems evident that a greater percentage of the significant years cohort mentioned Democratic Protests (40.9%) than others (23.8%) (see Table 5.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Choice of Democratic Protests by Significant Years</th>
<th>Significant Years Group</th>
<th>Non-Significant Years Group</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Protests (n=33)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within the event</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within a group</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001 (logistic regression)

However, statistical test did not capture a relationship of the significant years experiences to mentioning the event (coefficient= -.11 p=.76).

On the other hand, it is interesting that the young generation also mentioned Democratic Protests with comparable percentage (25.7%) to their elder counterparts (30.8%). Like the case of the Korean War, this seems to be related to indirect experiences about the event during adolescence and young adulthood that have significant impacts on memory formation as do direct experiences (Schuman and Scott, 1989). Indeed, the three major democratic movements were not the focus of public discourse until the late 1990s in South Korea. This started in 1993 with establishment of the first civic administration; the South Korean government officially initiated discussion of these events in public, especially May 18th in 1980 (Jeong, 2005). However, it was not until the early 2000s that such issues became extended to the more general public. This took place through in a variety of forms including schooling, news media, popular culture, and historic preservation. In fact, the government passed an amendment for Korean history curriculum of public high school education in 2002. The new curriculum was designed to
put more emphasis on Korean modern and contemporary history education (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2002).

Crucial roles of schooling for collective memory formation were recognized in earlier studies (e.g., Shuman et al., 2003). Schuman and his colleagues paid attention to considerable emphasis of agencies of the state including school instruction and speculated “given all of this emphasis, […] It is little wonder that the events of the 1940s are still vividly alive for young…” (p.119). If borrowing this explanation, it doesn’t seem to be a coincidence that higher tendencies to mention Democratic Protests was found in young cohorts who attended high school after the history curriculum amendment passed (48.8% of after and 36.4% of before amendment cohort). Thus, these events are experienced by the young generation in the present of their significant years through various societal processes of reviving them. In short, the mentioning pattern of this event among the young respondents seems to relevant to the significant years hypothesis.

**Analysis of Reason Mentioning: Autobiographical Memories and Factual Memories**

Are the meanings given for an event same in two generations? This is another important question in collective memory studies. The earlier sections showed clear generational relationships to event mentioning. For example, older events were more frequently mentioned by the elder generation, highlighting that personal experiences in adolescence and young adulthood are crucial elements for such memory formation. Then, is this also relevant to explain reasons for their choices? In an earlier study, Schuman & Scott (1989) argued that analysis of reason mentioning not only confirms generational differences in event choices but also helps understand cases when the surface memory of an event does not vary by age. This is an important insight because, as they stated, there are possible generational differences in conception and perception about an event depending on generations. Schuman and Scott sought an explanation via distinguishing memories: autobiographical memories, heavily based on personal experiences, and factual memories, considerably based on knowledge of earlier events (1989).

This section explores the generational differences in attached meaning to respondents’ event selection. Each event was analyzed with subcategories of reason choices by two generations. In order to examine the relationship of generation to reason mentioning, t-test and logistic regression analyses were conducted. Overall, important generational differences in associated reasons are found mostly in the Korean War and Independence. Generation differences do not occur in Democratic Protests and World Events. For these two events, gender
rather than generation was more related to reason mentioning. The other two events including Japanese Colonization and Period of President Park partly show generational relationships to reason mentioning. Test results are to be discussed separately by each event.

**The Korean War.** The Korean War was chosen as the first priority in both generations in the event mentioning question. However, do these two groups refer to the same war? It was found that there are distinct reasons for the seemingly same event choice depending on each generation. Table 5.7 compares priorities of reason mentioning for the Korean War by generation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Young (n=64) (%)</th>
<th>Elder (n=91) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology Conflicts</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fratricide</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Damages</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Experiences</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Large Impacts 1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the reason mentioning between the two groups shows quite different patterns. Most of the young respondents perceived the Korean War as Division (73.4%) while their elder counterparts remember the war as Ideological Conflicts (41.8%). Interestingly, Emotional statements were more frequently given by the young generation (26.6%) than the elders (14.3%). War Experiences marked in high rank in the reason mentioning among the elder subjects (28.6% and the second rank), which is hardly expected for the younger respondents. This comparison of the reason mentioning between the two generations was statistically tested by t-tests and logistic regressions. The test results are presented in Table 5.8.
Table 5.8
Reasons Given for the Korean War by Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Young (n=64)</th>
<th>Elder (n=91)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>47 (73.4%)</td>
<td>16 (17.6%)</td>
<td>-2.21***</td>
<td>0.75*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology Conflicts</td>
<td>12 (18.8%)</td>
<td>38 (41.8%)</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-1.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>17 (26.6%)</td>
<td>13 (14.3%)</td>
<td>-1.45***</td>
<td>-0.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Experiences</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26 (28.6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Damages</td>
<td>6 (9.4%)</td>
<td>20 (22.0%)</td>
<td>-0.82**</td>
<td>-1.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fratricide</td>
<td>6 (9.4%)</td>
<td>20 (22.0%)</td>
<td>-0.78**</td>
<td>-1.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>16 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-4.12***</td>
<td>-1.05*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. + p<0.05, ++ p<0.01, +++ p<0.001 (T-Test)
2. *p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 (Logistic Regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Numbers in parenthesis of each row indicates percentages of the respondents who mentioned a particular reason within those who mentioned the event. For example, 73.4% of the young respondents and 17.6% the elder respondents who mentioned the Korean War recognized Division as the reason for their choice. One respondent’s reason mentioning can be counted to a maximum of three reason categories, so each row is not mutually exclusive. Absence of War Experiences mentioning among the young sample is obvious since the oldest respondents in the group were born in 1979, which is far after the war period. Clear generational relationships were found in Division (coefficient=-2.21, p<.001) followed by Emotion (coefficient=-1.45, p<.001) War Damages (coefficient=-0.82, p<.01), Fratricide (coefficient=-0.78, p<.01), and Large Impacts (coefficient=-4.21, p<.001).

According to the reason choice comparison in Table 5.7 and statistical test results in Table 5.8, it is apparent that young respondents perceive Korean War from rather general and broad aspects. Reason choices for Division is far more frequently mentioned by the young generation (73.4%) compared to the elders (17.5%). However, in considering that the young generation was born in South Korea not Korea, this finding is not very surprising. To the young generation, Division of Korea is a well known ‘fact’ and that is the most significant, controversial, and emotional subject of various social representations in the present South Korean society. These are experienced through varieties of forms such as schooling subjects, family history, news media, popular culture, and historical preservation. Therefore, the strong tendency to choose Emotion for the reason among the young respondents is more likely about
generalized people in the period and extended to a national level. In fact, those who gave emotional comments for the reason of their choice tend to state;

    It is the biggest tragedy in Korean history (man, age 21 in South Korea).

    This is sad history because many people had to experience horrible time (woman, age 28 in the U.S.).

    These reason mentioning patterns are very different from the elder generation. Contrary to the young generation, elder subjects are inclined to perceive the war based on their own War Experiences. The top three reasons for their choice of the Korean War imply their strong personal attachment to the event through more specific remembrance and emotions. Most of time, respondents’ reasons were very descriptive which inevitably touched various aspects of their memories. Their own War Experiences were usually combined with Ideology Conflicts and War Damage which are common reasons for the elders, and further with Emotion.

    I was drafted to the war to protect my country against North socialists. It was a great triumph of democracy (man, age 78 in South Korea).

    Because of the North communist invaders, my family had to drift to look for safer places. It was so difficult time. I cannot say enough how hard it was (woman, age 68 in South Korea).

    The entire country was completely destroyed because of the North red evil ones. I don’t even want to imagine what if we lost over the North (man, age 72 in South Korea).

    When the North Red evils came to our town, they robbed everything. We had to suffer from starvation so bad (woman, age 75 in the U.S.)

The elder respondents were more likely to emphasize Ideology Conflicts between North and South. The cause of the war is usually perceived as invasion of North to South and the results, division, is frequently described as ‘triumph of democracy over communism (man, age 78 in South Korea)’. This is very different from what the young generation meant by Ideology Conflicts of the Korean War. The young respondents who mentioned Ideology Conflicts tend to focus on broader causes and impacts in correlation with geopolitical situation of Korea during the Cold War period.

    Division of Korea is a result of other countries’ ideology conflicts during Cold War (man, age 26 in South Korea).
By this war, division of Korea became *perpetuated* (man, age 23 in South Korea).

Consequently, division still has *huge impacts* on South Korean society through anti-socialism until today (woman, age 23 in South Korea).

These common statements exemplify the emotional distance between the war and the young respondents. On the contrary, such comments are very rare among the elder respondents. This might be because personal experiences are so dominant in their memories that it is hardly expected for them to have the distance to perceive the long lasting consequence, division, and sequential impacts in a broad manner.

Findings in the Korean War show there are generational differences in the attached meanings although the war was equally chosen as the first historical events by both generations. This supports earlier studies (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989) which highlighted different sources of memories; personal experiences at the time of an event for autobiographical memory, and gained knowledge for factual memory.

**Independence.** Independence is another event which shows great generational relationships to reason mentioning. However, unlike the case of the Korean War, the reasons given for Independence are exclusively concentrated in one reason category, Regaining Sovereignty, mentioned by 100% of the young and 86% of the elder subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given for Independence by Generation</th>
<th>Young</th>
<th>Elder</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18-29)</td>
<td>(65-89)</td>
<td>(Elder)</td>
<td>(Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>35 (100%)</td>
<td>49 (86%)</td>
<td>1.40**</td>
<td>0.98*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regaining Sovereignty</td>
<td>7 (12.3%)</td>
<td>3 (5.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>4 (11.4%)</td>
<td>2 (3.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>11 (31.4%)</td>
<td>3 (5.3%)</td>
<td>-2.46***</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. $p<.05$, ++$p<.01$, +++$p<.001$ (t-test)
2. *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$, ***$p<.001$ (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Further analyses by logistic regressions revealed that the elders are more likely to mention Regaining Sovereignty (coefficient=1.40, p<.01) than their younger counterparts. An interesting observation is that the elder respondents’ answer is absolutely more clustered in the first reason choice, Regaining Sovereignty, than any other reason category while young respondents mentioned Regaining Sovereignty exclusively but also other categories including Large Impacts.
(31.4%) and Emotion (11.4%).

In interpreting these findings, however, it has to be noted that respondents did not always give their reasons in straightforward and separate ways. Instead, respondents often combined their reason mentioning of Regaining Sovereignty with other reason categories although they were all coded separately in this study. Like the case of the Korean War, the elders tended to remember Regaining Sovereignty (86%) based on their own Personal Experiences (12.3%), whereas the young respondents were more likely to focus on Large Impacts (31.4%). For example, the elder respondents often explained their reasons for choice of Independence as following:

We got our Sovereignty back from Japan. Are there supposed to be another reason? You don’t even know how painful it was. …We were not even allowed to speak Korean and… (woman, age 85 in the U.S.).

On the other hand, the young respondents’ descriptions about their choices were often,

We got back our Sovereignty. By doing so we were able to start over our new history as an independent country (man, age 23 in South Korea)

I learned our efforts (referred to independence movement) for independence greatly encouraged other countries under colonization at that time. I am proud that we made good impacts to the world history (woman, age 20 in South Korea).

These distinct portraits of the event illustrate that Independence is remembered in different ways even when the respondents used the same terms to describe meanings given for the event, Independence.

