

Making a ‘Multicultural Special Zone’: multiculturalism in South Korea

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, and that it has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

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Abstract

This thesis contributes to research on urban and everyday multiculture by exploring an ethnically diverse, working-class neighbourhood – Wongok-dong in South Korea – from a cultural and political economic perspective. Wongok-dong, a commercial and residential neighbourhood located in an industrial city, Ansan, is one of the most diverse areas in the country with migrants coming from different ethnic, cultural and national backgrounds, largely from Asia – for example, from China, Vietnam and Uzbekistan. Over the last decade, the local government has promoted this area as a *Damunhwa* (multicultural) Special Zone, as part of an urban revitalisation project. The aim of the study is to understand how the multicultural is imagined, institutionally and spatially materialised, and practiced and experienced in this area. More specifically, it asks two questions: first, what are the political and economic forces underpinning the process of establishing the *Damunhwa* Special Zone? Second, how do the residents experience and evaluate the changes brought about by multiculturalism? Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Wongok-dong, the thesis examines the analytically independent but practically interdependent relationship between cultural and economic dimensions in the process of the multicultural city/place making, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the main concerns of the residents living in the multicultural environment. I argue that Wongok-dong has been transformed into a place that welcomes migrants and yet is segregated and racialised, showing the discrepancy between the rhetoric of a multicultural city and the material reality and lived experiences of the city. The thesis highlights the conjunction of multicultural and neoliberal elements in shaping a local multicultural place and the role of everyday evaluations in (re-)producing the ethnic and ‘racial’ relations of a culturally diverse society.

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List of Abbreviations

AMCSC: Ansan Migrant Community Service Centre

BND: Balanced National Development

CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States

DSZ: *Damunhwa* Special Zone

EPS: Employment Permit System

IMF: International Monetary Fund

ITTP: Industrial Technical Training Programme

SRDS: Specialized Regional Development System

Notes on the usage of Korean language

This thesis employs ‘the Revised Romanization of Korean (hereafter, RR)’ by and large, which has been officially used in South Korea since 2000, in transliterating concepts, names or other words in the Korean characters required to mention into the English alphabet. I did not, however, alter the names of any Korean authors that were already available or suggested. Also, I use some of Korean names including those of public figures including the presidents as they are commonly spelled in academic works even though they do not accord to RR: for example, in the name of former presidents, the surname, Bak (in RR) is written as Park and first name Jeong-hee (in RR) as Chung-hee, therefore, Park Chung-hee (RR: Bak Jeong-hee) and likewise, Roh Moo-hyun (RR: Noh Moo-hyeon).

In writing Korean names, I placed surname first and given name following the convention in South Korea. For example, in the names of the former presidents above, Park is surname and Chung-hee is given name, and likewise, Roh is surname and Moo-hyun is given name.

Unless otherwise stated, I am solely responsible for all translations from Korean to English.

1. Introduction

Let me begin with my story. I became interested in multiculturalism around ten years ago when a Korean news media reported on what was happening in Europe and the United Kingdom regarding multiculturalism. They covered intense debates about multiculturalism in Britain, France and Germany, citing statements made by then-national leaders and politicians expressing pessimistic attitudes towards multiculturalism and their concern about national identities and integration of migrants (Choi, 2011; Kim et al., 2011). In the aftermath of terrorist attacks, such as the 7/7 in London in 2005, and urban riots such as those in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, England in 2001, migrants, particularly Muslims, were criticised for ‘self-segregation’, allegedly refusing to integrate (or assimilate) into the society and accepting common national value(s) or customs. Multiculturalism that attempted to respect migrants’ culture and religion was blamed for the growth of Islamic extremism and terrorism within Western countries.¹ Such news shocked me as it challenged the image of ‘Europe’ I had formed prior to that point. I had little knowledge of Europe, limited to history, culture and the language of white ethnic groups, such as Anglo-Saxons, Germans, Celts, Romans and Vikings, and religions, such as Catholicism and Protestantism and the Church of England. The historic cities and places in European countries and the United Kingdom I travelled to before were also all about these cultures, though I now recall how I often stopped for a street Doner kebab during my travels as it was affordable and filling for a backpacker. Regarding the news which contradicted my image of ‘Europe’, I became interested in ‘multiculturalism’.

