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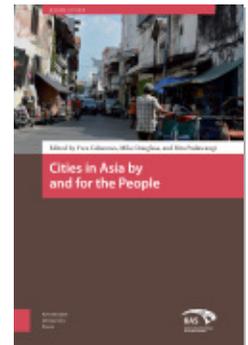
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12 Ethnic Place-Making in Cosmopolis

The Case of Yeonbeon Village in Seoul

Myung-rae Cho

Abstract

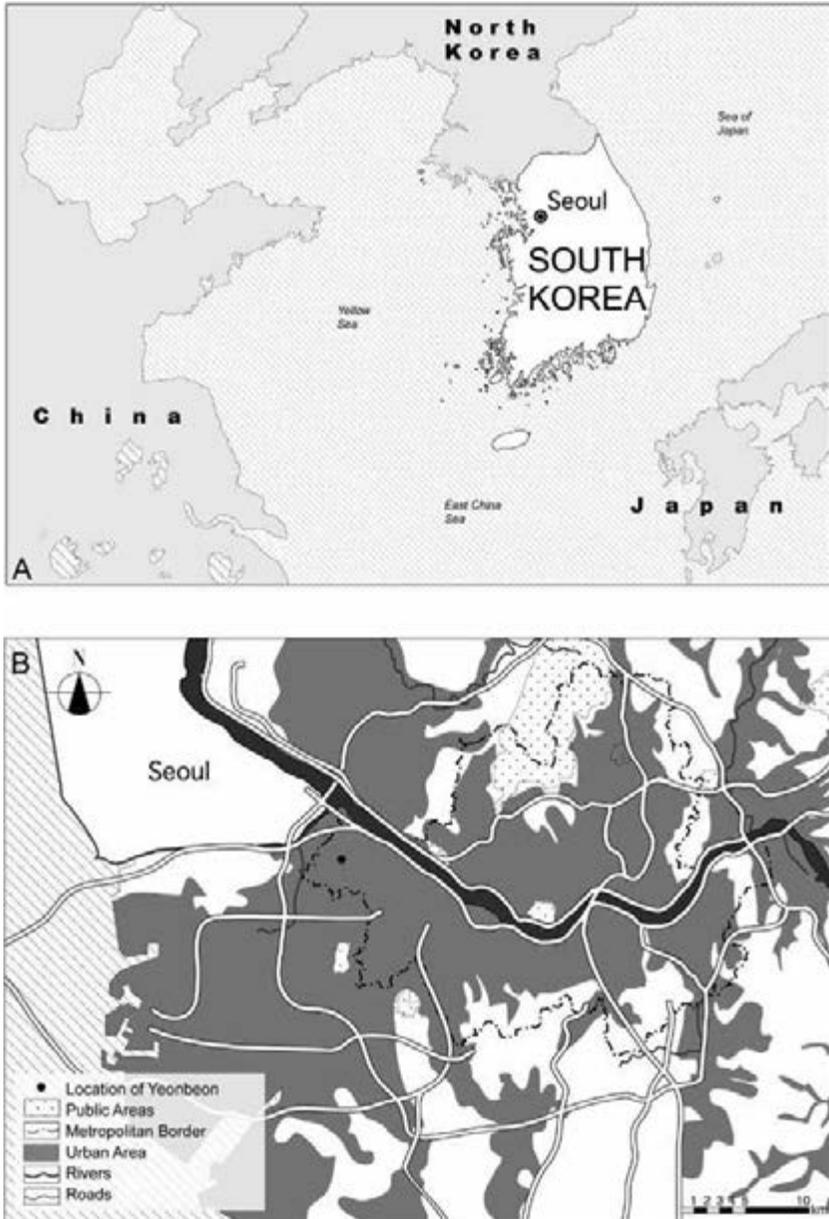
This chapter delves into how a Korean Chinese community called ‘Yeonbeon Village’ was formed as an ethnic enclave and has evolved into a transnational space in cosmopolitan Seoul. The chapter focuses on three analytical points. First, from the perspective of ‘place-making of the people’, it analyses how an ethnic space for Korean Chinese migrant workers came into being in globalizing Seoul. Second, from the view of ‘place-making by the people’, it examines how the place was built into a transnational community to accommodate the reproduction of everyday ethnic life. Finally, from the angle of ‘place-making for the people’, it examines how both citizen and non-citizen actors are engaged in constructing the public sphere of inclusive life in this transnational enclave.

Keywords: globalization, cosmopolis, migrant workers, global village, Yeonbeon

1. Introduction

Just like the South Korean economy, Seoul, its capital city, has undergone an astonishingly rapid globalization in the past three decades. In 2014, Seoul hosted 9.4 million overseas visitors from 200 countries, becoming the 13th most tourist-attracting city in the world (KBS 2016). The number of foreign registered residents in the city has also been increasing. As of December 2015, 457,806 foreign residents (including naturalized foreigners) reside in Seoul, accounting for 4.53 per cent of Seoul’s total population. This share is nine times bigger than the share in 1998 (0.49 per cent), when the Asian financial

Figure 12.1 Maps of (a) South Korea and (b) location of Yeonbeon in Seoul



Source: Ariel Shepherd

crisis broke out with a neoliberalist impact on the country's economy. The new influx of foreigners was mostly based on economic motives because Seoul's post-crisis development had increasingly become entrenched in economic globalization. In December 2015, 25.5 per cent of the registered foreign residents in Seoul were migrant workers. Another quarter (25.5 per cent) were overseas Koreans and migrant workers from China. Marriage migrants (10.1 per cent) and foreign students (7.1 per cent) were the next largest groups of foreigners (Ministry of Public Administration and Security 2015). In other words, approximately two-thirds of the foreign residents of Seoul have come for the sake of employment, business ventures, or for the pursuit of an easier economic life in the neo-liberal, globalized milieu. The locations of their residences in Seoul are chosen largely in accordance with their economic capability in the city's fragmented housing and employment market. For instance, foreign workers and businessmen—who mainly come from advanced countries—tend to reside in the central (CBD) and Southeastern (upper-class and service businesses) areas of Seoul, while migrant workers—who are mainly from China—and marriage migrants live in the Southwestern (lower-class and industrial businesses) area (see Cho 2015b for more detail). However, economics is not the only factor leading to the formation of these foreign residential enclaves which have made Seoul an ethnically diverse, global city.

With the influx of this foreign population, 30 places with concentrations of foreign dwellers, called 'mini global villages', have emerged across Seoul. Thus, Seoul is now attaining a new metropolitan character that goes beyond a globopolis—a place characterized by global neoliberalism that makes it exclusive, homogenous, and focussed on global consumption and the economy—to a cosmopolis: a place characterized by democratization and an increased role for the civil society in governance, which makes it an inclusive, diverse, and convivial space (Douglass 2008). Seoul's cosmopolitanism is expressed through a mosaic of diverse ethnic enclaves or foreign residential communities. Each enclave or community appears to be formed through the different reactions of incoming groups of foreigners to the conditions of urban housing and the employment market at the macro level (Cho 2015b). At the same time, they are also built by internalizing a different kind of social capital that allows the reproduction of ethnicity-based everyday lives at the micro level. Differences in the macro and micro processes of community building leads some of these global villages to be more inclusive than others (Cho 2015b). This is entirely dependent on whether individual and institutional actors—including foreign residents, local residents, municipal governments, and NGOs—make a concerted effort to create a public sphere of discursive engagement for inclusive life within their community.