**Democratic Protests.** Democratic Protests showed generational relationships to the event mentioning, but no such relationships were found in the reason mentioning given for the event choice as shown in Table 5.10.
Table 5.10
Reasons Given for Democratic Protests by Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Young (18-29)</th>
<th>Elder (65-89)</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Protests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Elder)</td>
<td>(Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development</td>
<td>26 (92.9%)**</td>
<td>21 (63.6%)</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives Lost</td>
<td>5 (17.9%)</td>
<td>18 (54.5%)***</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>5 (15.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Among all the three reason categories, Democracy Development is the most commonly given reason in both generations. However, overall reason mentioning patterns are different by each generation. The young subjects’ reasons for Democratic Protests are considerably concentrated in Democracy Development (92.9%). On the other hand, the elders’ reasons are comparably distributed to two reason categories; Democracy Development (63.6%) and Lives Lost (54.5%). Such differences in reason mentioning between two groups are statistically significant (t-tests).

Yet, this turns out to be related to gender rather than generation. Logistic regression tests revealed that females are more likely to mention Democracy Development than males (coefficient=0.85, p<.05).

The different meaning underlying similar reason mentioning of both generations can be better understood by looking at the subjects’ answers in more descriptive ways. In the case of Lives Lost, attached meanings to the reason choice are quite different by generations. The young subjects tended to explain the reason in very straightforward and general terms as followings,

- A lot of people fought and got killed for democracy development (woman, age 20 in South Korea).
- Democracy that we take for granted today is from sacrifice of a lot of people at that time (man, age 19 in South Korea).
- It was a massacre committed by the government (man, age 25 in South Korea).

On the other hand, the elder respondents often associated Lives Lost to their personal remembrance.

When that happened, I was hiking in Mt. Bookhan with my husband. Someone around me had a radio and we heard the news...I was horrified to think what if
my family got ripped off and could never see again (woman, 67 in South Korea).

These comments are very similar to the reason mentioning analyses of the previous events, elaborating that the elders’ memories of the event are more like autobiographical, whereas the young subjects’ answers are more close to semantic memories.

However, one interesting observation is the elders’ memories are related to what they witnessed, heard or knew about the democratic protest movements rather than what they personally experienced.

I ran a small store in front of a university. When military arrived to arrest students, I witnessed they got killed by military. It was horrible. Thanks to them, we can live in democracy society now (woman, age 76 in South Korea).

The entire country was in turbulence. They were all innocent students who protested for our country (man, 69 age in South Korea).

As reflected in these quotes, the elders remember what they directly observed what others did in the period of the events. This is unlike other cases such as the Korean War and Independence that the elders remembered what they did rather than what others did. Thus, this finding seems to suggest that memories are not solely determined by when subjects experienced such events. Rather, this appears to say how subjects experience an event is also important to construct memories depending on the nature of an event (Schuman et al., 1998).

**World Events.** Generational association to reason mention was tested in only one reason category due to a few numbers of the subjects in other reason categories.

As shown in Table 5.11, the test results indicate that gender has a relationship to the reason

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Events</th>
<th>Young (n=49)</th>
<th>Elder (n=8)</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Known to the world</td>
<td>34 (69.4%)</td>
<td>7 (87.5%)</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.08 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koreans’ Unification</td>
<td>11 (22.4%)++</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Benefits</td>
<td>5 (10.2%)</td>
<td>3 (37.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>4 (8.2%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Relation with Japan</td>
<td>3 (6.1%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (t-test)  
2. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (logistic regression)  
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.  
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

As shown in Table 5.11, the test results indicate that gender has a relationship to the reason
mentioning of Getting to known to the World in controlling for generation. Females were more likely to identify the event with a chance to Get Known to the World (coefficient=1.08, p<.05).

An interesting finding is that the young generation tends to conceive World Events in more diverse aspects than their elder counterparts. Besides two reason categories showing high mentioning rates from both generations (i.e., Getting Known to the world and Economic Benefits), the young generation also recognized the events as opportunities to Unify all Koreans together (22.4%). This was further connected to their positive Emotional statements (8.2%) as Koreans. More interestingly, the young respondents’ answers are clearly related to their own experiences. This is very unlike to other cases such as the Korean War, Independence, and Democratic Protests. For example, one of the young respondents stated that,

By hosting the international events successfully, we showed our unified Korean power to the world. This is awesome. I am proud of it. (man, age 20 in the U.S).

Responses based on personal experiences were not found among the elder subjects in World Events. This might be because impression of those recent events are diluted by earlier ones that dominate their memories (Schuman & Scott, 1989), despite the young generation’s certain feeling of unification of all Koreans through the events.

Japanese Colonization. Colonization is one of two events which did not show generational relationships to event mentioning. However, statistical tests captured that the given reasons for the event are associated to generation in two reason categories. Table 5.12 displays the test results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given</th>
<th>Young (18-29)</th>
<th>Elder (65-89)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Colonization</td>
<td>(n=23)</td>
<td>(n=32)</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Sovereignty</td>
<td>8 (34.8%)</td>
<td>19 (59.4%)</td>
<td>-0.70</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Suffering</td>
<td>11 (47.8%)</td>
<td>9 (28.1%)</td>
<td>-1.95**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>8 (34.8%)</td>
<td>4 (12.5%)</td>
<td>-1.94**</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10 (31.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause (Self-Blame)</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>2 (6.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>6 (26.1%)</td>
<td>3 (9.4%)</td>
<td>-1.94**</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Overall, reason mentioning rates of two generations are not statistically significant (t-tests). The
young generation chose National Suffering for their first reason (47.8%) followed by Loss of Sovereignty and Emotional statements with the same mentioning rates (34.8%). On the other hand, Loss of Sovereignty was selected as the first reason by the elders (59.4%). Also, clearly the elder subjects remembered the event with their personal Experiences (31.3%) which is ranked at the second place of their reason choice. In examining generational relationships to reason mentioning, the elder respondents were less likely to give Emotional statements (coefficient=-1.95, p<.01) and Large Impacts (coefficient=-1.94, p<.01) than their younger counterparts.

As shown in other analyses of reason mentioning, it was not very straightforward to classify the respondents’ reasons given for the event, since most reasons contained mixed descriptions about Japanese Colonization. However, this happened in quite different ways from other events. In other cases, each generation shows its own way of combining reasons. For example, in the case of Independence, the majority of both generations chose Regaining Sovereignty as their reason for the event. The young respondents associated the reason with Large Impacts whereas the elders did with their personal Experiences. To the contrary, both generations identified Japanese Colonization by associating Loss of Sovereignty to Emotional statements.

We lost our country. This brought unforgettable pains to Koreans. It is a humiliating event (woman, age 72 in the U.S.).

We lost our sovereignty. A lot of people got through such painful time and there are people who still have to deal with such memories and pains now. This is a sad event but we should not forget it (woman, age 23 in South Korea).

What needs to be noted here though is the same reason mentioning of two generations does not always convey the same perceptions. Based on personal Experiences (31.3%), what the elders referred to National Suffering include themselves, but this is not the case of the young respondents. This is similar in Emotional statements. The young subjects far more frequently expressed their Emotions related to the event (34.8%) than their elder counterparts (12.5%). However, the young generation’s emotion tends to be generalized as Koreans, but the elders’ emotion is clearly personalized as individual themselves.

**Period of President Park.** In reason mentioning, statistical analyses were rather limited due to a few numbers of the respondents in each reason category. Of the two reason categories tested by logistic regressions, Unacceptable Military Takeover indicates generational association
to mention the reason. As shown in Table 5.13, the elder subjects were less likely to identify the beginning of Period of President Park as Unacceptable Military Takeover than their younger counterparts (coefficient=-1.32, p<.01).

Table 5.13
Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of President Park</th>
<th>Young 18-29 (n=9)</th>
<th>Elder 65-89 (n=31)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy Growth</td>
<td>3 (33.3%)</td>
<td>21 (67.7%)</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable Military Takeover</td>
<td>3 (33.3%)</td>
<td>5 (16.1%)</td>
<td>-1.32 **</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>3 (9.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>3 (33.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>3 (9.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended Dictatorship of President Rhee</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>2 (6.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

The six reason categories shown in the Table 5.13 clearly characterize controversial perspectives about the historic figure, Park Chung-Hee and his 18 years of presidential period, which started by a bloodless military coup on May 16, 1961 and ended by Park’s assassination on Oct. 26, 1979. Three categories including Ended Dictatorship of President Rhee, Economy Growth, and Emotion imply positive assessments of his period, whereas the other three such as Large Impacts, Flashbulb Memories, and Unacceptable Military Takeover reveal negative aspects about the period.

There is little controversy “The hyper-growth of the economy was directly owing to Park’s ‘guided capitalism’” (Oliver, 1993, p. 295). During Park’s period, South Korea economy status transited from a country of which per capita income was 72 dollars in 1961 to “Asia’s Next Giant” (cited in Oliver, 1993, p. 296) in the late 1970s. This general perception on his periods is reflected in the respondents’ reason choices which were considerably concentrated in Economy Growth in both generations (33.3% of the young and 67.7% of the elder sample).

Interestingly, the elder generation gave for highly positive meanings to the period than their younger counterparts. The elders’ reason mentioning rates are summed up to 83.9% in the three positive reason categories. If considering all turbulent time in the past 100 years including Japanese colonization, independence, and the Korean War which the elder generation had to get
through, there seems no doubt that economy growth in the period of President Park is such a
dramatic experience to them. Consequently this is expected to remain positive imprints about the
President Park and his period to the elder generation. In fact, most of the elder respondents
retrospected on him as,

He saved us from bitter hunger (man, age 65 in South Korea).

Somebody says he was authoritarian President. But I think it was okay because
we need such a person who could drive forward our country with power (man,
age 65 in South Korea).

On the other hand, the small number of the young respondents (n=9) in each reason
category doesn’t allow for analysis. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that parts of young subjects
identified Unacceptable Military Takeover (33.3%) and Large Impacts (33.3%) containing
negative aspects of the period which are relatively recent topics in the South Korean society.

It is true that our economy grew rapidly during Park’s period. However, it is
also true that the period remained a lot of social problems which are still
important issues in the South Korean society (woman, age 22, in South Korea).

Such a critical aspect of the period are recently talked because criticizing shortcomings of the
period was strongly forbidden under the military regime. Only after the Korean military
completely depoliticized in 1993 were people allowed to discuss controversies of the Park’s
period in public. Diverse issues have been raised such as social discrepancies, reversing domestic
political maturities, increasing economic dependency on Japan and the U.S., and class disparities
which have been growing since the period in South Korea.

Observing such different perceptions about the period between two generations reminds
of the previous analyses regarding sources of reason mentioning given for an event. When
looking at the respondent’s reason choices, it is evident that the elder generation significantly
tends to rely on their personal experiences, while the young generation’s perceptions are more
dependent on their knowledge in explaining their choices.

Conclusion

This chapter began with two empirical questions regarding generational effects in
collective memory formation. The questions are if the respondents’ remembrance of the past
varies depending on generations, and, if it is, is the significant years hypothesis relevant to
explain such differences between the two groups. Through data analyses, generational
relationships were found in six out of the eight major events including the Korean War, Independence, World Events, Democratic Protests, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks but none in Japanese Colonization and Period of President Park. The elder generation tends to remember the events that occurred in relatively earlier parts of the past century such as the Korean War and Independence. On the other hand, the young generation embraces the older events as well as recognizes relatively recent events including World Events, Democratic Protests, IMF Emergency Loans and Inter-Korea Summit Talks with considerable emphasis. With further analysis of the age structure in the subjects’ responses, the significant years model appears directly relevant to explain mentioning patterns of the Korean War. In other cases, it was necessary to apply the model rather broadly depending on the nature of events.