Having this interest, I worked in a research institution in South Korea² in 2013 and learned more about Korean multiculturalism. In contrast to what appeared to be the demise of multiculturalism on the other side of the world, multiculturalism has thrived in South Korea

¹ I review these debates in Chapter 2.

² I use ‘Korea’ and ‘South Korea’ interchangeably to refer to South Korea (Republic of Korea).

since the mid-2000s, with increased interest among academics, policymakers and civil groups. In response to the growing number of migrants since the late 1990s, the national government advocated a multicultural Korea in 2006, introducing institutions and public discourses related to immigrants and their integration. Yet, the way multiculturalism has developed is highly Korean-specific, even though the concept and theories of multiculturalism that are used are from Western contexts. As I discuss in Chapter 4, multiculturalism has been a measure for improving national competitiveness in both economic and social terms by receiving labour migrants into national and local industries and encouraging their cultural and human rights so as to become a socially developed society, like many idealised Western countries. Governmental bodies, local actors and civil groups banded together to promote multiculturalism and to bid for increased funding available for migrant help, multicultural education and other related programmes. The media has also promoted multiculturalism, often representing multiculturalism as the inevitable future of the country following the ageing population and low birth-rate, and migrants as economic contributors to the country, while legitimating industries' demand for cheaper workers, as in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing.

The impressions from the two contradicting cases of multiculturalism – Western countries and South Korea – the former appearing to treat multiculturalism as something threatening their national identities and the latter reforming their national identity as a multicultural Korea (see Chapter 4) – made me wonder about multiculturalism again. Though it is based on the principle of respecting cultural and ethnic differences and diversity, multiculturalism in South Korea appeared as a project in which businesses, national and local governments, civil groups and even academics participated.

1.1. Wongok-dong, a multicultural special zone in South Korea

Wongok-dong, where this study took place, exemplifies such a mutation of multiculturalism. Located in Ansan, an industrial city in the Northwest of South Korea, Wongok-dong is one of the most labour migrant populated neighbourhoods of the country, with over 80% of the

residents being foreign national migrants. This is much higher than the average rate of foreign residents in the country, which is 4.3% of the total population (about 2,220,000, as of 2019) (Ministry of the Interior and Safety, 2020).³ It is an area in the country with migrants coming from different ethnic, cultural and national backgrounds, though largely from Asian countries, including China, Vietnam and Uzbekistan. Foreign workers have populated Wongok-dong over the last two decades, as the area's proximity to the industrial complex and transportation infrastructure, such as the train station and bus stops, allow residents an easy commute. The neighbourhood also provides low-cost, multiple-dwelling houses for single and/or low-income tenants. The area serves a significant consumer market for migrants, with over 1,000 small self-employed businesses, including grocery stores and restaurants. Another reason for the area's popularity with migrants is its social networks and institutions, such as religious organisations, ethnic communities, and governmental and non-governmental support groups.

With this demography and characteristic, Wongok-dong has been known as one of the most multicultural and multi-ethnic places in South Korea. With many Asian migrants, the area's portrayal in South Korean media often focuses on it as 'a little global village', 'a little Asia', 'a borderless village', 'the mecca of Southeast Asians' and 'the first multicultural place' (Oh, 2014: 3). A protestant church-based group in Wongok-dong led public attention to focus on the Borderless Village movement during the 2000s. Promoting the idea and practice of 'borderless citizenship', in which labour migrants may be included in the local society regardless of their 'race', nationality, culture, gender or class (Park, 2007: 192-5, 202-3), the group undertook projects, such as surveying local Korean people's perception of migrant minorities, hosting community events like a monthly clean-up day and a multicultural festival to bring migrant and non-migrant Korean residents together (Oh and Jung, 2006: 76-7).