Against this conceptual backdrop, this paper delves into how a Korean Chinese community called Yeonbeon Village was formed in Guro-gu, a typical working-class district, and evolved into a transitional space for Seoul as a cosmopolis. The paper focusses on three analytical points. First, from the perspective of 'place-making of the people', it analyses how an ethnic space for Korean Chinese migrant workers comes into being in globalizing Seoul. Second, from the view of 'place-making by the people', it examines how the place is built into a transnational community to accommodate the reproduction of everyday ethnic life. Finally, from the angle of 'place-making for the people', it examines how citizen and non-citizen actors are engaged in constructing a public sphere of discursive engagement for inclusive life in a transnational enclave. Much of the empirical information about the village is drawn from my field observations and interviews with community activists and Korean Chinese workers conducted in January 2013, May 2013, and December 2015.

2. Multi-Cultural Spaces in a Global City and Beyond¹

Underpinned by neoliberalism, contemporary globalization entails so-called bipolar migration flows: at one extreme are 'globalized professionals', whose lifestyles vary little from one country to another, and at the other are marginalized, poorly-skilled migrants who cannot afford to discard their ethnic lifestyles (Keyder and Öncü 1994). One consequence of their concentration in globally attractive cities is the fragmentation of the labour and housing markets, with the latter producing what Davis (1992, 206) calls 'a complex class, ethnic and land use mosaic' (Poulsen, Johnson, and Forrest 2002, 229).

The nature and extent of the fragmentation of cities along ethnic lines has occasioned much academic study, starting from the 1920s Chicago School. The existing explanation is that such fragmentation results from twin sorting processes, assimilation and ghettoization, that operate in multi-ethnic cities. Assimilation involves the initial spatial separation of ethnic groups, reflecting the combination of economic and cultural factors, with changes in both leading to the subsequent reduction of segregation and increased integration into the everyday social processes of the city. Ghettoization, on the other hand, combines economic disadvantages,

1 This and the following section are revised versions of Sections 2 and 3 of my previous paper (Cho 2015b).

which severely restrict the housing choices of the members of a particular group, with overt discrimination. This produces extreme spatial segregation combined with social deprivation (Poulsen, Johnson, and Forrest 2002, 230).

This view has only limited applicability for explaining the cultural diversity and ethnic pluralism in the contemporary global cities that attract diverse groups of people from all over the world, either short-term—such as migrant workers and students—or longer-term residents—such as marriage migrants. While mechanisms of discrimination are at work either implicitly or explicitly, some ethnic people or groups also choose to stay in relatively exclusive residential areas in order to retain their cultural identity. For them, assimilation entails forceful acceptance of the national narratives of the host country, denying them the right to the city as non-citizen residents or minority citizens. The mutual recognition of cultural difference is much more appreciated than assimilation or the overcoming of ghettoization. Adding to this tendency is the pluralism of urban families that have many foreign members or members living in other countries due to international marriages.

Contemporary global cities are encountering an increasing need for new types of space that can accommodate differences based on the region of origin, ethnic identity, income, and other attributes of residents. This is ascertained by the tendency of globalizing urban societies to change into a mosaic of culturally diverse spaces. However, a multicultural space within a city is shaped and is functioning differently from one to another. As the locus of the interplay between globalization and localization, multicultural spaces have received various names: transnational spaces, ethnic enclaves, ethnic places/communities, the third space, hybrid spaces, post-colonial spaces, in-between spaces, interstitial spaces, and the like. This varied naming begs the question of how multicultural spaces should be defined, and from what perspective.

There are several competing theoretical interpretations of multicultural spaces that emerge in the process of urban globalization. Multiculturalism emphasizes the spatial co-existence of diverse ethnic cultures—especially between indigenous residents and immigrant residents—in an urban society nested within a nation-state. Post-colonialism brings to light the role of these spaces as a ‘third’ or ‘hybrid’ space of culture or value-orientation that lies in-between the West (the colonizers) and the Other (the colonized) within a global city. Transnationalism gives prominence to the space of transnational actors and how their culture flows and is shared across country boundaries. Cosmopolitanism highlights the deeper change of global cities to accommodate the socially equitable and inclusive living of citizen and non-citizen residents through renewed urban democracy and governance.

Of these theoretical viewpoints, cosmopolitanism best describes the future of cities in which multi-cultural spaces develop into a spatial polity of mutual aid and equitable accommodation among residents, who imprint their own identities in the urban landscape (Douglass 2008, 3). Considering that roots for the reproduction of everyday subsistence are now being established transnationally by a great number of people from all over the world, the idea of a city worth living in that celebrates its cultural diversity is what Douglass (2008) calls a 'cosmopolis'. This implies that cosmopolitanism should be realized through the multicultural space of the global city. How can a multicultural space be a theatre of inclusive social life in a city (cosmopolis)? The nature of such cosmopolitan space should be examined from an entangled perspective combining three dimensions of people-centred place-making: place-making of the people, by the people, and for the people.

3 Global Seoul in Transition and Progressive Place-Making

The developmental state and its city in Korea began to experience formidable changes in the 1980s (Douglass 2008, 5-6). Major changes began to take hold along two lines: the ascendancy of the neo-liberal state's role in the planning of the economy; and political reforms towards civic and local democracy. These reforms have given rise to two modes of producing urban space after the developmental city: one, a neo-developmental city evolving into a globopolis, and the other, a convivial city leading to cosmopolis (see Figure 2).

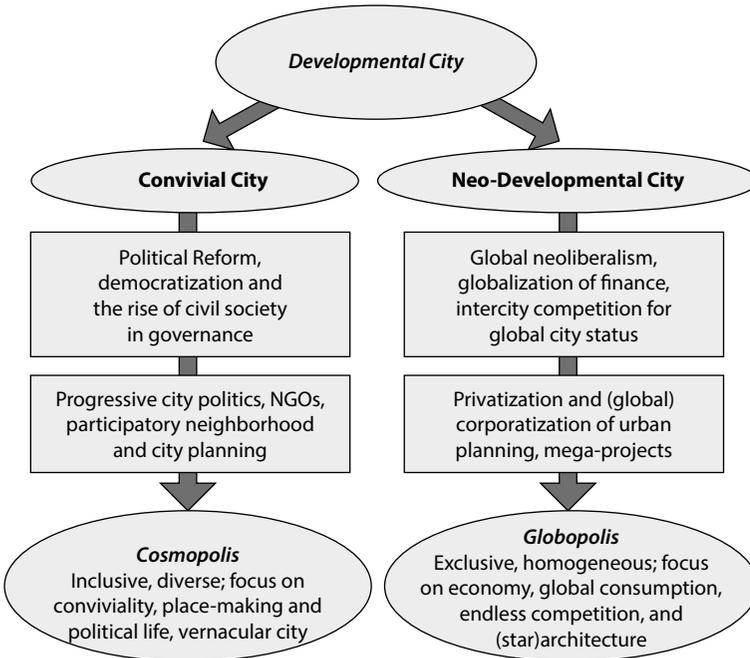
Post-crisis² Seoul's tendencies have been towards the preponderance of a neo-liberal globopolis over a convivial cosmopolis. Some key characteristics of a neo-liberal globopolis are: private, commodified space; global imaginaries; corporate-led, mega-scale, and economically competitive. Missing from this city are unscripted public and civic spaces, place-making by residents and neighbourhoods, vernacular architecture, low-income populations, and participatory planning (Douglass 2008, 72).