Regarding reason analysis for the given events, the responses exemplified the distinction between autobiographical memories and factual memories. To the relatively older events such as the Korean War, Independence and Colonization, the different sources of the event choices became more salient depending on generations. The elders’ responses were clearly more connected to their own personal experiences, emotions and specific memories, while the young subjects portrayed events with broader perspectives and generalized emotions. Such distinctions between two generations are mostly apparent in the cases of earlier events. However, it was also revealed that the young respondents remarkably bring their own personal experiences and emotions in describing more recent events. The reason mentioning of World Events exemplifies this tendency. Therefore, the fundamental nature of the two memories (autobiographical memories and factual memories) is related to whether the respondents experienced an event personally rather than generation itself.

Another interesting observation is found in different varieties of the subjects’ responses depending on generations. Throughout all categories, the elders’ responses were more likely concentrated in a limited number of events as well as reasons. And these are mostly interrelated with their own experiences. On the other hand, the young generation tended to show more diversified perspectives about their choices of events and reasons regardless of whether they experienced the event directly or indirectly.
Chapter 6  
Cultural Effects on Collective Memories

**Cultural Effects**

The second analytical question is if culture experienced in different countries has impacts on Koreans’ collective memories. This question emerged in questioning one aspect of the significance of adolescence and young adulthood experiences in collective memory construction. Do such salient imprints in individuals’ memories persist even after they diverged to a different cultural environment by migration or birth? In order to pursue this question, the total sample (n=216) was divided by locations; South Korea (n=127) and the U.S. (n=89). The samples in the U.S are classified to three groups. First, elder immigrants (n=44) whose mean immigration duration is 27 years. Second, young immigrants (54.3%) who migrated to the U.S. in earlier years (the mean age of immigration=13.5 and the mean duration of immigration=10). Third group is young Koreans who were born in the U.S (45.7% of the young respondents in the U.S.). These three groups have been considerably exposed to a different culture from their own national origin. Given the distinctive cultural settings, do these groups of people in South Korea and the U.S share their historical memories? If they do not, what do their memories look like, and what are the sources of their memories?

For data analysis, differences of event mentioning rate between groups were analyzed by t-tests. Afterward, relationships of locations to event mentioning were tested by logistic regressions controlling for gender. The results of statistical analyses are presented in Table 6.1. Table 6.2 compares priority of event mentioning in the South Korea and the U.S.
Table 6.1
Most Commonly Mentioned Events by Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (S. Korea)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S. Korea)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Korea (N=127)</td>
<td>1.02*** 0.17</td>
<td>United States (N=89)</td>
<td>- -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Korean War (1950-1953)</td>
<td>95 (74.8%) 60 (67.4%)</td>
<td>51 (40.2%) 41 (46.1%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Independence (1945)</td>
<td>51 (40.2%) 41 (46.1%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Democratic Protests (1960, 1980, and 1987)</td>
<td>48 (37.8%) 13 (14.6%)</td>
<td>38 (29.9%) 19 (21.3%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•World Events</td>
<td>38 (29.9%) 19 (21.3%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Japanese Colonization</td>
<td>38 (29.9%) 17 (19.1%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Period of the President Park</td>
<td>31 (24.4%) 9 (10.1%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•IMF Emergency Loan</td>
<td>13 (10.2%) 7 (7.9%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Inter-Korea Summit Talks</td>
<td>16 (12.6%) 0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>2 (1.6%) 6 (6.7%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Election 2008</td>
<td>4 (3.1%) 4 (4.5%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>- 8 (9.0%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>0 (0.0%) 3 (3.4%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruptions</td>
<td>3 (2.4%) 0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with the US</td>
<td>2 (1.6%) 1 (1.1%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>6 (4.7%) 12 (13.5%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>8 (6.3%) 30 (33.7%)</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Events with a symbol (*) are the major events mentioned by more than 7% of respondents.
2. Each of event mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
3. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (t-test)
4. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Table 6.2
Comparison of Priority of Event Mentioning by Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South Korea (n=127)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>United States (n=89)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (1950-1953)</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>Korean War (1950-1953)</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence (1945)</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>Independence (1945)</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF Emergency Loan (1997-2000)</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (2000)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Event Mentioning

T-Test Results. Throughout the eight major event categories and the Don’t Know answer, three events and the Don’t Know category indicated statistically meaningful differences in event mentioning between two groups (i.e., Democratic Protests, Period of President Park, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks). Event mentioning orders of each country are remarkably similar except in
two cases; Democratic Protests and Inter-Korea Summit Talks. Democratic Protests gained third place (37.8%) in South Korea but fifth (14.6%) in the U.S. This mentioning rate difference was statistically significant at the level of p<.001 (t-test). In the case of Inter-Korea Summit Talks, 12.5% of the respondents in South Korea voted for the event but there are no respondents in the U.S. Statistical test captured this difference as significant at the level of p<.001 (t-test). Except for these two events, respondents in both countries showed great agreement about the significance of each event in Korean history over the past 100 years. The Korean War and Independence have strongest imprints in Koreans’ memories regardless of locations followed by World Events and Colonization with the same mentioning orders in both countries. The groups also agree to place Period of President Park at the sixth with mentioning rate of 24.4% and 10.2% in South Korea and the U.S., respectively. However, the mentioning rate difference of Period of President Park turned out to be statistically meaningful at the significance level of p<.01. IMF Emergency Loan takes the bottom of the ranks by mentioned 10.2% and 7.9% in South Korea and the U.S.

To sum up, the respondents in the two countries mostly share the significance of historical events. Interesting findings are relatively higher recognition of Democratic Protests was seen among South Korean subjects and no mentioning for Inter-Korea Summit Talks was given at all in the emigrant group. Also, attention needs to be paid to the higher rate of the Don’t Know category among the U.S respondents.

**Logistic Regression Results.** Location relationships to event mentioning were found in the four major events and the Don’t Know category. These findings are quite consistent with t-test results in two cases. One of them is Period of President Park. The mentioning rate differences between two countries are statistically significant (p<.01) and such a difference is related to location. Although the respondents in South Korea more frequently mentioned the event (24.4%) than in the U.S (10.1%), the location relationship with controlling for gender is in a negative direction (coefficient=-0.63, p<.01). When controlling for location, the coefficient for gender comes up stronger (coefficient=-1.43, p<.001) than location in terms of the significance level. Together, the female subjects in the U.S. were less likely to choose Period of President Park. Another event showing both statistical difference and location relationships is the Don’t Know category. This category marked 6.3% and 33.7% of mentioning rate in South Korea and the U.S., respectively. The difference is significant at the level of p<.001 (t-test). Such a
mentioning pattern is also captured by logistic regression. Test results highlight that the respondents in South Korea are less likely to fall into the Don’t Know category (coefficient=-2.54, p<.001)

On the other hand, three events display location relationships although mentioning rates of two groups were not statistically different (t-test). First of all, the Korean War mentioned by a majority of both groups shows a positive location relationship. Controlling for gender, the respondents in South Korea were more likely to vote for the Korean War (coefficient=1.02, p<.001). Colonization also exhibits an association to location but in a negative direction (coefficient=-0.44, p<.05), controlling for gender. However, controlling for location, gender has much stronger association with mentioning Colonization than location. According to the results, females were less likely to mention the event at the significance level of p<.001 (coefficient=-1.07). Thus, it seems to be gender rather than location which has a significant relationship to Japanese Colonization. Lastly, IMF Emergency Loan shows strong association with both location and gender in equal significance (p<.001). Considering the relationships of these two variables, females in the U.S. were much less likely to identify the event as an important Korean historical event.

In short, all the five categories including the four major events and the Don’t Know category indicated a negative location relationship except the Korean War. Also, it has to be noted that a perfect division of mentioning Inter-Korea Summit Talks by location was not tested because a zero value in the emigrant group made statistical analysis less meaningful.

**The Korean War and Inter-Korea Summit Talks.** The Korean War stretches over its impacts to Koreans regardless of residing locations. It marked the first top choice of event mentioning in both locations (mentioned by 74.8% and 67.4% of the respondents in South Korea and the U.S, respectively). A location relationship to the Korean War is in a positive direction indicating respondents in South Korea were more likely to mention it at the significance level of p<.001. Interestingly, Inter-Korea Summit Talks, which is an event in the continuum of the Korean War, was solely given by the subjects in South Korea (12.6%).

What interpretation can be drawn from this finding? Geographic locations of the respondents might be one possible source to explain this event mentioning pattern. One remains in the land where the war actually took place and its long lasting impacts are experienced by people. The other group left or has never been to the land, which inevitably makes them free
from its persistent influences. Thus, the Korean War is what people can see anywhere in South Korea, but this is not the case of the U.S. respondents. To them, it is the event which has to be brought back from their experiences or knowledge. In this matter, Halbwachs offered insights into importance of “relevance of the past to the present” (Olick, 1999) in social memory studies. According to Halbwachs, the extent of relevance of the past to the present is the key to distinguish history and historical memory. Halbwachs argued “history is the remembered past to which we no longer have an ‘organic’ relation” (Olick, 1999) so it is not important in our lives. On the other hand, historical memory which reaches us through only historical records can be alive in various ways of commemorations and knowledge (Olick & Robbins, 1998). Borrowing Halbwachs’ distinction, the Korean War is closer to the concept of ‘historical memory’ to the respondents in South Korea but it is more likely ‘history’ to Koreans in the U.S. The respondents in South Korea might have put more weight on the event than their counterparts in the U.S. because they keep interacting with the war in daily lives through commemorations, symbols, news reports, media representations, or schooling. In correlation with various interactions, Inter-Korea Summit Talks is one of the biggest national agendas attracting substantial media attention in a continuous manner. From this point of view, it seems understandable that there are no respondents who mentioned Inter-Korea Summit Talks in the U.S. since the event is not a part of their experiences.

**Independence, Japanese Colonization, and Period of President Park.** Among these three events, a relationship to location is either not found or weaker than the gender effect. In the case of Independence, mentioning rate was not statistically different between the two groups (t-test). Consistent with this finding, neither location nor gender shows a relationship to Independence. Japanese Colonization and the Period of President Park showed a relationship to location in controlling for gender at the significance level of p<.05 and p<.01, respectively. However, further analysis displays that gender has stronger coefficient for both events mentioning than location. Controlling for location, females less tend to choose either Japanese Colonization or the Period of President Park (coefficient=-1.07, p<.001, and coefficient=-1.43, p<.001). Thus, it appears that mentioning Japanese Colonization and the Period of President Park is more closely related to gender than location.

Compared to the case of the Korean War, these findings seem to tell another interesting story. If the Korean War has the most persistent imprints on the respondents regardless of
location through its ‘organic’ relation to the present, these three events can be entitled to ‘history’ equally to both groups. Unlike the Korean War, these three events do not seem to get involved with the present lives of the respondents in either of the countries. Colonization was officially terminated by regaining sovereignty. Independence was done by itself so there is no controversy of its permanency. And the Period of President Park was ended by assassination. Thus, these events are more likely to be perceived as historical events which have been done. Such historical facts require not much updated experiences or knowledge to bring them back. Therefore, it is possible that the respondents in both countries equally remember the events easily.