As a result of the Borderless Village activities, Wongok-dong gained a reputation among

³ I provide the demography of Wongok-dong and Ansan in Chapter 4.

researchers and the media, and, in 2009, the local government promoted Wongok-dong as a *Damunhwa Maeul Teuk-gu* (literally translated as multicultural village special zone).⁴ This *Damunhwa* Special Zone (hereafter, DSZ) is a project of integrating migrants into the local society by building a multicultural-friendly environment and providing public services for migrants and regenerating the local economy by commercialising multicultural elements of the neighbourhood for attracting visitors. By placing a department of the Ansan City Hall, Ansan Migrant Community Service Centre (hereafter, AMCSC), in charge of developing and implementing policies and programmes aimed at active inclusion of migrants into the local society in Wongok-dong, this neighbourhood has become a centre of the local government's multicultural administration. Furthermore, the special zone promoted the *Damunhwa* food street as an 'exotic' tourist destination, featuring 'ethnic' restaurants and cultural events that allow visitors to consume and experience cultural diversity.⁵

As frequently cited in media and research journals as a symbolic place of multiculturalism, whether positive or negative, Wongok-dong became familiar and left me wondering about the neighbourhood. So, I visited Wongok-dong for preliminary research. My first impression of the place was at odds with my expectations, though. The streets, with old buildings and rubbish, reminded me of a typical scene of Korean street markets about 20 or 30 years ago. Even though it had its unique multicultural characteristic, with diverse foreign-language signs and non-Korean people, the image of a working-class area overwhelmed my impression of Wongok-dong. I then wondered why I felt disappointed with the reality of Wongok-dong. What did I expect from visiting this area? What was the image of multiculture before I visited this place?

This gap between the rhetoric of Wongok-dong as an exotic, symbolic multicultural location and its reality inspired me to rethink what multicultural means. Regarding cultural

⁴ The term *Damunhwa* can mean either multicultural in an adjective form and multiculture as a noun depending on what follows.

⁵ I discuss more of these DSZ and the *Damunhwa* food street in Chapter 5 and 6 respectively.

differences and ethnic diversity, Wongok-dong is multicultural. However, such cultural or ethnic diversity was not enough to qualify it as ‘multicultural’, as there appeared to be more from reading the media narratives surrounding it and the DSZ project taking place in the area. As I wrote in my field notes in December 2017, ‘What is multicultural in Wongok-dong?’ What make(s) this area ‘multicultural’, whatever it is? How can I understand this multicultural neighbourhood?

1.2. Making a new sense of multicultural place

Local multicultural places or spaces have emerged as a research topic in its own right, focusing on the lived manifestation of cultural or ethnic diversity and the dynamics from the different contacts and interactions within specific areas. Counteracting the alleged ‘fall’ of multiculturalism, academics in many disciplines, including Cultural Studies and Sociology, have examined local multiculture, focusing on how cultural differences are encountered and negotiated, with identities and ethnicities continuously reconstructed in daily, urban, social and spatial settings (e.g., Amin, 2002; Gilroy, 2004; Neal et al., 2013; Nowicka and Vertovec 2014; Wise and Velayutham, 2009). The literature on this topic has developed over the last two decades, deepening the understanding of local and urban development of multiculture in which identities and communities are imagined, performed, and negotiated. Yet, local multicultural places are also where people are *getting by*. This suggests that our lives in a multicultural environment include other elements than cultural and ethnic diversity such as making a living, raising families and pursuing interests. However, as I discuss in the following chapter, the existing knowledge about multicultural places is based on the premise that cultural, ethnic or migrant elements alone are solely constitutive of the ways of living in a local multicultural place/society.

This thesis is concerned with this gap in the literature, with an ethnic or migrant focus that overlooks other forces, such as the political economic processes. I argue that one must study a local, everyday multicultural place as a concrete subject and object affected by different social elements, forces or relations, depending on its specific historical and geographical contexts.