A dramatic shift in the course of this city-making occurred with the election of a civic activist, Park Won-soon, as the mayor of Seoul in the 2011 by-election.³ The result of this election was motivated by a debate about whether

2 This refers to the 1998 financial crisis that swept East Asian developing countries.

3 The conservative then-mayor of Seoul reacted to the progressive fraction's (opposition party and civil society) demand for general free school meals by offering a referendum vote. He stated that would resign if a majority of citizens supported the demand. The vote turned out to be against him, and his resignation led to the election of the progressive candidate Park Won-soon, Korea's first civic activist and former human-rights lawyer mayor.

Figure 12.2 After the developmental city – two modes of urban space production



Source: author, following Douglass 2009, 68

to provide free school meals—a debate that was just the tip of the iceberg of the nation-wide public debate between conservatives and progressives about universal welfare. Rising with a diversity of grassroots mobilizations, Mayor Park brought the imperatives of the civil society movement into the government and made two landmark changes to the municipal administration. One is the substitution of people-centred living welfare agendas in place of economy-centred development agendas; the other is the replacement of bureaucratic governance tinted with ‘statism’ with democratic governance based on ‘civicism’. The former is epitomized by ‘agenda innovation’, with the latter typified by ‘governance innovation’ (Cho 2014).

These changes have brought about an array of reform policies that prioritize human flourishing over economic growth, people prosperity over place prosperity, welfare provision over mega development, and democratic governance over bureaucratic governance. Formulated with the principles (e.g., participation, civic empowerment, association) of civil society, these policy experiments, in aggregate, have brought a dramatic change to the process of Seoul’s city-making. This change also halted the neoliberal globopolis mode of city-making that had

Table 12.1 Globopolis versus Cosmopolis

Dimension	Globopolis	Cosmopolis
Orientation	High global city status to enhance economic competition	Inclusive, convivial, diverse, multicultural city
Drivers	Economic profit, raising material production and consumption	Associational life, identity, place-making, tolerance, accommodation.
View of the City	Composed of private spheres of production and consumption, economic engine, cultural economy, fixed, functional division of urban space	<i>Civitas</i> , a public sphere, with an active civil society; heteropolis, negotiable meanings and uses of urban space.
Foreigners/non-citizens	Disposable labor; never to become residents or citizens	Full human beings with the right to the city, family life and equivalents of citizenship
Public/common space	Limited, pseudo-public, controlled, ornamental, iconic global architecture	Plentiful, inclusive, flexible, site of local place-making
Scale of urban projects	Mega	Human
Urban Planning	Top-down government-corporate partnerships	Participatory/citizen-government partnerships/local business
Governance	Corporate management of privatized urban spaces with some state regulation	Citizen-government engagement in policy making, planning, implementation, monitoring
Citizenship	Reserved for majority ethnic group and contained by the nation-state	Open to all who live in the city, multiple levels of citizenship.

Source: Author after Douglass, 2009, p.73

predominated during the previous decade, during the tenures of Mayors Lee Myung-bak (2002-2006) and Oh Se-hoon (2006-2011). These two conservative mayors were enthusiastic about mega projects, such as the Han River plans and Cheonggyecheon restoration, for making Seoul a globopolis of world status, and less concerned about the living conditions of the people.

The cornerstone of the urban transformation unleashed by Mayor Park was bringing people back into the centre. Asserting that Seoul should be reoriented towards a 'people-centred city'—the Korean variant of a progressive city—, Mayor Park pulled the plug on the mega-development projects that were financially in trouble or had insufficient public support. Once clear of the neo-developmental mode of city-making, the mayor engaged the people in a dialogue about the city, and especially their right to it. The

results of this dialogue include the 2030 Seoul Plan, Participatory Budgeting, and the Seoul Welfare Minimum, all of which were created through the initiative of the citizens. Mayor Park has gone further to reorganize the social and spatial structure of global Seoul based on communities and the social economy. In September 2012, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) put forward an ambitious plan to form 975 village communities by 2017, together with the supply of 3180 community builders. It also proclaimed that it would help citizens create 8000 cooperative organizations over the next ten years, which would produce 5 per cent of Seoul's Gross Regional Domestic Product (Cho 2014). In May 2013, the metropolitan government released a plan to form 13 multicultural villages and establish seven global village centres to provide a helping hand to foreign residents. This plan is geared towards enhancing the inclusion of non-citizen residents in the public life of the increasingly multicultural city of Seoul.

The thrust of this progressive city-making is revisiting the right of people to be principal agents in the construction of their own space, both socially and physically. It targets the revival of human flourishing in a corporate and alienating mega city through civil society mobilization. In an increasingly multi-cultural world, inclusiveness is a critical constituent of progressive city-making. Tenants, lower-class families, the elderly, youth, and migrant workers are chosen as the target groups for urban inclusiveness. With this progressive urban reform, the neoliberal globopolis of Seoul is shifting towards becoming a convivial cosmopolis (Cho 2015a). However, exactly how to localize these cosmopolitan ideals is yet to be determined. Place-making by non-citizen residents is one of the test cases for such a progressive urban experiment.