Democratic Protests. Democratic Protests is ranked third (37.8%) in South Korea and fifth (14.6%) in the U.S. Different mentioning rate in two groups was found statistically significant at the level of p<.001 (t-test). But neither a location nor a gender relationship to mentioning the event was identified by logistic regression.

Although a statistical test was not able to capture a relationship to location, it seems worthwhile to pay attention to the respondents in South Korea show much greater mentioning percentage as well as higher ranks of the event then their emigrant counterparts. To interpret this pattern, distinction between ‘history’ and ‘historical memory’ discussed in the previous sections seems also relevant. Democratic Protests is different from other events in that it became an available issue to the general public recently. Since the first South Korea government was established in 1948, the country was governed by authoritarian administrations until 1993. During this period, there were three democratic protest movements in 1960, 1980, and 1987. These events which used to be labeled as anti-government protests were definitely not a subject to be spoken openly in public. Only after 1993, starting with the first civic government, issues related to the movements were officially recognized. But discussion led by the government mostly dealt with limited subjects such as compensating surviving participants and clearing their names. Even at the time, the prevalent public perceptions on the movements considerably relied on anti-Communist sentiments which had been already established by the past military administrations. The government and public opinions about these events rigidly straddled between sacred uprising for the sake of the country and unacceptable communist protests. In the given societal atmosphere, time was needed until such heavy political color covering the movements began to fade away so people became more comfortable with such sensitive issues. Thus, it can only date back to the early 2000s when various forms of attempts actively initiated
to focus on these events in legislation, academic research, education, and popular culture. This current trend certainly signifies revival of these three movements in Korean history. Here Democratic Protests differs from other historical events such as Independence, Colonization, and the Period of President Park, whereas it is similar to the Korean War by its nature. As discussed earlier, the former three events are more like fossilized history, but the Korean War keeps influential connections to the present. Similarly, discourse of the three democratic protest movements mirrors contradictions and conflicts with which Korean society is constantly confronted. From this point of view, Democratic Protests keeps in touch with people in the present through its ‘organic’ relation according to Halbwachs (1992).

In order to get familiar with an ‘organic relation’ of Democratic Protests, it is presumably necessary that the events are placed physically close to people, so they can sense gradually changing societal atmosphere surrounding them. Thus, it does not appear to be coincidence that there are greater similarities among the subjects within each country rather than each generation. Looking at the mentioning rates of Democratic Protests, 41.3% of the young respondents and 45.3% of the elders in South Korea chose the event but 20.9% and 8.7% in the U.S, respectively. Regarding the nature of the event, therefore, it seems to be an important finding that the mentioning rates between the two countries are statistically significant (p<.001) although logistic regression tests did not fully capture a location relationship to the Democratic Protests in the current study.

World Events. Statistical test results indicate there is neither meaningful difference in event mentioning rate between the two groups nor an association of location to the event (t-test and logistic regression). Comparison of the event mentioning priorities between the two countries also demonstrated compatible reputation of the event in both countries; fourth (29.9%) in South Korea and third (21.3%) in the U.S.

What can be inferred from the similar reputation of the World Events, particularly the Korea-Japan World Cup9, in two countries? One possible implication can be drawn from “spatial limits of the event” (Schuman, et al., 1994, p. 328). In the Korea-Japan World Cup, the South Korean national team achieved unprecedented success in the games having reached the semifinals. Hundreds of thousands South Koreans gathered in the streets to street to cheer and

---

9 Despite the varieties of events coded in the category, most responses were the Korea-Japan World Cup (50.8%) followed by the Seoul Olympic (40%), Kim Dae-Jung’ award of Nobel Peace Prize (4.6%), and Deajeon EXPO (1.5%).
celebrate. Such festive mood of Koreans was seen not only in South Korea but also in the U.S. Many Koreans in the U.S. still recall the event that all other communities got surprised to witness Koreans’ unification during the World Cup (Newsnjoy, April 25, 2007). Its strong impression lodges not only in personal recollections. Rather, it is referred to as one of the two major events in Korean immigrant history along with the L.A. Riots in 1992 (Donga Daily, Jan 27, 2003). Its contribution to Korean immigrants’ society is to have Koreans’ identity and pride recovered which were vulnerable since 1992. Further, such unified feelings of Koreans spurred young immigrant generations to get closer to their native cultural origins (Ohmynews, Jan 8, 2006).

As portrayed above, the impacts of the World Cup held in South Korea reached far beyond the national border. In fact, such international events are likely to identify participants and audiences with their national origins than any other indicator. Thus, individuals might have been more heavily recognized as Koreans during the event regardless of the current place of their lives. This seems to leave equally remarkable impressions of the World Cup on Koreans’ memories in both countries.

**IMF Emergency Loan and Inter-Korea Summit Talk.** Statistical tests showed location relationships to mentioning IMF Emergency Loans. The test results indicate that the respondents in South Korea were less likely to mention the event (coefficient=-1.65, p<.001). This finding is quite puzzling at first glance. The immediate consequences of the event struck the economic system and the sequential impacts were rapidly spread out to all of South Korea (Kwon, 2001). Compared to other recent events like World Events, IMF Emergency Loan is clearly characterized as a regional issue in nature.

However, the finding appears understandable after taking a closer look at a mentioning pattern underlying the statistical results. As presented in an earlier chapter, it is only the young generation in both countries who recognized it as an important historical event. To paraphrase this along with the test results, the young respondents in the U.S. were more likely to identify the event than their counterparts in South Korea. Considering the age range of the subjects (age of 8-18) at the time of this event, it is hardly expected that they directly experienced it themselves. This makes an assumption possible that the respondents who mentioned the event are likely those who have experiences through their families before or after migration to the U.S. more directly than their counterparts in South Korea. Although the given information is limited to make further explanation possible, a quote from one respondent in the U.S. seems to help
understand one aspect of the event mentioning relationships to location.

I went high school in the U.S and my family lived in South Korea. When IMF happened I had difficult time because my parents were not able to support me financially as much as they had used to (woman, age 28, in the U.S).

*Don’t Know.* One more interesting finding is a relationship of location to the Don’t Know category. Comparing mentioning rate, the subjects in the U.S were much more likely to fall into this category (33.7%) than in South Korea (6.3%). This difference in mentioning rate was tested as statistically significant by t-test (p<.001). Also, controlling gender, it was found that the respondents in South Korea were less likely to fall into the category (coefficient=-2.54, p<.001, logistic regression).

There are more interesting patterns underneath these test results if breaking down the numbers presented above. For the event mentioning question, all respondents were asked to name three events. In the opposite way, respondents could fall in Don’t Know category as many as three times if they did not give answers at all. In South Korea, the respondents who gave the Don’t Know answer once are 4.7% and twice are only 1.6%, and there is no respondent who gave all three answers with Don’t Know. These numbers are compared to 18%, 5.6%, and 10.1% in the U.S., respectively. In other words, all respondents in South Korea were able to give at least one event while 10.1% of the U.S. subjects were not able to give any events at all.

**Analysis of Reason: History and Historical Memory**

An initial question for this chapter asked if individuals’ historical imprints formatted during the significant years in their native country remained even after international migration experiences. As shown above, the four events and the Don’t Know category indicated a relationship to location controlling for gender. However, further analysis revealed that three of those four events have a stronger association with gender than location (e.g., World Events, Colonization, the Period of President Park and IMF Emergency Loans). This finding seems very supportive that salience of such memories tends to persist in spite of individuals’ different cultural experiences. Before concluding this, another question to be answered is if this is the same in the reason mentioning of the two groups. In order to examine this question, reasons given for the each event were coded in subcategories. And then, statistical tests were conducted to measure differences between groups (t-test) and an association of location to reason mentioning (logistic regression).
The statistical test results display that there are no meaningful differences of reason choices in the groups. However, a relationship of location to reason mentioning was found throughout the entire event categories by further analyses. Test results are presented by each event category.

**The Korean War.** Table 6.3 shows that every reason category but Division is associated to location controlling for gender (logistic regression).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason Category</th>
<th>South Korea (N=127)</th>
<th>United State (N=89)</th>
<th>Location (S. Korea)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>44 (46.3%)</td>
<td>19 (31.6%)</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology Conflicts</td>
<td>29 (30.5%)</td>
<td>21 (35.0%)</td>
<td>-0.53*</td>
<td>-0.78**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>22 (23.2%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>-0.81**</td>
<td>-1.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Experiences</td>
<td>17 (17.9%)</td>
<td>9 (15.0%)</td>
<td>-1.40***</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Damages</td>
<td>19 (20.0%)</td>
<td>7 (11.7%)</td>
<td>-1.02***</td>
<td>-1.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fratricide</td>
<td>19 (20.0%)</td>
<td>7 (11.7%)</td>
<td>-0.99***</td>
<td>-1.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>11 (11.6%)</td>
<td>6 (10.0%)</td>
<td>-1.72***</td>
<td>-1.53***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. + p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.

What does the exception of Division imply? This seems repeatedly to ensure predominance of the Korean War in Koreans’ memories. In fact, Korean contemporary history is characterized as “history of division” (Kim et al., 2007) which was perpetuated by the war in 1953. Thus, the Korean War is usually equated to Division in Koreans’ remembrance and this is likely one of the most prevalent perceptions about the event regardless of location. Statistical test results presented in Table 6.3 above seems to indicate this tendency.

Among the remaining reason categories, War Experiences, War Damages and Fratricide show a strong relationship to location. All three are in a negative direction implying the respondents in South Korea were less likely to report them as their event choice of the Korean War. Putting this in a reversed way, what makes the respondents in the U.S more likely to remember the war with their War Experiences, War Damages, and Fratricide? Seeking answers can be started by tracing back the time when the respondents migrated to the U.S. Migration years of the respondents range from 1955 to 1998. The majority (86%) of them came to the U.S. before the late 1980s which is referred to as the time when South Korea got “global approval of the elevated status” (Oliver, 1993, P.319). In other words, the respondents representing a
hardship generation that got through the devastating period of colonization, the post independence chaos, and the Korean War left South Korea before benefiting from economy growth and political freedom. As a result, the last scene imprinted in their memories is likely based on their harsh experiences of the time. Temporal and spatial distance with the present South Korea might make their memories preserved without much direct experience to replace them in the U.S., while their counterparts’ are somewhat diluted by living through development of the country in South Korea. Thus, the Korean War might trigger remembrance of bitter War Experiences, War Damages, and Fratricide which were imprinted in the respondents’ memories in the U.S. more strongly than in South Korea.

Location relation to Ideology category can be understood along with explanation about the three categories above. Test results demonstrate the respondents in South Korea were less likely to identify Korea War with Ideology Conflicts (coefficient=-1.53, p<.05). This might reflect the currently soothed tension between the two Koreas. Since 2000, various attempts to improve a relationship with North Korea have been actively progressed by the government, business sectors, cultural exchanges, and civic communities (Kim et al., 2007). Although it was found in section 5.1 that the elder generation has strong anti-Communist sentiments caused by devastating experiences of Korean War, the respondents in South Korea have witnessed national efforts to ease tension between the two countries, and they got acquainted with improved relationships with North Korea. For example, the first Inter-Korea Summit Talks were held in 2000 which is referred to as a stepping stone towards Korea’s reunification. The sequential impacts of the event made it possible that family reunification events and traveling to the North took place during the past years. The respondents in the U.S., however, are placed too far to sense such gradual changes occurring in South Korea. This seems to be one possible explanation of a location relationship to Ideology reason category.