Therefore, in this thesis, a multicultural place or local multiculture is something that can be (re-)formed by dynamics from various forces, experiences, and relations, including but not privileging cultural, ethnic or migrant elements alone. It can be understood by adopting a cultural and political economic approach that helps identify different elements and their intersections affecting local multicultural places. I chose Wongok-dong as a case to study, for it represents a local multicultural neighbourhood in an industrial city in South Korea, where the local government project of making a multicultural special zone has taken place. It is timely to look at this area as it has received promotion as a multicultural ‘special’ place, involving neoliberal urban (re-)development processes; it provides a specific example of multiculture in its historical, geographical, and discursive contexts at the national and local levels, as well as in the context of regional labour migration in Asia, which I will examine in the empirical chapters.

My main research question is:

- What are the cultural and (political) economic elements or forces underpinning the making of Wongok-dong a *Damunhwa* special place?

The empirical analysis aims to address the following sub-questions:

- How is the multicultural imagined?
- How is it institutionally and spatially materialised?
- How is it experienced and evaluated?

The emphasis in this set of questions is on identifying elements involved in the development of multiculture and people’s experiences and evaluations. In answering these questions, this thesis highlights the role of political economic processes in their intersection with the cultural processes, such as the discourse of making meanings about migrants and cultural diversity, in making a particular pathway of multiculture in an urban, local area. To answer the questions, I conducted an ethnographic study in Wongok-dong over one and a half years, conducting participant observations, interviews, group discussions and collecting archival and visual materials (see Chapter 3). In what follows, I provide the outline of this thesis.

1.3. This thesis' structure

The rest of this thesis comprises two parts. The first part is composed of the theory and methodology chapters (Chapters 2 and 3), and the second part contains five empirical chapters (Chapters 4 to 8). The last chapter (Chapter 9) concludes this thesis.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on urban, everyday multiculture and introduces the key theoretical concepts. I firstly offer my critique of local, urban and everyday multiculture, critiquing the limitations of the ethnic or migrant focus in previous studies and suggesting the importance of other elements in (re)shaping urban, everyday multiculture. I then outline the approach to culture and political economy that stresses the analytically separable but practically interdependent cultural and political economic processes. I then move to other theoretical resources that inform the study of urban neoliberal development. In conclusion, I highlight the theoretical contribution of this thesis to studying contemporary urban multicultural places and societies.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and research methods. I first address my approach to ethnography as a means of understanding people's activities and their interpretations and explaining structural factors that affect those interpretations. I then discuss a way of conducting this kind of ethnography, suggesting ethnographers should focus more attention on the social relations and processes in the places under study and their links to wider processes by drawing on the concept of 'global sense of place' (Massey, 1994). I then move to describe how I conducted my ethnographic fieldwork and how I reflected upon the research process. I illustrate how I performed participant observation, semi-structured interviews and archive/desk research to collect materials and how I prepared them for analysis using a data coding software, Atlas.ti. I also discuss how I 'read' people and how they read me in the study area and the ethical challenges faced during the fieldwork.

Turning to empirical discussions, in Chapter 4 I describe the historical, geographical, and discursive context of Wongok-dong, concerning the background of political economy and

multiculturalism in South Korea and regional labour migration in Asia. The focus of this chapter is firstly on summarising the specific pathway of neoliberal and multicultural development in the country with developmentalist capitalism and how it has formed in Wongok-dong – a working-class, multicultural urban neighbourhood in an industrial city, Ansan. It also introduces the popular representations of migrants, particularly marriage migrants and their families and labour migrants, the highest migrant population in South Korea, and Wongok-dong regarding foreigner crimes.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyse the discursive and material practises of making Wongok-dong a multicultural place through the DSZ. In Chapter 5, I address the urban governance of the special zone project, examining how it has developed to deal with both economic revitalisation and cultural diversity. Drawing on the interpretations of urban neoliberal development outlined in Chapter 2, I first analyse the Ansan government's self-imagining narrative as 'the City of *Damunhwa*' regarding the vocabularies used, the aims of self-promotion and the representation of migrants. I then examine the public-private partnerships and their migrant support activities in the DSZ. The chapter argues that, while Wongok-dong has become a migrant support public service centre, welcoming more migrant visitors to the area, the special zone project has resulted in the segregation between migrant and non-migrant residents.