4 Yeonbeon Village: Korean Chinese Place-Making

4.1 Ethnic Enclaves in Seoul: Spaces of Urban Globalization

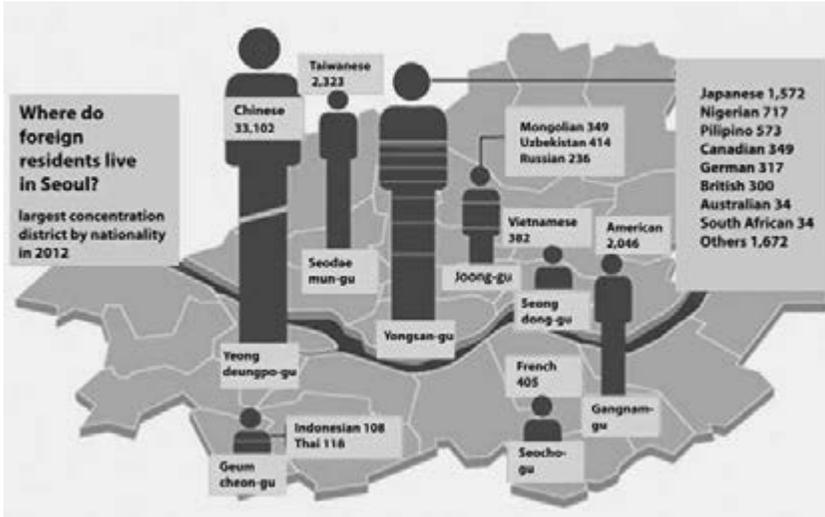
As stated in the beginning of this paper, the population of foreign residents of Seoul reached 457,806 individuals in December 2015, accounting for 26.3 per cent of the total foreign population (1,741,919) of Korea and 4.53 per cent of Seoul's total population (10,103,233) (Ministry of Public Administration and Security 2015). Even though they are still a small fraction of the overall population, foreign residents or non-majority ethnic groups are quickly growing in number, with a significant effect on Korean society that had remained ethnically homogeneous until at least the late 1990s (Park et al. 2009). Some ethnic groups are more concentrated in some places than

others, and these groups more easily form ethnic communities where their identity is distinctively expressed in the landscape of the place. In Seoul, there are currently 30 ethnic enclaves called 'mini global villages'.⁴

The formation of global villages in Seoul reveals the way that the Korean economy has globalized over the last few decades. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Korean industrial economy began to take its current shape with the aid of capital and high technologies sourced from advanced countries. This involved the inflow of professional and skilled personnel, who mostly worked for multinational corporations and related international organizations. These foreign employees resided near the inner city of Seoul to use the high-level cultural and residential facilities like international schools and mansions. By the 1990s, the Korean economy was faced with an increasing shortage of labour, which resulted in the opening of the labour market to a foreign workforce. This policy change led poorly-skilled workers from Asian developing countries to come in great numbers and fill the low-end urban labour market. They settled down around the deserted industrial zones on the outskirts of Seoul, where cheap accommodation was available after the Korean workers left. The pattern of the concentration of different groups of foreigners in Seoul fits with the urban ecological fragmentation forged by the bipolar migration flow of globalized professionals and marginalized, poorly-skilled migrants. Globalized professionals carry with them a global high-culture lifestyle that does not vary much between nationalities, but peripheral low-paid labourers tend to adhere to their own ethnic lifestyles. This bipolar labour flow interacts with the labour and housing markets of the recipient global city to create a 'complex class, ethnic and land use mosaic' on the urban space. The global villages emerging in Seoul form a multicultural spatial mosaic upon which each ethnic group engraves its own distinct sense of lived place through the articulation of the global bi-polar labour flow with the labour and housing market of Seoul.

These two contrasting ways of ethnic place-making are typified by two representative ethnic communities in Seoul, Seorae Village and Yeonbeon Village (see Cho 2015b for more detail). The former is a French community for globalized professionals or skilled workers located in the southern middle-class residential area of Seoul; the latter is a Korean Chinese community for peripheral un-skilled migrants located in the southwestern working-class residential area. Each ethnic community has a different spatial-historical background and a different capacity for place-making in

4 In this paper, the term 'global village' is used interchangeably with the term 'multicultural village or space'.

Figure 12.3 Distribution of foreign residents by nationality (2011)

Source: author

relation to the foreign residents' host community. Due to their reciprocal integration with mainstream urban processes, the community life of the French residents tends to be more inclusive than that of the Korean Chinese residents, although both communities are supported by the SMG. On the other hand, the more isolated Yeonbeon villagers (Korean Chinese) are more engaged in making their space into a lived multicultural place, and have in fact formed a public sphere to claim residents' right to the city with the help of civil society and governmental actors. This place-making is part of Seoul's shift from globopolis to cosmopolis due to progressive urban governance.

4.2 Confluence of the Labour and Housing Markets for Korean Chinese Workers

Yeonbeon (*Yanbian* in Chinese) is the name of a town in northern China that is a central locus of the community of about two million Korean people in China.⁵ Seoul's Yeonbeon Village is named after this town because of

5 The population of Koreans in China, the Korean Chinese, include millions of descendants of Korean immigrants with citizenship of the People's Republic of China, as well as smaller groups of South and North Korean expatriates, with a total of roughly 2.3 million people as of 2009, making it the largest ethnic Korean population living outside the Korean Peninsula. They are

similarities between the two streetscapes. The village is located in Garibong-dong ('division'), Guro-gu ('district'), which was the site of Korea's earliest export-oriented industrial parks built in the 1960s. After the Korea-China Diplomatic Normalization in 1992, this area quickly changed into a place for Korean Chinese migrant workers to concentrate and then disperse all over Seoul and beyond. Now Garibong-dong and its neighbouring areas are inhabited by about 30,000 Korean Chinese migrants. The Korean Chinese habitations stretch across several districts (wards), including Guro-gu, Geumcheon-gu, Yeongdonpo-gu, and Gwanack-gu, which are mostly low-income, working-class areas with relatively cheap houses and good access to public transportation. Among the eight Korean Chinese enclaves⁶ in Seoul, Garibong-dong, nicknamed 'Yeonbeon Village', is the earliest settlement of Korean Chinese migrant workers as well as a place of entry for their ensuing chain migration arranged through community networks. As of 2012, Korean Chinese made up 43 per cent of the Garibong-dong population (23,204). They are concentrated in narrow, dilapidated dwellings scattered along the streets of the Garibong traditional market.

The Korean Chinese are ethnically Korean but of Chinese nationality. Called *Chosonjok* ('Choson tribe'), they are mostly the second- or third-generation offspring of the Koreans who were forced to immigrate to Manchuria (in Northern China) during the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945). They live in China as a minority, but since the implementation of Deng Xiaoping's opening policy in the 1980s they are allowed to go abroad to earn money. A majority (650,000) of the migrating Korean Chinese came to Korea with the 'Korean Dream'. Their migration to Korea was motivated by mixed reasons of finding a job overseas and visiting their grandparents' homeland. However, their dual identity as Korean Chinese renders their status precarious, as they are sometimes treated as fellow countryman and sometimes as foreign labourers. This duality is reflected in their employment status, which is different from that of other foreign migrant workers: Korean Chinese workers are permitted to visit Korea with a visiting employment visa, while other foreign workers are granted a work

called Chaoxianzu (Chinese: 朝鲜族) in Chinese or Chosonjok (Korean: 조선족, Choson is the name of Korea's last dynasty in 1392-1910) in Korean, who form one of the 56 ethnicities officially recognized by the Chinese government. Most of them live in Northeast China, especially in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, which had 854,000 ethnic Koreans living there as of 2000 (Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koreans_in_China).