A relationship to location was also found in Large Impact category. According to the test results, the respondents in the U.S. tended to identify the war with its impacts more than their counterparts in South Korea (coefficient=-1.72, p<.001, logistic regression). In addition, gender is strongly related to the reason at the same significance level (coefficient=-1.53, p<.001, logistic regression). Together, the female subjects in the U.S. were less likely to associate the war with its impact. However, it is necessary to note that almost all the respondents who chose the reason (n=17) were from the young generation (n=16). The respondent composition of mentioning
seems to require consideration not only of location, but also of generation as well as gender in interpreting the mentioning pattern of Large Impact. Thus, this reason mentioning will be discussed more in the next section focusing on combination impacts of generation and culture in collective memories.

**Independence.** Similar to the findings by generational division in Chapter 5, almost every respondent’s reasons are condensed in on category in both countries, Regaining Sovereignty (98.0% in South Korea and 87.8% in the U.S.), followed by Large impacts 21.6% in South Korea and 7.3% in the U.S.). Shown in Table 6.4, the coefficient for location indicates the subjects in South Korea were more likely to vote for Regaining Sovereignty (coefficient=2.47, p<.001) but less likely for Large Impacts (coefficient=-0.94, p<.05).

**Table 6.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given for Independence by Location</th>
<th>South Korea (N=127)</th>
<th>United State (N=89)</th>
<th>Location (S. Korea)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>(n=51)</td>
<td>(n=41)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regaining Sovereignty</td>
<td>50 (98.0%)</td>
<td>36 (87.8%)</td>
<td>2.47***</td>
<td>1.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonization Experiences</td>
<td>3 (5.9%)</td>
<td>4 (9.8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>5 (9.9%)</td>
<td>1 (2.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>11 (21.6%)</td>
<td>3 (7.3%)</td>
<td>-0.94*</td>
<td>-1.91***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

This is not a surprising result if looking at the reason descriptions before they were categorically coded.

**Independence** is important because we got back our Independence (man, age 77 in the U.S.).

**Independence.** Are you asking me why? What can be more said about we got back our country! (woman, age 65 in South Korea).

The quotes above are very typical among the respondents who chose Independence for their reason. From one point of view, the reason for the event mentioning, Independence, might be too obvious to be asked as remarkable consensus about the event are reflected in statistical test results as well as the answer descriptions. Moreover, this reason category denotes the end of the Colonization Experience, the beginning of Large Impacts, and sources of countless Emotions. Thus, it appears that Regaining Sovereignty embraces all other reasons, although the
respondents’ answers were categorized in four different codes.

The variable relationships to Large Impacts were found in both location and gender. Controlling for gender, the respondents in South Korea were less likely to identify Large Impacts (coefficient=-0.94, p<.05). But, controlling for location, gender shows a stronger association to the reason (coefficient=-1.91, p<.001). In considering effects of these two variables, the female subjects in South Korea were inclined not to choose Large Impacts for their reason.

**Democratic Protests.** Among the three reason categories, a positive relationship to location was found in Democratic Protests. According to the logistic regression test results in Table 6.5, the respondents in South Korea tended to associate the event choice with the reason Democracy Development more than their U.S. counterparts (coefficient=1.36, p<.01).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>South Korea (N=127)</th>
<th>United State (N=89)</th>
<th>Location (S. Korea)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Protests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development</td>
<td>41 (85.4%)</td>
<td>6 (46.2%)</td>
<td>1.36**</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives Lost</td>
<td>18 (37.5%)</td>
<td>5 (38.5%)</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>3 (6.3%)</td>
<td>1 (7.7%)</td>
<td>-1.90**</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.

Another test for Lives Lost was conducted but neither location nor gender showed relationships to the reason mentioning.

In addition to the statistical findings, it seems necessary to pay attention to the distribution of the reason mentioning in each category in order to better understand the underlying meaning of these patterns. Comparing the two countries, there are twice as many respondents who remembered the event with Democracy Development (85.4%) in South Korea. On the other hand, not much difference was found between the two categories among their U.S. counterparts; 46.2% for Democracy Development and 38.5% for Lives Lost. The reason mentioning patterns demonstrate the distinct natures of remembrance about the event depending on the sample locations. Lives Lost and Flashbulb Memories are more about what happened at the moment of the event so it is clearly past oriented. To the contrary, the consequences of the event which is represented as the reason category of
Democracy Development are called for based on present-oriented perspectives.

As mentioned earlier, the three democratic protest movements became a public issue only after the late 1990s. Heavy concerns about anti-government sentiments and communism labeling the movements are less intensified since the early 2000s. This results in more diverse assesses to the issues related to these movements toward the publics. Depending on whether the respondents are familiar to the gradually changing circumstances, their remembrance of the event is either constantly refreshed or stopped in the moment when it was initially generated. For this distinction, the respondents’ location appears to have a significant role.

World Events. Excluding two reason categories having small numbers of respondents, a relationship to location was found in the other three cases. But none of the reason mentioning is related to another variable, gender. Table 6.6 summarizes the statistical test results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Given for World Events</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>United State</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=127)</td>
<td>(N=89)</td>
<td>(S. Korea)</td>
<td>(Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Known in the world</td>
<td>33 (86.8%)</td>
<td>8 (42.1%)</td>
<td>1.94**</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koreans’ Unification</td>
<td>7 (18.4%)</td>
<td>4 (21.1%)</td>
<td>-1.09*</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Benefits</td>
<td>7 (18.4%)</td>
<td>1 (5.3%)</td>
<td>-1.09*</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>2 (5.3%)</td>
<td>3 (15.8%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Relation with Japan</td>
<td>2 (5.3%)</td>
<td>1 (5.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive. Thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

The respondents in South Korea were more likely to identify World Events as chances to Get Known to the World (coefficient=1.94, p<.01) but less likely to identify Koreans’ Unification as well as Economic Benefits at the significance level of p<.05.

The biggest impression of the event is its impact to get Korea known to the world. The category makes up the largest proportion of reason mentioning in both countries; 86.8% in South Korea and 42.1% in the U.S. This is similar to findings in the previous work of Schwartz and Kim (2002) examining significance of cultural origins in collective memory construction. In the comparative study between South Korea and the U.S, they claimed that cultural origins play a determining role to structure group members’ memories. It was found that “international recognition” (p. 215) is one of the most important constituents of South Koreans’ concept of
national honor. World events definitely provide chances to bring attention from the rest of the world to the country which boosts a sense of pride for South Koreans. As shown above, the findings of the current study ensure such a profound sensitivity about national reputation in the world, and that is regardless of the subjects were divided by either generation or location.

On the other hand, the reason mentioning pattern in the category of Koreans’ Unification and Economic Benefits seems to highlight that meanings attached to the event vary depending on the respondents’ locations. According to the statistical test results, the respondents in South Korea were less likely to recognize either Koreans’ Unification (coefficient=-1.09, p<.05) or Economic Benefits (coefficient=-1.09, p<.05) than their counterparts in the U.S. What can be inferred from the test result indicating Koreans outside of Korea concerns with Koreans’ Unification more than ones in South Korea? To be noted here, though, is more frequent mentioning the Koreans’ Unification does not necessarily imply it is considered more importantly. Rather, the mentioning pattern is likely driven from more salient impressions of the U.S respondents than their counterparts in South Korea when they experienced a sense of unification as a Korean whole. Presumably, such experiences are not frequently given to people who are apart from their native country as the U.S. respondents in the current study. This seems to be one possible aspect to understand the test results.

**Japanese Colonization.** Three of the six reason categories are associated to location in the case of Japanese Colonization. Table 6.7 shows the respondents in South Korea tended to focus less on Emotion (coefficient=−1.25, p<.01), Experience (coefficient=−0.88, p<.05) and Large Impacts (coefficient=−1.17, p<.01).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>United State</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=127)</td>
<td>(N=89)</td>
<td>(S. Korea)</td>
<td>(Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Colonization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Sovereignty</td>
<td>(n=38)</td>
<td>(n=17)</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Suffering</td>
<td>19 (50%)</td>
<td>8 (47.1%)</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>8 (21.1%)</td>
<td>4 (23.5%)</td>
<td>-1.25**</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>9 (23.7%)</td>
<td>1 (5.9%)</td>
<td>-0.88*</td>
<td>-1.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause (Self-Blame)</td>
<td>3 (7.9%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>7 (18.4%)</td>
<td>2 (11.8%)</td>
<td>-1.17**</td>
<td>-1.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.
However, the small numbers of the subjects in each category requires careful interpretation of the test results.

Instead, the other categories which did not display variable associations seem to give insights into understanding attached meaning to the respondents’ choice for the event. About half of the subjects perceived the importance of the event with Loss of Sovereignty in both countries (50% in South Korea and 47.1% in the U.S.). The second rank is also shared with the two groups by National Suffering (39.5% in South Korea and 29.4% in the U.S.). A similar interpretation drawn in the reason analysis of Independence seems to lend applicable points in this case. Although some respondents specified their reasons, the category Loss of Sovereignty itself tends to include other reasons due to the nature of the event.

Are you asking me why? We lost our sovereignty. What else do you need to hear about? (man, age 73 in South Korea).

Simply, it might be too obvious to be asked. Second, Colonization is completed history which is nationally commemorated with little controversies. The fact that we lost our country preoccupies remembrance of the respondents so there seems little space left for other concerns related to the event. Thus, not much updated information is needed to remember the event but the facts that Korea Lost Sovereignty which brought National Suffering to all Koreans. In short, no difference in the two groups seems to reflect that Colonization is a certainly important history but does not have significant impacts on the current lives of people equally in both countries. All together, Japanese Colonization only exists in historical records, which is referred to as “dead memory” by Halbwachs’ term (Olick & Robbins, 1998, p. 110).

**Period of President Park.** As shown in Table 6.8, most of reason categories have a few numbers of the subjects. This makes it challenging to interpret the statistical tests results of the reason mentioning for the Period of President Park.
Table 6.8
Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of President Park</th>
<th>South Korea (N=127)</th>
<th>United State (N=89)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=31)</td>
<td>(n=9)</td>
<td>(S. Korea)</td>
<td>(Female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy Growth</td>
<td>17 (54.8%)</td>
<td>7 (77.8%)</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable Military Take Over</td>
<td>8 (25.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>3 (9.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>3 (9.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>2 (6.5%)</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended Dictatorship of President Rhee</td>
<td>1 (3.2%)</td>
<td>1 (11.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. + p<.05, ++ p<.01, +++ p<.001 (t-test)
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. Each of reason mentioning is not mutually exclusive thus total percentage of each group is not summed up to 100%.
4. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Nevertheless, if only taking the first two categories, the period appears to be mostly remembered with Economy Growth and Unacceptable Military Take Over by the respondents in both countries.

Regarding perceptions of the period, on the one hand there is a single and nonnegotiable fact which characterizes the period as time of Economy Growth. On the other hand, diverse perspectives tackling shortcomings of the period have been emerging since the early 1990s which are represented as Unacceptable Military Take Over and Large Impacts in the reason categories. In this sense, the test results above seem to be understandable in that most of the respondents entitled the event as Economy Growth in both countries, whereas clearly more respondents in South Korea identified the recently discussed aspects of the event. With no doubt, it requires updated information in order to get acquainted to the later perspectives, which inevitably relies on geographically close distance with the event. Therefore, the reason mentioning patterns for the Period of President Park appear to ensure the significance of the organic relation of events to the present lives.

