

# Program in Transnational Korean Studies Presents:

## The Structure of Protest Cycles: Contagion and Cohesion in South Korea's Democracy Movement

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In his seminal study of contentious politics, Sidney Tarrow conceptualized a social movement as constituting a series of protest cycles. While the concept of protest cycles has received much attention in the social movements literature, its empirical operationalization remains relatively crude compared to the rich theoretical discussion. Drawing on recent work on event structures, this paper operationalizes protest cycles as a population of interlinked events. We demonstrate the usefulness of considering a social movement as a protest event network with a novel dataset on South Korea's democracy movement. In our conceptualization the nodes of the network are protest events and links are coded as present if protestors cited a specific prior event as a source of inspiration for mobilizing. Appropriating strategies developed for network analysis we ascertain which events in Korea's democracy movement were more likely to solicit direct responses and which linked disparate event clusters. By identifying the characteristics of events that contribute to protest contagion and movement cohesion, we provide a better understanding of the structure of protest cycles in South Korea's democracy movement.

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**4:30pm – 6:00pm**

**HSS 4025**

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Paul Y. Chang is an assistant professor of sociology at Harvard University. His primary research interest is in South Korean social and political change. He is the author of *Protest Dialectics: State Repression and South Korea's Democracy Movement* (Stanford University Press 2015), and co-editor of *South Korean Social Movements: From Democracy to Civil Society* (Routledge 2011).