6 These eight enclaves include Singil-dong Chinatown, Daerim-dong Chinatown, Guro-dong Chinatown, Garibong-dong Yeonbeon Street (or Village), Docksan-dong Chinatown, Bongcheon-dong Chinatown, Sindaebang-dong Chinatown, and Jayang-dong Lamb Brochette Street.

permit visa that only allows them to work in strictly restricted areas of employment. Korean Chinese workers can work in 38 employment areas, such as daily construction work, restaurant services, domestic services, patient care, and the like. These jobs are typical of so-called '3D' (dirty, dangerous and difficult) jobs, which most Korean workers abhor and avoid. Since the early 1990s, the Korean government's policy of importing foreign labourers has allowed a plethora of foreign migrant workers to flow into the country and occupy the marginalized, low-paid segment of the labour market that the local Korean workers had abandoned. Korean Chinese workers are typical examples of the marginalized, poorly skilled workers migrating along the lower circuit of global labour flows. Mostly middle aged (40s-50s) and conversant in the Korean language, they easily get precarious, low-paid jobs in personal services businesses in the inner city of Seoul; other foreign migrant labourers tend to work in manufacturing jobs on the outskirts or outside of Seoul.⁷ In the urban labour market, however, the Korean Chinese are called '*Chosonjok* labourers' and are treated the same as other foreign workers. As a reservoir of cheap and disposable labour, they contribute to keeping the low-wage segment of the urban economy viable. After the expiration of their visas (usually after 5 years), they either go back to China and then return with a new visa or illegally stay until the Korean government lifts the measures of crackdown on them. Yeonbeon Village provides them with the chance to either find jobs in the street recruitment market or hide their illegal overstay with the help of fellow residents.

A practical reason for the settlement of the Korean Chinese in Yeonbeon Village is the availability of cheap accommodation and the suitability of the living environment to their low-cost living in Seoul. Seventy per cent of Korean Chinese residents live in *Beol-Jip* ('bee houses'), a complex of small box-like rooms that resemble a beehive. Some houses in the village have more than 20 rooms. This kind of housing appeared during the 1960s and 1970s, when young Korean workers from rural areas started to live together near industrial parks to save on living expenses. After the factories closed, the 'beehive house village' in Garibong-dong was mostly deserted for a long time, though it was occupied by runaway youngsters and the homeless. It became a cause of local residents' economic hardship and the rapid downturn of the local economy.

7 45 per cent of migrant workers (mainly Korean Chinese) with visitors' visas reside in Seoul, whereas 65 per cent of migrant workers with employment visas work in small- and medium-sized cities outside Seoul.

This situation began to reverse after the reestablishment of the Korea-China diplomatic relationship in 1992, when Chinese Koreans came and filled in the places that Korean workers had left. Low-income house owners and local shopkeepers alike welcomed the Korean Chinese and the rejuvenation of the local economy, particularly the Garibong-dong traditional market. Entering the lowest segment of the housing market in Seoul, Korean Chinese workers gradually made Garibong-dong their ethnic enclave⁸ through their reciprocal relationship with the local Korean residents based on a feeling of brotherhood. This reciprocity developed into a collective effort toward place-making to some extent, in that the Garibong-dong area absorbed increasingly more *Chosonjok* and Chinese migrant workers and rose to become one of Seoul's 'Chosonjok Towns'.

Mainland Chinese are also an important group of foreign migrant workers. Chinese workers residing in Yeonbeon Village are known to be 20 per cent of foreign workers holding a Chinese passport. They tend to congregate around Yeonbeon Village to live close to the Chinese-speaking Korean Chinese workers. The addition of mainland Chinese workers further consolidates Yeonbeon Village as a Chinese enclave. Yet its current feature as an ethnic enclave began to appear with the entry of Korean Chinese workers in large numbers after the Korean government permitted Korean Chinese over-stayers to readjust their qualification for continued stay before the 2002 World Cup Game in Seoul. However, the form of cheap housing called Beol-Jip can be well kept even by now, paradoxically, due to the housing redevelopment introduced to the area which commenced in 2003 and was cancelled in 2014. With redevelopment planning in effect, no architectural act is allowed, leading to leaving the area physically isolated. In the meantime, this physical condition works as an important reason for some well-off Korean Chinese to get dispersed to more liveable neighbourhoods nearby or away.

4.3 Yeonbeon Village as the Space of Ethnic Everyday Life

In the survey conducted by Seong-hoon Bhang and Soo-hyeon Kim (2012), 75.5 per cent of the Korean Chinese survey respondents in the village were reported to have come directly to Garibong-dong after their arrival in Korea. When asked why they came to the village, 27.1 per cent answered 'cheap accommodation', 25.7 per cent responded 'local job availability', and 22.9 per cent replied 'acquaintance ties'. Together, these reasons underpin the making of Garibong-dong into a Korean Chinese ethnic place to accommodate

8 In Korea, ethnic enclaves of this kind are formally called 'multicultural spaces'.

the spatial reproduction of ethnic everyday life. *Beol-Jip*, as the ‘cheap and easy residence’, accounts most critically for the continued inflow of Korean Chinese migrant workers. A single room in these beehive houses costs them about US\$ 100-150 per month; with US\$ 1000-2000 for their monthly income, they could not but live in such cheap rental accommodations.

This low residential cost is critical to lowering not only the first cost of emigration, but also residents’ living expenses in the host country. Beehive housing also suits the collective form of their everyday lives as single migrant workers without family companionship. Most new arrivals turn up at the village with information provided by earlier settlers from the same hometown or family. Though living alone, Korean Chinese residents are closely associated through various personal and social ties, especially in the form of this condensed residence. Building and sustaining these place-based ties are a crucial way of making the place into an ethnic enclave.

In addition to residential convenience and social networks, the availability of jobs is another reason for Korean Chinese migrant workers to congregate in or near the village. 78.4 per cent of the residents are known to be engaged in precarious daily labouring (Ji 2014, 266), which requires them to find new jobs every day or week. Daily recruitment markets are held near the Nam Guro subway station every day at dawn, where head hunters recruit 280 people on average every day during the summer⁹ (Ji 2014). In addition, almost 200 labour-hiring or exchange offices are concentrated along the roads to the station. These job providers constitute the largest network of employment for Korean Chinese workers in Korea.

Many Chinese-run shops and agencies also provide diverse employment-related services—such as legal and financial support—for Korean Chinese workers in Seoul. In the early stage of village formation, Chinese-run restaurants played the role of informal service agents arranging housing, visa renewal, and job searches for Chinese migrants, including both Korean Chinese and Mainland Chinese workers. Now the village itself functions as a place-based network of employment for the Korean Chinese that also draws Mainland Chinese job seekers into the village.

In this way, the village provides a socio-spatial arrangement for low-paid Korean Chinese workers to solve their housing problems as well as find jobs through place-rooted relational networks such as personal ties, the street recruitment market, and job service agencies. The Nam Guro subway station is a gateway through which Korean Chinese workers can commute

9 It now recruits 1000 labourers every day, and is one of the largest street head hunting markets in Korea.

cheaply to all locations in Seoul—and even to workplaces outside of Seoul. Some Korean Chinese work in the provinces on weekdays and return to the village on weekends. For them, Yeonbeon Village is not merely a site of cheap housing, but instead a transplanted hometown where they can live together and help each other as an ethnic population in the globalizing metropolis of Seoul.