In Chapter 6, I investigate the making of the multicultural food district in Wongok-dong as a tourist attraction. Following an outline of urban, neoliberal placemaking and food multiculturalism and my discussion of 'ethnic food' in the South Korean context, I analyse the narratives involved in promoting the neighbourhood as a place for multicultural food consumption and the practice of inviting migrant cooks there. In doing so, I address how migrants' food (culture) is imagined, how migrant and non-migrant relations are (re-)constructed and how a governance technology operates. In examining Wongok-dong's local food multiculturalism and how it is shaped by neoliberal place-making practices advertising the place as culturally authentic and different and mobilising migrants in selling the area as a food street,

I argue that, while the value of difference and diversity becomes the market value in this local tourism, it constructs migrants and migrant food (culture) as ‘ethnic’.

Chapters 7 and 8 attend to the residents’ (mostly non-migrant Koreans) experiences and evaluations of the multicultural and neoliberal processes explored in the earlier chapters, focusing on their everyday discourse, knowledge, emotional responses, and moral judgements. In Chapter 7, I explore the residents’ ambivalent response to migrants and diversity in Wongok-dong. I first outline research trends studying the negative public perceptions of, or attitudes towards, migrants and multiculturalism, suggesting more investigations on mixed attitudes and feelings. I then analyse the residents’ narratives of welfare benefits for migrant children and students in the public education system and economic downturn in Wongok-dong, focusing on their emotional responses and reasoning. The chapter reveals how the residents’ complex and ambivalent responses to migrants and diversity are related to what they are concerned about, showing the tension between recognition and redistribution and the intersection between class and ethnicity/‘race’.

Chapter 8 examines the everyday process of racialising migrants in Wongok-dong. In analysing the residents’ everyday discourse on migrants’ behaviours, distinguishing themselves from migrants and associating migrants with certain qualities, I discuss how their evaluations articulate with racialising practices. I also examine how the public perception of hierarchical national economies in Asia entrenched in South Korean society influences their judgements about migrants. As well as in Chapter 7, I shed light on how people’s daily concerns shape multiculture in a local neighbourhood.

Lastly, Chapter 9 provides the overall conclusion of the thesis, reaffirming that both cultural and political economic processes – involving the urban neoliberal governance practices and the residents’ everyday experiences and evaluations – have shaped multiculture in Wongok-dong. Following my reflection of the theoretical and empirical contributions of this thesis to the multicultural scholarship, I suggest a future research agenda and conclude the thesis.

2. Literature review and theoretical considerations

This chapter reviews the literature on urban, everyday multiculture and sets out the main ideas and interpretations that inform this thesis. This thesis examines how both political economic processes and understandings of cultural relations and differences shape multiculture in Wongok-dong. To do this, I view the relationship between culture and political economy as one of conceptual independence and practical interdependence. I suggest that this view is helpful for analysing the spatial and social changes and experiences in the multicultural neighbourhood in their close relationship with political economic forces, particularly neoliberal discourse and policies.

The chapter firstly summarises the debates around multiculturalism as a normative theory to understand discussions on ‘culture’ and ‘cultural difference’ from different perspectives as well as a state and policy strategy, focusing on how multiculturalism has faced challenges in academic and political arenas. Having established this context, I review the literature on local and lived multicultural development that has emerged, countering the alleged ‘fall’ of multiculturalism, offering my critique of it and foregrounding my approach. I then consider both cultural and political economic elements in studying multiculture in Wongok-dong. Lastly, I treat neoliberalism as a process, focusing on its manifestation at the urban scale, to examine its role in the making of Wongok-dong into a multicultural place.

