

Abstract

The aim of this bachelor's thesis is to analyze and evaluate the role of the student movement in the democratization process of the Republic of Korea. In the first part, after a thorough introduction of the current discourse in the fields of transitology and social movements, I focus on explaining the causes of the phenomenon of student movements at the vanguard of democratization processes based on two theories, Vanguard in a Vacuum and the crisis of historical subjectivity theory.

The second part attempts to supply necessary socio-cultural context and to point out important social changes beneficial to the democratization process. Finally, I attempt to illustrate the ideological shift inside the student movement in the aftermath of the Gwangju Uprising as a key factor in the success of the June Struggle.

Keywords

democratization, social movements, student movement, minjung, Gwangju