Through place-based interpersonal networks, Korean Chinese settlers invite their friends (including the Mainland Chinese) and families to come to Korea and stay with them until they move to other places. Even illegal over-stayers can hide from the authorities and find work with the help of their fellow countrymen or local Korean residents. Korean Chinese's place-making of Garibong-dong is thus a way to cope with their precarious and second-class-citizen status in the housing and labour market of Seoul. In this regard, the village is a space created by them as well as for them.

Their everyday living in the village is rather simple and was not very sociable until recently. Half of the Korean Chinese workers in the village came alone and only for the purpose of earning money to send to their family in China. Without family companionship, they keep their everyday life as cheap and humble as they can. Living in the village is the most suitable means to this end. In the early morning they go out for work; on the way home, they drop into the open market to buy cheap Chinese food, cook it at home, and then go to sleep. This pattern of everyday life is almost identical for all of the single Korean Chinese residents. They spend their leisure time at home or meet their fellow workers in the streets or drinking at bars after work or on weekends. Recently, however, with rising incomes and the increasing number of family members or friends residing together, an increasing number of Korean Chinese residents have become interested in consuming Chinese identity-related commodities as a way of pursuing an enhanced social life in Seoul. This includes eating cheap Chinese foods, drinking and singing together, gambling, chatting and drinking tea, watching movies in the theatre, shopping, job training, and educating their children.

The collective desire of Korean Chinese residents has transformed the Garibong traditional market, initially established for Korean workers, into a bustling folk market for *Chosonjok* and Chinese settlers. The main streets to the market are now full of Chinese commercial outlets, such as Chinese restaurants, Chinese grocery stores, money exchanges, travel agents, recruitment centres, karaoke, gambling rooms, and PC (personal computer) rooms, all targeted at Chinese customers living in Garibong-dong. This indicates that Garibong-dong has undergone a rapid change from the earlier collective

residence of Korean Chinese migrants into an economic centre for Korean Chinese commercial businesses operating locally and transnationally.

From the mid-1990s, petty businesses began to appear to sell cheap Chinese food and groceries to the single Chinese workers. Chinese restaurants were opened by *Chosonjok* women who rented and operated them alone, while Chinese grocery stores were run by local Korean merchants who sold imported Chinese food stuffs alongside Korean commodities. These stores were later taken over by the Korean Chinese. In 2002, when the Korean government provided a grace period to Korean Chinese over-stayers until March 2003, Garibong-dong rapidly became crowded with Korean Chinese workers, stimulating a commercial boom in the village. This brought new opportunities for some Korean Chinese to launch various business ventures related to China and Korean Chinese workers. New entrepreneurs engaging in Chinese commercial businesses were diverse and included Chinese females married to Koreans, Korean Chinese workers with savings, Chinese business immigrants, and naturalized Chinese Koreans.

Between 2003 and 2006, the Chinese market in the village shrank due to the Korean Government's crackdown on illegal over-stayers. With the housing redevelopment of the area decided in 2003, many residents of Garibong-dong began to move into neighbouring districts like Daerim-dong to find more stable residences, and even into new residential areas like Jayang-dong north of the Han River, where they launched new Chinese businesses. After 2006, many Korean Chinese workers who had gone back to China returned to Seoul with renewed visas and their family members (wives and children): a special visa for overseas Koreans had been introduced. This led to the further boom and extension of the Chinese market in the village. Bang and Kim (2012) reported that there were 137 commercial outlets related to China in Garibong-dong, including: 17 karaokes, 16 grocery stores, 12 bars and tearooms, 10 travel agencies, 10 clothing and miscellaneous stores, and 2 currency exchanges. More than 60 per cent of these commercial establishments were either rented or owned by Korean Chinese. Chinese businesses in the village now attract various types of investment capital, such as the accumulated capital of Korean Chinese workers, venture capital of Korean-Chinese joint investors, and even capital directly from China. Chinese investment also reaches into the housing properties around the village.

Through these kinds of economic activities around the village, Korean Chinese residents are in one way or another engaged in making the place into a transnational space that reflects their diasporic identity. Though ethnically Korean, most of them identify as Chinese. A survey from 2010

shows that Korean Chinese residents believe that speaking the Korean language does not necessarily mean that they are the same ethnicity as the local Koreans (Park et al. 2010, 91). More precisely, Korean Chinese settlers in Korea have a hybrid identity flowing across two national spaces, Korea and China; making their area of residence into a transnational commercial space is a way of maintaining their ethnic identity. Chinese commercial outlets along the village streets are therefore a sort of spatial apparatus to assist with the cheap reproduction of Chinese Koreans' day-to-day living based on their hybrid identity.

Along with the reproduction of the Chinese identity in the neighbourhood, the main street of Garibong-dong has been designed to resemble a city with the same name in north China, with a fake Chinese streetscape as a result of the concentration of many commercial outlets with Chinese codes. This zone of the social reproduction of Korean Chinese residents is relatively secluded or disassociated from the mainstream everyday life of Korean residents in the village. Now, after Yeonbeon Village has been advertised by the mass media as a global village typical of Seoul, many Korean citizens visit to experience Chinese culture in a roundabout way. The village has therefore emerged as a multicultural tourist place in Seoul, as well as a transnational space expressing Korean Chinese identity.

4.4 Yeonbeon Village as a Public Sphere for Non-Citizens

As a former living area for factory workers, Garibong-dong is notorious for its concentration of low-income residents and its deteriorated residential environment. There are no public parks or public service facilities such as welfare or cultural centres in or around the village. The lack of public space in this area is such a chronic problem of urban planning that it affects both Korean and Chinese Korean residents alike. To relieve this planning deficiency, this area was designated in 2003 as a planning zone for clearance-based housing redevelopment due by 2014. This has been an excuse for the public authority to avoid its responsibility for the failure to provide public facilities to improve the lives of residents. Paradoxically, however, the retained environmental degradation has in effect created a ghetto, forming a Korean Chinese enclave immune to the interference of urban market mechanisms.

Yeonbeon Village's creation as a Korean Chinese enclave is due to both the residential conditions that are favourable to the settlement of socially weak, poor immigrants and the network of migrant residents who induce the inflow of their fellow countrymen and relatives from China or within

Korea. Relationships between friends and relatives are known to function as the most important network for Korean Chinese migrants to obtain information on and mutual help with their employment and economic activities as migrant labourers and to organize social engagements such as family parties, folk festivals, and even gambling. Even Mafia organizations connected to mainland China have appeared in the area, fighting over the criminal market.