The comparison in these sections between the two groups divided by locations implies that cultural impacts on the respondents’ memories vary depending on the nature of an event. To be noted, though, is that conceptualization of the cultural differences was rather limited to a spatial term. In acknowledging this issue, the intensity of the different cultural experiences of the respondents seems another essential aspect to better understand cultural effects on collective memory formation. To test this, event mentioning patterns of the U.S. respondents (n=89) were analyzed with variables related to their immigration experiences.
Effects of Immigration

The comparison in the previous section between two groups divided by location implied that cultural impacts on the respondents’ memories vary depending on the nature of events. One to be noted, though, is that cultural differences were solely conceptualized as a spatial term. However, it will be better to understand cultural effects on the respondents’ remembrance if how long the different cultures have been experienced by the respondents is considered as another essential aspect in data analysis. To test this, event mentioning patterns of the U.S. respondents were analyzed with variables related to their immigration experience by each generation.

Effects of Immigration among the Elder Respondents. In order to examine cultural effects followed by immigration experiences on the elder respondents (n=43), three variables including gender, education, and years of immigration were considered for data analysis. The test results are summarized in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9
Most Commonly Mentioned Events of the Elder Respondents in the U.S. by Gender, Education, and Years of Immigration (N=43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Years of Immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (38)</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence (34)</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development (9)</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Events (0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Colonization (12)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of the President Park (8)</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF Emergency Loan (0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know (14)</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Numbers in each column indicate the coefficient of each event tested by logistic regression.
2. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.
4. Education was coded 0 for less than high school graduation and 1 for high school education and above.
5. Years of Immigration: In order to choose the most appropriate way of use the data, duration of immigration was considered in four ways; linear, proportion of subjects’ age, squared and logged. By operating logistic regression using each of the four with age and gender, proportion of duration of immigration of subjects’ chronological age was chosen by its largest R-square scores. For convenience, this is referred to as years of immigration in this study.

As shown above, there is no sign that tested variables are related to the respondents’ event choices throughout all event categories. This seems to ensure the previous findings that different cultural experiences do not very effectively impact on the respondents’ memories.

Effects of Immigration among the Young Respondents. The U.S young respondents
(n=46) were asked additional questions related to their immigration experiences. These questions included year of immigration, identification of cultural origin, interaction with other Koreans, and place of birth. Coefficient of these variables to event mentioning was tested by a logistic regression. Across all the events categories, a few variable relationships were found. The test results are present in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10
Most Commonly Mentioned Events of the Young Respondents in the U.S. by Gender, Years of Immigration, Identification of Cultural Origin, Interaction with Other Koreans, and Place of Birth (N=46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Years of Immigration</th>
<th>Identification of Cultural Origin</th>
<th>Interaction with Other Koreans</th>
<th>Place of Birth (U.S.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War (23)</td>
<td>-1.50*</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.46*</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence (9)</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development (4)</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-12.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>-12.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Events (23)</td>
<td>-1.75*</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Colonization (5)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of the President Park (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF Emergency Loan (7)</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>-9.62</td>
<td>-0.70</td>
<td>0.94*</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks (0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know (39)</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Numbers in each column indicated a coefficient of each event tested by logistic regression.
2. *p<.05, **p<.01, and ***p<.001 (logistic regression)
3. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.
4. Years of Immigration indicate proportion of duration of immigration of subjects’ chronological age. For convenience, this is referred to as years of immigration in this table.
5. Identification of Cultural Origin was measured by asking “How strongly do you identify yourself as a Korean-American?” with scale between 1 (American) and 7 (Korean).
6. Interaction with Other Koreans was measured by asking “How often do you interact with other Koreans in your daily lives?” with scale between 1 (0%) and 7 (100%).

The statistical tests captured that mentioning the Korean War is associated with gender and identification of cultural origin but not any other variable. The female respondents were less likely to mention the Korean War (coefficient= -1.50, p<.05). And those who identified themselves as a Korean more than an American were more likely to choose the Korean War (coefficient=0.46, p<.01). In the case of World Events, respondents’ mentioning patterns are related to none of the variables except gender (coefficient=-1.75, p<.05). IMF Emergency Loans also showed a variable association, indicating that the more respondents interact with other Koreans, the more are they likely to recognize the event (coefficient=0.94, p<.05).

**Conclusion**

In fact, cultural effects which were not distinguished by grouping respondents solely by
location differences appear to surface in their event mentioning patterns. The extent to which cultural effects is associated with Democratic Protests and Colonization both in a negative direction, while generational relationships to the Korean War, Independence, and the Don’t Know category are not affected by controlling for years of immigration and gender. However, possible interpretations about the two events showing a relationship to years of immigration might be different from each other. Test results indicate that the fewer the years of immigration, the more likely are the respondents to mention Democracy Movement. As discussed in earlier sections, discourses related to Democratic Protests recently became public issues in the early 2000s. This suggests that those who chose the event might have come to the U.S. later than others which is indicated as shorter years of immigration. On the other hand, mentioning Colonization might be related to chronological age which is often interrelated to actual years of immigration. Thus, younger immigrations having been living in the U.S. shorter than others seem to be those who vote for the event. Colonization is one of the events which are recognized by all respondents regardless of generation and locations. In other words, Colonization is an event which does not require either personal experiences or much historical knowledge. This might explain why young respondents, who do not have either, still were able to pick Colonization without much difficulty. Other measures of cultural effects were operationalized in survey questions for young immigrants about Identification of Cultural Origin, Interaction with Other Koreans, and Place of Birth. Interestingly, young immigrants’ event choices did not show any significant relationships to all these additional variables Only IMF Emergency Loan showed an association with Interaction with Other Koreans in a positive direction.
Chapter 7
Effects of Generations and Cultures

An aim of this chapter is to compare effects of generation and culture in the respondents’ collective memory over the past 100 years. Findings in Chapter 5 showed a generational relationship to five of the eight major events (the Korean War, Independence, Democratic Protests, World Events, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks) and the Don’t Know category. In Chapter 6, a relationship to location was found in the four major events (the Korean War, Colonization, the Period of President Park, and IMF Emergency Loans) and the Don’t Know category. Then, what story can be seen if effects of generations and locations are compared? To get answers, a logistic regression controlling for generation, gender, and location was conducted.

Analysis of Event Mentioning

In the most event categories, variable associations are consistent with the previous findings in Chapter 5 and 6. Table 7.1 summarizes the logistic regression test results.

Table 7.1
Most Commonly Mentioned Events by Generation, Gender, and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (South Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td>1.60***</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>0.61*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>0.72**</td>
<td>-0.51*</td>
<td>-0.56*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development</td>
<td>-0.65*</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Events</td>
<td>-2.49***</td>
<td>-0.79**</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Colonization</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>-1.01***</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of the President Park</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-1.48***</td>
<td>-0.69**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF Emergency Loan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Korea Summit Talks</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know***</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-2.40***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N: 216

1.* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

A stronger relationship to generation than the other two variables were found in the Korean War, Democratic Protests, and World Events. This variable dynamic is similar to the previous test results in earlier chapters. The elders were more likely to mention the Korean War (coefficient=1.60, p<.001) but less likely to choose Democratic Protests (coefficient=-0.65, p<.05) and World Events (coefficient=-2.49, p<.001).

Controlling for the all three variables, Japanese Colonization and the Period of President Park indicate their strong relationships to gender. This is a consistent with the previous findings. In the separated two tests examining generational and cultural effects, these two events were
significantly related to gender controlling for either of the other two variables.

On the other hand, Independence shows different mentioning pattern from what the earlier findings indicated. In investigating generational effects, the event was more closely associated to gender than generation (coefficient=-0.66, p<.01) whereas there was no variable relationship found in measuring cultural effects of location. Controlling for generation, gender, and location together, however, the event mentioning of Independence turns out to be related to all three variables although generation has the strongest association to the event.

Another interesting observation is seen in the Don’t Know category. In Chapter 5, the category was very strongly associated to generation (coefficient=-1.27, p<.001) controlling for gender. In a separate analysis in Chapter 6, the category also showed a significant relationship to location (coefficient=-2.54, p<.001). A test considering all the three variables together reveals the Don’t Know category is strongly related to location but neither of the other two variables (coefficient=-2.40, p<.001).

Due to reasons discussed earlier in the event mentioning analyses, relative impacts of the variables were not tested for IMF Emergency Loans (mentioned by only the young respondents) and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (mentioned by solely the South Korean subjects).

The question to be answered was which variable has a stronger relationship with Korean subjects’ memories. Findings in this chapter give some insights into the question. Among the statistically tested six events and the Don’t Know category, generational effects exceed cultural differences in four cases; the Korean War, Independence, Democratic Protests, and World Events. In the other two not showing a generational association, it tends to be gender rather than location which was influential to the respondents’ event choices. The only case indicating stronger effects of location is the Don’t Know category. In other words, different cultural experiences of the respondents in the two countries divide historical events to either remembered or not remembered. But, once the respondents are able to bring them back, their different cultural experiences hardly differentiate the contents of their remembrance.

**Analysis of Reason Mentioning**

It is a main focus to compare three variables’ associations to reason mentioning in this section. The two previous chapters demonstrated how generation, gender and location are related to respondents’ reason choices. An emerging question is whether variables which showed a salient relationship to particular reason categories remain effective when considering all three
variables for data analysis. Test results conducted by a logistic regression are presented by each event category.

*The Korean War.* Dynamics between the three variables are the most evident in the reason mentioning of the Korean War.

**Table 7.2**

| Reason Given for the Korean War by Generation, Gender and Location |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                    | Generation (Elder) | Gender (Female) | Location (S.Korea) |
| Korean War (n=155) |                   |                 |                   |
| Division           | -2.53***          | 0.47            | 0.77*             |
| Fratricide         | -0.36             | -1.05**         | 0.84**            |
| Large Impacts      | -3.81***          | -0.44           | -1.00*            |
| War Damage         | -0.40             | -0.91*          | -0.85**           |
| Ideology Conflicts | 0.66*             | -1.09**         | -0.83**           |
| War Experience     | -1.32***          | -0.71           | -0.30             |

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Generation indicates the strongest relationship to Division, Large Impacts, and Emotion. The result of Division is consistent with the previous analyses that a generational relationship was found controlling for gender in Chapter 5, but neither location nor gender association was indicated in Chapter 6. The other two categories were significantly associated with gender controlling for generation and location controlling for gender, but the effects of the two variables are remarkably weakened when considering all the three variables together.

Compatible effects of gender and location are indicated in Fratricide and Ideology. This finding is consistent in the case of Ideology. But this is not the case of Fratricide. Chapter 5 showed a compatible relationship of generation and gender to the reason mentioning, and Chapter 6 displayed location had a stronger association than gender. However, the effect of generation disappears in the dynamics of all the three variables in this Chapter 7.

A stronger association of location is found only in War Damages implying the respondents in the South Korea were less likely to mention the reason. This is consistent with previous analyses of the reason mentioning.