2.1. Multiculture beyond the ethnic or migrant lens

Multiculturalism and multiculture

There is no shortage of accounts of multiculturalism, for, as Bennett (1998) puts it, ‘the word itself has had a diasporic career’, circulating in a range of fields from academia, arts, education, law, political rhetoric to business management and marketing, and has emerged and faded in many plural states and societies, so its meaning has pluralised (Bennett, 1998: 2). Multiculturalism has developed as a descriptive, normative, practical, and political term,

including policy and ideology. It is descriptive as it describes the increased heterogeneity resulted from migrations occurred in the aftermath of the colonial regimes and the contemporary global, uneven political economic development (Goldberg, 2004). It is normative in the sense that it supports cultural diversity and the proliferation of different values (Goldberg, 2004). It is a practical issue in the sense that it is about how people with different cultural or ethnic backgrounds live together, but also a set of ideological and political interventions advocating for the empowerment of marginalised groups, dealing with issues such as discrimination and segregation, challenging institutions and discourses formed by dominant groups, and the unequal power relationships between dominant and minority groups (e.g., Goldberg, 1994; Hall, 2000; May, 1999).

While it is impossible to explore all these aspects and literature of multiculturalism, this section's focus is on the literature on local, lived development of multiculturalism, which I refer to as 'multiculture' in this thesis. To do this, I first want to clarify the meaning of 'multiculturalism' and 'multiculture' – terms which will often be distinguished from one another in this thesis. 'Multiculturalism', as a broad and contested concept, is a normative and political philosophical approach to a diverse society and a set of strategical and institutional measures, including public discourse and policies for dealing with issues arising from diversity. In this definition, 'multiculturalism' involves both theoretical or political ideas or ideals and actual discursive and material practices in managing or governing cultural and ethnic diversity. For example, I use the word 'multiculturalism' in the following section in outlining the theoretical and political debates around how we should approach culture and cultural differences or in introducing the South Korean government's approach to migrants and diversity and its manifestation in public discourse and policy in South Korea (see Chapter 4).

I use the term 'multiculture', to denote something being (re-)shaped through ongoing cultural, social, political, and economic processes and everyday experiences. This approach to 'multiculture' recognises cultural difference or diversity as necessary, but not sufficient, in

(re-)making multiculture, for it considers the importance of other elements and the intersection between different social forces. This term, ‘multiculture’, has been widely used in those literatures studying how cultural differences are encountered and negotiated through ordinary places and practices (e.g., Gilroy, 2004; 2006; Neal et al., 2013; 2018; Valluvan, 2016). For example, Neal et al. (2018) define ‘multiculture’ as ‘a concept that demands recognition of the ways in which cultural formations are made through the crossings, adaptations, borrowings, translations, convergences that take place between and across cultural difference’ (Neal et al., 2018: 5). While distinguishing ‘multiculture’ from ‘multiculturalism’ as a policy orientation, they emphasise the need to see multiculture as a dynamic, ongoing process to be negotiated and its potentials for (re-)shaping of identities and its concrete process in places and everyday practices (Neal et al., 2018: 5). While acknowledging the importance of cultural dynamics and their spatial and everyday aspects, I examine the role of political economic processes in (re-)making multiculture in Wongok-dong from cultural and political economic perspectives (I discuss this approach later).

The rise of research interest in ‘multiculture’ as a lived, local and spatial process is in the background of theoretical and particularly political debates about multiculturalism, which I shall now summarise.

Multiculturalism as theory

As ‘a normative response’ to cultural diversity (Parekh, 2006: 6), multicultural theories concern how they address ‘culture’ and ‘cultural difference’ to achieve social justice and coexistence between differences (often within a nation-state frame), referring to the different perspectives on the matter as theories of ‘politics of difference,’ ‘politics of recognition’ and ‘politics of identity’ which were prevalent in the late 1900s.