From the earliest stages of the formation of the settlement, the Korean Chinese migrants have formed various organizations to protect their rights and interests as non-citizens. These include: the Chinese Workers Association, for protecting their rights as migrant labourers (1996); the Chosonjok Federation, for the amendment of the Overseas Korean Act (2002); the Korea-Based Chosonjok Students Association, for extending the human resource network and solidarity of the Korean Chinese (2003); and the online Grand Assembly of the Korean Chinese Residing in Korea, for sharing and promoting information about the Korean Chinese diaspora (2003). In 2006, the Federation of Korean Returnees was formed to help with the settlement of overseas returnees. In 2009, the Federation of the Overseas Koreans in Korea was established to promote the civic status of naturalized and non-naturalized Korean Chinese residing in Korea. In 2010, the China Federation Assembly was set up to protect and promote the rights of Chinese workers in Korea. In 2012, the Federation of Korean Chinese Voters was instituted to obtain the right to vote in elections as Korean citizens, and the Korean Chinese Business Club was created to promote cooperation and exchange among Korean Chinese businesspersons in Seoul.

These organizations are targeted at promoting the civic rights of the Korean Chinese population as non-citizens in Korea, and are mostly headquartered in or around the district of Guro-gu where Yeonbeon Village is located. Among these, the Federation of Korean Returnees has its most active local chapter in Garibong-dong, mainly composed of local Korean Chinese merchants. The chapter runs a shelter for the Korean Chinese homeless as well as a centre to arrange services for migrant workers' immigration, job finding, recruitment, and business advertising. Korean Chinese residents also form neighbourhood organizations to arrange social activities for community solidarity such as sports, folk festivals, and patrol. All of these associational activities weave together the networks among Korean Chinese workers to build social capital that is embedded in the village. Through these community-based actions, Korean Chinese settlers could open a public sphere for communication and cooperation among themselves in their residential area where there is no public space.

Yet, this public sphere could not be possible without the active engagement of Korean NGOs protecting and advocating for the human rights and dignity of Korean Chinese migrant workers as foreign labourers as well as fellow Koreans. Churches were the earliest activists to enter Yeonbeon Village to help *Chosonjok* migrant workers from a religious and humanitarian standpoint. The Chinese Korean Church was the first to set up in Garibong-dong in 1996, followed by the Korea-China Adoration Church (1998) and the Seoul Chosonjok Church (1999). These churches ran various community programs offering legal consultations, arrangements for shelter, and medical services in parallel with religious activities. Seoul Chosonjok Church published the 'North East Newspaper' to circulate news about the Korean Chinese. The Korean Chinese House opened by Reverend Kim Hae-seong in 2001 has been a model organization providing humanitarian and institutional assistance to Korean Chinese migrant workers in need. Many Korean NGOs have followed suit.

A typical case is the Korea Chinese Town Center set up by a community activist in 2003. This centre publishes a newspaper called Korean Chinese Town News and provides comprehensive services for Korean Chinese residents, covering labour issues, immigration, legal disputes, business, and travel. Korea's leading global NGOs such as Global Sharing also have branch organizations in or near Garibong-dong. Global Sharing runs voluntary service programs to protect and advocate for the human rights of foreign workers according to global standards. It also operates the Foreign Worker Service Center with a commission from the government. Medical NGOs worked together to open the Migrant Worker Medical Center in Garibong-dong in 2004. Human rights NGOs such as Aid to the Korean Chinese and Regaining Chinese Korean Rights are directly engaged in protecting and solving foreign workers' rights and interests that are likely to be encroached upon in a competitive urban society.

Many Korean Chinese workers suffer from livelihood challenges such as housing, legal disputes, employment, health problems, monetary hardship, and cultural distress, all related to their second-class-citizen status in Korea. The NGOs' voluntary activities fill the empty place of public service provisions that are supposedly the responsibility of the public authority. More importantly, the NGOs have brought the issues of non-citizen workers into the realm of civil society and made them a subject of public debate in cooperation with Korean Chinese organizations. This has led municipal governments to take action to protect foreign residents in globalizing Seoul.

In June 2013, the SMG opened Seoul Global Center, a headquarters that coordinates and controls the 42 agencies and organizations dealing with

foreign resident affairs all over Seoul. South-West Global Village Center has recently opened as a branch office to provide public services for the multicultural families in this region, which includes Garibong-dong. As a partnership organization, the Center runs a variety of programs such as language learning, job training, legal advice, cultural learning, children's education, and medical care through the participation of the foreign residents. In cooperation with Korean residents, foreign (multicultural) residents are allowed to apply for a research grant to make a policy proposal for improving foreign residents' rights to the city. Children's education is the priority concern of multicultural families in this area, and this issue has been solved through a multi-layered arrangement among the Center, District Governments, Education Offices, and schools. In this arrangement, the district governments take increasingly more active roles in protecting and treating multicultural families as empowered members of the globalizing city. For instance, the District Government of Guro-gu has set up a commission consisting of local politicians, NGOs, foreign workers, employers, and residents to include their initiatives in local multicultural policy-making.

More positive and rigorous actions have also happened at the level of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG). At the end of 2012, Mayor Park had a first-ever town-hall meeting with about 100 Chinese Korean residents, where the participants mentioned a variety of problems related to their everyday suffering in Seoul, such as limited access to public housing, a lack of public places for gathering, and a lack of schools for Chinese Korean children. In the meeting, Mayor Park promised that the Chosonjok Center (*Chosonjok* self-governance centre) would be established to help enhance the social status of Chinese Koreans, for they were just as human as their fellow Koreans. In 2014, with the financial support of the SMG, the district government purchased a building for conversion into the Chosonjok Center in Garibong-dong. In the same year, the SMG decided to cancel the planned demolition of Garibong-dong for housing redevelopment with eviction and instead apply a preservation-based village-making method to the area, thereby improving it and making it into a cosmopolitan village. With this change, foreign residents, whether tenants or property owners, were officially invited as stakeholders in the planning process of village-making—thereby showing inclusiveness, one sign of a cosmopolis. This was a symbolic action indicating that the SMG recognizes non-citizens' rights to the city in the institution of urban planning. At the end of 2015, Mayor Park invited representatives of the foreign residents in Seoul to his office for a full consultation on the SMG's multicultural administration. Since then, this meeting has been regularized as an institutional procedure.

This new form of urban governance demonstrates the mayor's belief that in the making of Seoul into a progressive global city—the Korean variant of a cosmopolis—it is critical to include foreign or non-citizen residents in the public sphere. Recently, overseas Koreans staying in Korea, especially the Korean Chinese, have started a campaign to call for reinstatement of their Korean citizenship and, in the 2011 Seoul mayor by-election, demanded their right to be included in the election agenda of all mayoral candidates. Such collective efforts for progressive city-making will contribute to the enhancement of the Korean Chinese's rights to the city, thereby rendering the political and social life of Seoul more inclusive.