*Independence.* In reason mentioning of Independence, generation and location show a strong relationship, but gender does not.
Table 7.3
Reasons Given for Independence by Generation, Gender and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S.Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence (n=92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regaining Sovereignty</td>
<td>1.05*</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>2.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonization Experiences</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>-2.35***</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

An effect of location is found in a reason category, Regaining Sovereignty. This is similar to the correlation which was already discussed earlier. In the previous analyses, generation and gender were associated with this reason and also location and gender were related to this category. Among generation, gender and location, location shows the greatest effects (coefficient=2.27, p<.001) on the Independence reason category.

Generation is more closely related to Large Impacts than the other two variables. The relationship was stronger than gender. Between location and gender, gender indicated a more close association to the reason. However, when considering generation, gender and location together, effects display a dominant association of generation to Large Impact reason category (coefficient=-2.35, p<.001).

Democratic Protests. Statistical tests were conducted for the two larger categories only due to having very few respondents in the Flashbulb Memory category. Table 7.4 shows the reason mentioning of this event related to generation and location.

Table 7.4
Reasons Given for Democratic Protests Choice by Generation, Gender and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S.Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Protests (n=61)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Development</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.60**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives Lost</td>
<td>1.2*</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-1.06*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

Location is the only variable showing an association, Democracy Development. This is similar to the earlier findings indicating no generational relationship controlling for gender and a close relationship to location controlling for gender. Among all three variables, the previous effect of gender declines, whereas location remains as an effective variable to this reason category.
In the previous analyses, no variable association was found in Lives Lost. Contrary to this, hidden variable effects are revealed in generation and location at the same significance level of p<.05. The test result implies the elder respondents (coefficient=1.2, p<.05) in the U.S (coefficient=-1.06, p<.05) were more likely to remember Democratic Protests with the reason of Lives Lost.

**World Events and Japanese Colonization.** Variable associations to reason mentioning are clearly divided by location in World Event and by generation in Japanese Colonization as shown in Table 7.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Events (n=57)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S.Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Known to the World</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>1.93**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koreans’ Unification</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Benefits</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-1.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
<td>-3.05**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

A clear impact of location across the reason categories is found in World Events. This is remarkably consistent with the previous analyses. In Chapter 5, gender was the only variable having a relationship to the all reason categories controlling for generation. On the other hand, in Chapter 6, every reason category was solely related to location controlling for gender. Such a strong relationship to location in the reason mentioning remains effective whereas an association to gender significantly declines when considering all the three variables.

Statistical test results for the reason mentioning of Japanese Colonization are presented in Table 7.6.
Table 7.6
Reasons Given for Japanese Colonization by Generation, Gender and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese Colonization (n=55)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S.Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Sovereignty</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Suffering</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>-1.68**</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause (Self-Blame)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>-1.65*</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

As shown above, generation is the only variable indicating a relationship to the reason mentioning; Emotion and Large Impacts, both in a negative direction. This is very different from the previous findings. In measuring generational effects, two out of the five reason categories showed an association with generation but none with gender. On the other hand, location was related to three out of the five reason categories, and gender indicated an association to one, Experiences in examining cultural effects. However, these variable associations are predominated by generation when comparing relationships across generation, gender, and location to the reason mentioning.

*Period of Present Park.* Reason mentioning was analyzed in only one category due to having very few respondents in each reason category.

Table 7.7
Reasons Given for Period of President Park by Generation, Gender and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of President Park (n=40)</th>
<th>Generation (Elder)</th>
<th>Gender (Female)</th>
<th>Location (S.Korea)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy Growth</td>
<td>1.30*</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>-0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable Military Take Over</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Impacts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashbulb Memories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended Dictatorship of President Rhee</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (logistic regression)
2. When n<5, statistical tests were not conducted for a methodological reason.

The only reason category tested by logistic regression is Economy Growth. The previous analyses found no variable relationship with this category. Contrary to this, the test results shown in Table 7.7 indicate generation is solely associated to the Economy Growth in a positive direction implying the elder respondents tended to choose this reason for their event choice more
than any other respondent group.
Chapter 8
Conclusion

This study explored how individuals’ memories are constructed in collective ways depending on group memberships of generation and culture. Four analytic questions were developed to pursue this initial inquiry: First, are generational effects found in Koreans’ remembrance? Second, if this is the case, is the significant years hypothesis valid to explain the generational differences in the respondents’ memories? Third, does the salience of the significant years’ memories persist for people who migrated to other countries? Last, which impacts are more strongly related to memory construction, generation or culture? From December 2007 to February 2008, surveys were conducted in South Korea and in the U.S. with young and elder generations of Koreans. The survey questionnaire replicating the study of Schuman and Scott (1989) asked the respondents how they perceive their national history. Overall, findings of the current study support many earlier studies. At the same time, there are emerging aspects of collective memories which are not fully understood with the previous studies. This chapter will discuss the supportive as well as the suggestive aspects of the findings in this study.

**Life Timing of Experiencing Events and the Nature of Events**

To the first question investigating generational effects, the Korean subjects’ memories generally support views the idea that belonging to a certain age group generates distinctive memories. Among the nine events, the six event categories (i.e., the Korean War, Independence, Democratic Protests, World Events, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks) showed generational differences to the event mentioning question. The elder respondents remarkably tended to choose older events such as the Korean War (1950-1953) and Independence (1945). On the other hand, the young generation’s choices were highly concentrated in recent events including World Events (1988 and 2002), IMF Emergency Loans (1997-2000), and Inter-Korea Summit Talks (2000). Democratic Protests (1960, 1980, and 1987), which is situated in the middle of timeline in the past 100 years, was more appealing to the young generation.

Extended from the first question, the second analytic question applies the relevance of the ‘significant years’ model to findings from the Korean samples. Do the generational relationships to event selection rely on the respondents’ experiences in adolescence and young adulthood, namely the significant years? This was answered by testing three events (i.e., the Korean War,
Independence, and Democratic Protests [particularly one in 1960]) out of the six which showed a generational relationship to the event mentioning. When strictly applying the significant years age range (17-25), there are not enough respondents in other three events categories for grouping them into two; one who were in their significant years when the events happened, and one who were not. This is because age is not considered as a continuous variable in the current study so the actual time when these three events (World Events, IMF Emergency Loans, and Inter-Korea Summit Talks) occurred is either too early or late for any respondents’ significant years.

In analyses of the significant years hypothesis, only the Korean War showed a peak in the mentioning rate at the significant years cohort whose age range is 65 to 72 during the survey period (coefficient=1.92, p<.001, logistic regression). Analysis of the other two events (Independence and Democratic Protests) did not indicate a relationship to the significant years effect. However, it does not mean that the significant years hypothesis is irrelevant to understanding the Korean samples’ perception on the past. Rather, this highlights the importance of the nature of an event in memory structure. In fact, Schuman and his colleagues recognized this issue, especially in terms of the spatial limits and the length of events. Regarding events which do not show a significant relationship to a particular age group, Schuman and et al (1994) addressed that “in extent or duration…[v]irtually all were affected by the changes of this period, which were probably experienced in people’s lives not as discrete, categorical events as coded in the study but as a stream of interrelation changes that took place over the time period” (p. 328). This statement appears to lend an explanation for not relationship of significant years in the mentioning the two events: the spatial limits of Independence and Democratic Protests reached the entire country so that virtually all Koreans who lived through the time were affected by the events.

Comparing their elder counterparts, the young generation was more inclined to select the relatively recent events such as World Events (1988 and 2002), Democratic Protests (1987), and IMF Emergency Loans (1997-2000). The young respondents remember these events with considerable emphasis, although most of the respondents were not in their significant years when these events actually happened. In order to understand this pattern, another important aspect of the nature of events may need to be discussed; the length of the events. In considering the nature of these recent events, they are more likely to be recognized with their beginnings (except World Events), whereas the older events tend to remembered with their ends. In other words, the
impacts of the recent events are still very influential in the present South Korean society in various aspects such as economy, politics, and culture. The three democratic protest movements coded as Democratic Protests were not public issues until the early 1990s when the first civil South Korean government was established. These events were only secretively discussed due to their anti-government label and prevalent anti-communist sentiments at the time in South Korea. It is only after the early 2000s when these events became openly discussed in education, popular culture, news media and historic preservation. Thus, the impacts of these protest movements became salient long after they actually happened. In the case of the IMF Emergency Loans, the South Korean economy has been restructured since the economic crisis in 1997. The current discussion of the economic crisis is often raised with accompanying impacts such as unemployment, income disparities, dissolution of families, increase of homeless, and distrust of the government. As the news media often portrays, the South Korean economy is on the way to recovery. The nature of the Inter-Korea Summit Talks is similar to these two events. Since the Korean War, soothing tension between the two Koreas is one of the top priorities in public agendas, and one of the examples is Inter-Korea Summit Talks in 2000. In short, the lengths of these recent events have been extended to the present through being revived in the case of Democratic Protests, and through the long lasting influences in the case of IMF Emergency Loans and Inter-Korea Summit Talks.

Autobiographical Memories and Factual Memories

Further analyses of reason mentioning given for events provide insightful explanations to understand relationships between life timing of experiences and the nature of an event. Depending on how the respondents experienced an event, their reason mentioning patterns were very different. At first glance, such differences appear to be based on age: the elders remember the past based on their personal experiences and their young counterparts depend their memories on knowledge which is learned through schooling or media representations. Although this is found in most cases, these patterns cannot be generalized to all events. Instead, it is whether an event is experienced personally but not whether the respondents are old or young that determines sources of individuals’ memories.

Those who directly experienced an event strongly tended to describe their event choices based on personal experiences regardless of the respondents’ age. These kinds of memories are named autobiographical memory, according to Halbwachs (1992). For example, an 85 year-old
woman in the U.S. elaborated her event choice of Independence as “...You don’t even know how painful it was. I was forced to change my name to Japanese.” An example of a young respondent about World Event is very similar. “It was awesome. During the World Cup, we got together and became as one.” These quotes elaborate that the respondents of different generations remember an event equally based on personal experience and emotion.

On the other hand, those who indirectly experienced events heavily rely on knowledge and generalized emotions for their memories. A 23-year-old man in South Korea described Independence as “Japanese Colonization is our humiliating history. By reclaiming our sovereignty, we were able to start over our new history as an independent country”. Although he touched on the emotional aspect of the event, it is not about of himself but about history. In addition, his statement is not very different from what Korean history book portrays the event. This kind of memories can be termed as factual memories. Here, what needs to be noted is that when such factual memories are constructed. Although the young respondents experienced the events in indirect ways, the indirect experiences still happened in their significant years through various forms, mostly schooling. Regarding this aspect, the earlier studies also emphasized that the importance of indirect experiences occurring in the significant years is as important as direct experiences in this period (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989). Therefore, the findings of the current study support the salient roles of the significant years experiences. At the same time, these point out that the nature of their memories is remarkably affected by the nature of experiences in individuals’ significant years.

History and Historical Memories

The concept of generational differences in collective memories leads to the third question. If there are generational differences in memories and they are considerably constructed by experiences during significant years, are those memories retained despite significantly different cultural experiences? Findings of the current study highlight that cultural differences do not seem to differentiate respondents’ memories. Across the nine event categories, three of them indicate a strong relationship to location (i.e., the Korean War, Inter-Korea Summit Talks, and the Don’t Know category). This pattern appears to reveal a very important finding in terms of the cultural effects on collective memory formation. The interpretation of the findings needs to start

---

10 In Korean history textbook published in 1996 by the government, one fourth of the contents are about the colonial rule periods (p. 124-p .184).
by considering characteristics of the three categories. In considering that the Korean War has never been terminated and soothing tension between two Koreas is a top priority of public agenda, the Korean War and Inter-Korea Summit Talks are interlocked in nature and remain salient in the present lives in South Korea. This is very different from most of other events which are characterized as having done such as Japanese Colonization, Independence and the Period of President Park. These different natures of the events echo the distinction of the past.