To begin with Young (1990), her main concern is with injustice deriving from the ways in which culture is defined on the terms used by dominant groups. She argues that it involves a kind of cultural imperialism that renders a minority group’s perspective invisible and objectifies

and marks them as different, stereotyped, marginalised or inferior (Young, 1990: 58-61). Therefore, a culturally oppressed minority group in this situation may come to see their culture and identity through cultural norms established by society's dominant or mainstream ethnic or cultural members and through 'the status of Otherness' (Young, 1990: 60). To overcome such injustices, Young stresses 'a relational understanding of difference' in which (cultural) difference becomes about 'specificity, variation, heterogeneity' rather than otherness (Young, 1990: 171). In this politics of difference, group differences in class, 'race', ethnicity, gender, sex and age are relativised as specific categories to compare each other and become different depending on the context (Young, 1990: 172).

The politics of difference is closely related to the politics of identity, for it is about recognising the differences between people found in an 'individualized identity, one that is particular to me, and that I discover in myself' (Taylor, 1994: 28). Taylor (1994) stresses the moral importance of 'being true to myself and my particular way of being' to be 'capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity' (Taylor, 1994: 28, 32). Yet, this is achievable through dialogical relations, not only with oneself but also with others, within which recognition becomes crucial (Taylor, 1994: 34). Based on this premise of the dependence of identity on (mis-)recognition by others, Taylor asserts that one should acknowledge individuals and cultural communities in their distinctiveness without assimilation into the dominant identity. From the communitarian view, individuals live within their cultural groups, assuming they have a constitutive attachment to their cultural communities, thus shaping their identities through them. Therefore, from this perspective, multiculturalism is a matter of ideas of what is good to allow self-realisation within a cultural group and mutual regard and treatment in a diverse society with the recognition of different individual and collective cultural identities as having equal worth (see also, Honneth, 1995; Modood, 2005; 2007; Parekh 2006).

Meanwhile, the demand for recognising differences and identities has also challenged the liberal idea of pursuing cultural neutrality in public institutions to enhance individual

freedom and equal rights. For example, Taylor (1994) argues that ‘difference-blind’ liberalism that advocates the fair and equal treatment of individuals, regardless of their economic and/or cultural backgrounds, inevitably necessitates the uniform application of norms and rules when defining minority or suppressed culture(s). Instead, he suggests ‘substantial’ liberalism that allows minority groups to enjoy special rights, similar to how Canadian society values French culture in Quebec. Within the liberal tradition, Kymlicka (1995) argues that minority rights are compatible with promoting individual freedom. For him, culture is related to freedom of making choices: that is, understanding culture is a prerequisite for deciding how people lead their lives. Therefore, individuals must have access to their ‘societal culture defined by language and history’ to make meaningful choices (Kymlicka, 1995: 8). In this sense, group-differential measures to ensure and encourage such access may play a valid role in the liberal justice theory. In his argument, Kymlicka promotes the rights of people to liberties and resources that enable them ‘to lead their lives following their beliefs about value, without fear of discrimination or punishment’ and ‘to judge what is valuable, and to learn about other ways of life’ (Kymlicka, 1995: 81). Institutional conferring of such rights is, therefore, necessary.

Normative multicultural theories attempt to acknowledge differences and guarantee people in a minority group the right to practise their culture. However, multiculturalism has faced criticism particularly regarding its tendency to assume that individuals would belong to a cultural group and have a certain specific, fixed identity and way of living. For example, Brah (1992) problematises the ‘culturalist’ view that ‘posits “ethnic difference” as the primary modality around which social life is constituted and experienced’ and identifies groups as culturally different, assuming they are internally homogeneous (Brah, 1992: 129). From a feminist view, some argue that the reified notion of culture by majority groups in multicultural theories and the associated multicultural policies supports stereotypes of minorities and represents them as profoundly different (e.g., Phillips, 2007). They may also threaten the rights of women, a ‘minority’ within a minority group, by justifying hierarchical masculine power in the