5 Diasporic Identity and Recognition in Cosmopolis

Globalizing cities entail the diversification of urban spaces and cultures, reflecting different ethnic identities. Global villages in Seoul have emerged as multicultural spaces along with the neo-liberal globalization of the metropolis. Each global village is dominated by foreign residents from a particular country, but in many villages they live hand in hand with other nationals. These spaces are considered multicultural places in Korea. 'Multiculturalism' is used to depict not only the mixed ethnicities and cultures in a place, but also the intention of co-existence, harmony, and mutual respect among the foreign and domestic residents of different ethnic groups.

However, all ethnic places do not reveal the same multiculturalism with regard to the integration of foreign residents with the host community. Some ethnic residents are more easily included in the host community and have managed to pursue their ethnicity-based everyday life in a more distinctive way. Others do not have the same experience. While villagers interact with the mainstream social processes of the city as non-citizens, their ethnicity is well expressed and reproduced in a social and spatial form. This difference of multiculturalisms is related to ethnic place-making, in which different groups of foreign residents attempt to engrave their ethnic identity on space.

This study shows that successful ethnic place-making is likely to lead to the transformation of residential space from a multicultural space of a globopolis into a transnational space of a cosmopolis. The transnationalization of ethnic space is another expression of the hybridization of spatial codes representing different ethnic identities through the everyday lives of residents who move across two countries. Once non-citizen residents of the place endeavour to acquire their rights to the city through engaging

with a public discourse on civil rights, the multiculturalism of the space is likely to change into cosmopolitanism. The account made hitherto is about how Yeonbeon Village was actually formed as an ethnic community of the Korean Chinese and evolved into an ethnic space of cosmopolis.

Behind all this effort to make a place lies the diasporic identity of the Korean Chinese. Even though they are ethnically Korean and speak the Korean language, most of the Korean Chinese in Seoul identify themselves as Chinese. They come to Korea as 'visiting workers' and are privileged to work in the designated urban service sector. After the expiration of their visas, they return to China with earned wealth, but then came back again with a renewed visa, accompanied by family members or folks from home. Through these irregular visits, they extend their sojourn in Korea so as to regularize their everyday life relationships in the form of a community. Most of the Korean Chinese in Seoul travel back and forth between Korea and China regularly, while some (especially those who are highly skilled) circulate across neighbouring countries like Japan and Hong Kong, and even to the United States, in search of better job opportunities. They do not need to settle down and assimilate into Korean society for good. This fluid lifestyle has something to do with their identity of being part of the Korean diaspora. This diasporic consciousness is framed by their status on the border between Korea and China. While migrating transnationally in conjunction with China's open-door policy and Korea's neoliberal globalization policy, they underwent the conversion of their identity into 'mobile citizens' (Urry 2007). This means that even in their mobile everyday lives they have tried to make their lifestyle fit with their cultural and ethnic identity as Korean Chinese as a means of survival and adaptation (Urry 2007).

In the ecological process of urban spatial change, assimilation comes after the successful overcoming of ghettoization or extreme segregation (Poulsen, Johnson, and Forrest, 2002). However, the exploration of the development of Yeonbeon Village in this chapter does not fit this view. On the contrary, as revealed by Korean Chinese place-making, ethnic people or groups in contemporary global cities like Seoul are often opposed to being assimilated into the host society in which they reside. They strive to pursue their identity and lifestyle in the host society by constructing everyday life networks in their neighbourhood space. For them, assimilation means forceful integration with or being absorbed into the mainstream social processes of the host city, losing their identity and autonomy as a mobile tribe. In urban ecology theory, assimilation echoes the logic of force and hegemony related to the dominant group or class of the city. Hence this view is not relevant to the idea of the cosmopolis, where diverse social and ethnic

groups coexist hand-in-hand, generating diversity, fluidity, equality, and symbiosis as new urban cultures. In such a city, separation and coexistence are more dominant than assimilation. In the previous sections, we saw how three kinds of ethnic place-making functioned as an instrument of this urban process: (1) place-making of the people, in the context of the labour and housing markets; (2) place-making by the people, in interaction with the host community; and (3) place-making for the people, through engaging with the public sphere to advocate residents' rights to the city. However, there is still the question of whether the collective identity of non-citizen residents is recognized and respected by others, especially Korean citizens.

Recognition of a group's ethnic identity and difference depends on how much they are respected by all parties in the cosmopolis. Compared with other ethnic groups, such as the French in Seorae Village, the Korean Chinese in Yeonbeon Village are not as respected by Korean citizens. They experience material deprivation due to their low status in the labour and housing markets of the city, as well as social marginalization by the host community, which is reluctant to accept them as equals. Even though they are ethnically Korean, Korean citizens consider them second-class citizens in Korean society. The same treatment is given to Koreans who flee from North Korea and settle in the free society of South Korea. This recognition is rooted in class consciousness, which Korean citizens embrace not only for themselves but also towards their fellow citizens in the process of capitalist urbanization. Most Chinese Korean migrant workers complain that in Seoul's everyday life they experience disdain, disregard, and dishonour from their Korean neighbours. This is undoubtedly attributed to the low opinion of the Korean Chinese in Korean society. Recognition of the identity and lifestyle represented by the village is an indicator for measuring how much this ethnic group is included in the everyday social process of the host city (Choi 2009). Paradoxically, this invisible discrimination against the Korean Chinese has been a cause for them to initiate community movements to promote their rights to the city, as well as to engage Korean NGOs in protecting their human and social rights as non-citizens.

Opening the public sphere in the village to advocate recognition of its residents' rights to the city is therefore equivalent to a 'place-making for the people'. As a result of this effort, the Korean Chinese have been able to construct and extend their place into a cosmopolitan space empowered with rights, equality, and justice. This enhancement is reflected in their inclusion in the progressive governance of the city. The completion of the urban shift

into a cosmopolis is entirely dependent on how much ‘recognition politics’ is carried out through place-making for the people (Choi 2009).

6 Conclusions

Seoul is being reborn into a post-developmental city under new progressive leadership, reflecting a change in government-civil society relations. The direction of urban change is set to upgrade global Seoul into a human-centred, convivial cosmopolis, with all possible institutional and policy means mobilized to this end. Thanks to various ethnic place-making called ‘global village’, Seoul is now undergoing a shift from a globopolis to a cosmopolis, where all dwellers, whether citizens or non-citizens, are equally integrated into the everyday life systems of the city.

Yet it is true that some ethnic place-making is more inclusive than others. The experience of place-making in Yeonbeon Village shows ambivalence, in that that it used to be less inclusive but is increasingly becoming integrated into the city through villagers’ claim of their right to the city. Ethnic place-making is structured through the interaction between villagers and the city, but its inclusiveness is hermeneutically determined by the mutual recognition between residential citizens and residential non-citizens (Davey 2000). Recognition politics appears to be a key determinant for rendering place-making inclusive in a cosmopolis (Choi 2009).

Seoul lies between being a globopolis and cosmopolis. A swift shift towards a convivial cosmopolis requires the intensification of progressive urban movements towards the justice of recognition. This shift has already begun to take place with the growing engagement of the civil society, and recently the metropolitan government, in enhancing the city-wide recognition of the Korean Chinese community.

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