According to Halbwachs (1992), the past is distinguished as history and historical memories. History is the dead past so it is not important in our lives any more. But, historical memories are the remembered past which can be alive through organic relations with the present. From this point of view, the Korean War and Inter-Korea Summit talks can be named as historical memories, whereas the rest of events are closer to the concept of history. The former constantly get involved with the present life while the latter is historically important but they do not have determinant impacts on Korea’s present. This is a crucial point in order to understand the respondents’ event choices in the two countries. In order to reach its organic relation to the present, the impressions of the events need to penetrate into individuals’ memories. For this, a spatial distance is one of the preconditions to be met. In terms of geographic distance, the U.S. respondents are too far away to sense gradually evolving perspectives of the past, which are happening in South Korea. Therefore, it seems reasonable that the respondents in the U.S. less tended to choose the Korean War and Inter-Korea Summit Talks which require proximity in order to get acquainted with. These findings demonstrate it seems to be a spatial distance rather than different cultural experiences which have impacts on respondents’ remembrance in the two countries.

**Generation or Culture?**

A final question is to compare the relative impacts of generation and culture in collective memory constructions. What do dynamics between the two components of memories look like? Data analyses generated starkly consistent results with the previous findings. Comparing generation and culture, generation plays a stronger role than culture in memory formation in the Korean respondents.

Distinct cultural effects are found in two event categories. The first one is Inter-Korea Summit Talks which is a recent as well as very regional event. Thus, it is assumed that the event is not very accessible to the respondents in the U.S. This is because recent information is
necessary in order to recognize it as an important historical event, which is not conveniently provided to them as much as to their counterparts in South Korea. Second, the Don’t Know category also shows a strong relationship to a location variable implying that the respondents in the U.S. have greater difficulty in naming historical events in Korean history. These findings seem to illustrate that cultural effects are influential whether the events are remembered or forgotten. However, once the respondents are able to bring back their memories, the contents of their remembrance is not significantly different regardless of the current residing locations.

**Distance between Events and People**

This study focused on examining how generational and cultural locations are interrelated to Koreans’ collective memories. The primary findings of the current study support the previous works in three aspects. At the same time, they provide the suggestive perspectives in collective memory studies. First, temporal distance of historical events is an crucial element to affect people’s memories: the further is the temporal distance, the more frequently is remembered by the elder generation. At the same time, the suggestive finding is that such a temporal distance is not necessarily measured from the time when events actually happened, but rather when they are recognized as important. This is closely related to the second important finding, that is, the significance of spatial distance between events and people: the further are people from the place where new perspectives of events emerge, the less do people remember the events. As shown in the event mentioning differences between two groups in South Korea and in the U.S., the impressions of newly focused events need to be sensible in order to be remembered. To be so, those events have to be physically close to people. Finally, the respondents’ remembrance in this study clearly demonstrates that distinctive sociohistorical structure of a country is significantly influential in setting temporal and spatial distance of the past between the events and people.

**Collective Memories and Social Identity**

In social memory studies, collective memories are often discussed with social identity (Olick & Robbins, 1998). That is, social identity is acquired through learning a group’s memories and identifying group members with its collective past (Zerubavel, 2003). Overall, this study highlights that individuals' memories of the past can vary depending on their memberships of generational and cultural groups. Then, does this finding explain how individuals perceive their social identity is related to their collective memories of generation and culture? Given very collective characteristics of Korean culture and language, all the respondents in the four different
groups referred to themselves as *we*.

We (not me) were forced to change *our* (not my) names to Japanese. They didn’t even allow *us* to have *our* (not my) own name (woman, age 82 in the U.S).

I was drafted to the war to protect *our* country over the North (man, age 71, in South Korea).

Because of the foreign power, *we* had to be divided into two (woman, age 25, in South Korea).

Because of the war, *our* country got ripped into two (woman, age of 23, in the U.S).

During the World Cup, *we* showed Koreans’ unified power to the world (man, age 22, in South Korea).

It was awesome. The World Cup made unified *us* as one (man, age 23, in the U.S).

Who do the respondents mean by *we*? Who of us are included in *we* and who of us are excluded in *we*? Based on the findings of this study, it is hard to answer these questions if try to take either generation or culture (the current residing life context). Rather, the respondents’ remembrance and their group identity can be better understood if focusing on the interrelated roles of generation and culture in sociohistorical structure of Korea. This finding from the Korean subjects is expected to help understand not only Koreans but hopefully more.

**Future Studies**

The findings in this study supported the previous works on generational impacts in collective memory construction. Also, it highlighted that sociohistorical circumstances as well as the nature of events are as important as the subjects’ life timing (the significant years) of experiencing the events. Issues raised in this study call for further research.

An important issue relates to the way this study operationalized age. One of the main interests of the current study was to explore the generational differences in subjects’ collective memories of the past. For this purpose, age was employed to group the subjects to two groups; the young (18-29) and the elder generation (65 and over). However, this is unlike previous studies with similar research questions and methods. Most studies (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989, and Schuman et al., 1998) have a continuous age range of their subjects which is usually from 18 to 65 and over. These studies treated age as continuous variable which allowed them to have more holistic data to analyze the age impact on the subjects’ responses. To have a continuous age
range of subjects is advantageous because it is possible for researchers to break down the samples’ age into age sub-groups (cohort groups). Many studies examining the significant years hypothesis have divided their sample with a five-year span (e.g., Schuman & Scott, 1989, Scott & Zac, 1993, and Schuman & Rodgers, 2004). This offered a more completed age range to see if there is a peak of the sample’s responses at a certain age cohort.

Although the current study found generational effects on the respondents’ memories in most event categories (six out of the eight major events and the Don’t Know category), a couple of issues emerge. First, if there were other age groups between the young (18-29) and the elder (65 and over), it would have been possible to have more complete analysis in the two events, IMF Emergency Loans and Inter-Korea Summit Talks, which showed a perfect generational relationship of the event mentioning. Second, having two age groups rather limited analyses of the significant years hypothesis. In considering the actual time when an event occurred, there were often not enough (or no) respondents who can be grouped in significant years cohorts due to the way that the sample’s age ranges (18-29 and 65 and over). This makes statistical analyses of the model limited. If the current study had a continuous age range of the sample, testing the significant years hypothesis could have been conducted in more cases. Therefore, more completed analyses of impacts of generation and the significant years experiences on collective memory might best be achieved by obtaining samples from broader age range in future studies.

Another important issue is raised from sampling method and sample number of this study. The research subjects of the current study were recruited by convenience sampling from universities, senior centers, and senior apartments. When considering resource constraints, this sampling method was the most practical way to gather data. However, more valid generalizability will be achieved if randomized sampling method is employed. Regarding sample number, the relatively small number of respondents (the young in South Korea [n=63], the elder in South Korea (n=64), the young in the U.S. [n=46], the elder in the U.S. [n=43]) made data analyses difficult. Some cases have too few respondents to classify them again into sub-categories of events or reason they mentioned. For example, when analyzing reason mentioning the Period of President Park, five out of the six reason categories have less than five (sometimes zero) respondents. In such case, statistic tests were not carried out because it seemed less practical to produce meaningful analysis. For this reason, in the cases which were not statistically tested, the impacts of generation and location are unknown. Therefore, this study would have
been considerably strengthened with more sample number.
References


Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2007). Korean overseas population. Retrieved April 08,


APPENDIX
Survey A.

Perceptions of Korean Younger Generation in the U.S.

ID Number:
Date:

Part A. The first section of this survey will ask you basic background information.

1) Gender? Male / Female
2) Age? ____Years of age
3) Were you born in the U.S.? Yes / No
4) If no,
   a. what was your age when you came to the U.S? ____Years of age
   b. who were the first in your family to come to the U.S.? __Parents
      __Grandparents
      __Great grandparents
      __Others:
5) How strongly do you identify yourself as a Korean-American?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Korean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) How often do you interact with other Koreans in your daily lives?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 %</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part B. Section B will ask you two questions about your opinions.

Could you please name the three important Korean historical events over the past 100 years? Please explain why.

Event 1.
   Please explain why

Event 2.
   Please explain why

Event 3.
   Please explain why

COMMENTS:
Part A. The first section of this survey will ask you basic background information.

1) Gender? **Male / Female**
2) Age? ____ Years of age
3) What was your age when you came to the U.S? ____ Years of age
4) How much formal education have you completed? Please circle on the correct response
   - None / Elementary school / Middle school / High school / University /
   - Others (please explain):

Part B. Section B will ask you two questions about your opinion.

Could you please name the three important Korean historical events over the past 100 years? Please explain why.

   Event 1.

   Please explain why
Event 2.

Please explain why

Event 3.

Please explain why

COMMENTS:
Survey C.
Perceptions of Korean Younger Generation in South Korea

ID Number:
Date:

Part A. The first section of this survey will ask you basic background information.

1) Gender? Male / Female
2) Age? ____ Years of age

Part B. Section B will ask you two questions about your opinion.

Could you please name the three important Korean historical events over the past 100 years? Please explain why.

Event 1.

Please explain why

Event 2.

Please explain why

Event 3.
Please explain why

COMMENTS:
Survey D.

Perceptions of Korean Elder Generation in South Korea

ID Number:
Date:

Part A. The first section of this survey will ask you basic background information.

1) Gender?  Male / Female
2) Age?  ____ Years of age
3) How much formal education have you completed? Please circle on the correct response.
   None / Elementary school / Middle school / High school / University / Others (please explain):

B. Section B will ask you two questions about your opinion.

Could you please name the three events in Korean history over the past 100 years that seem to you especially important?

Event 1. (__________________________________________)

Please explain why
Event 2. (______________________________)

Please explain why

Event 3. (______________________________)

Please explain why

COMMENTS:
설문지 C.

서울에 거주하는 대학생 설문 조사

설문지 번호:
날짜:

I. 기본 개인정보

☐ 성별: 남 / 여

☐ 출생 년도: ______년

II. 설문지 두번째 항목은, 한국 역사에 대한 응답자의 의견을 묻는 것 입니다.

지난 100년 동안, 한국 역사에서 가장 중요하다고 생각하는 세가지 일 혹은 사건은 무엇입니까?

첫번 째:

중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇입니까?

두번 째:
중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇인가?

세번 째:

중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇인가?

<기타 의견>
설문지 D

서울에 거주하시는 어르신 설문 조사

설문지 번호:

날짜:

I. 기본 개인 정보

1. 성별: 남 / 여

2. 출생 년도: ______년

3. 최종 학력 (해당하시는 부분에 동그라미 해 주십시오.)

무학 / 초등학교 / 중학교 / 고등학교 / 대학교 /

기타(직업학교, 대학교 이상, 등등)

II. 한국 역사에 대한 의견

지난 100 년 동안, 한국 역사에서 가장 중요하다고 생각하는 세가지 일 혹은 사건은 무엇입니까?

첫번 째: 

108
중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇입니까?

두번 째:

중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇입니까?

세번 째:

중요하다고 생각하는 이유는 무엇입니까?

<기타 하시고 싶으신 말씀>