maintenance of cultural practices (Okin, 1999). The post-colonialists also problematise how cultural difference is the product of history constructed and represented by power (Narayan, 1997). For example, Bhabha (1994) criticised the liberal multiculturalist idea of culture as '*pre-given* ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed table of tradition' and the rhetoric of 'cultural diversity', where culture is in 'an object of empirical knowledge', often represented by authorities (Bhabha, 1994: 2, 34, emphasis in original). From this logic of cultural diversity, the power relations between the dominant Self and minority Other(s) and the coloniser and the colonised remains binary, in which the minority culture is tolerable by the power in the name of 'equal respect' (Bhabha, 1998: 30-3).

Multiculturalism as a 'failed' state project?

Political debates about multiculturalism in the next century focused on its validity in dealing with diversity and difference. In the late 20th century, multiculturalism emerged as a policy and political approach in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, guiding their efforts to manage cultural differences and diversity in their societies (e.g., Bloch et al., 2013; Joshee and Johnson, 2011; Koleth, 2010). However, since the late 1990s, with the rise of far-right, anti-immigrant politics, there have been debates across Western countries questioning the effects and worthiness of multiculturalism as a national strategy and policy regarding cultural diversity, particularly following events such as the 2001's urban disturbances in England and the London terror attacks of 2005 (e.g., Cantle, 2006; Joppke, 2004; Meer and Modood, 2009; Modood, 2008; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010).⁶ In the United Kingdom, for example, multiculturalism has been blamed by commentators and politicians over the last two decades for excessive diversity and cultural relativism, as well as allegedly fostering ethnic segregation and ghettoisation, spawning Islamic terrorism and eroding common culture or national values, including solidarity and mutual obligations as fellow citizens, as well as support

⁶ For a summary of the main incidents and discourse regarding this multiculturalism backlash, see Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010.

for the welfare state (e.g., Blunkett, 2002; Goodhart, 2004; West, 2013).⁷ In the policy world, against a view of multiculturalism alleged to encourage segregation and ‘parallel lives’ between ethnic, ‘racial’ and religious groups, emphasis was placed on how to live together, promoting common values and community cohesion or pride, with institutions encouraging mutual understanding, respect and trust while celebrating cultural diversity (e.g., Cantle, 2001; 2006; 2012; Ouseley, 2001). Researchers such as Vertovec (2007) called for a new approach to policy and society for understanding and dealing with ‘super-diverse’ demographics and social compositions that emerged across European countries and in Britain in the 21st century, involving multiple countries of origin, employment, languages and immigrant statuses, and transnational connections.

However, it would be difficult to posit that official multiculturalism as the public policy approach to diversity in many Western countries has ended. Some interpretations suggest that the apparent political shift away from multiculturalism is merely rhetorical, given the absence of substantive changes in policies and the continuation or expansion of multicultural policies through introducing civic integration programmes (e.g., Banting and Kymlicka, 2013; Fortier, 2010; Mathieu, 2018; Phillips, 2006; Lentin and Titley, 2011; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010). The assumption that multiculturalism undermines national culture and identity is also contested by local multicultural policy programmes and practices (e.g., Jones, 2015). Further, as Lentin and Titley argue (2011), in presenting multiculturalism as failed or in crisis, there are anxieties concerning crises of controlling and managing diversity in a post-racial era while ‘race’ and racism are silenced (Lentin and Titley, 2011: 3).

While the debate about the alleged ‘fall’ of multiculturalism has mounted within and across Western countries since the early 2000s, particularly with the remarks of political figures such as David Cameron and Angela Merkel on state multiculturalism as having ‘(utterly) failed’

⁷ For critical discussion, see Phillips, 2005; West, 2013.

(Weaver and agencies, 2010; New Statesman, 2011), multiculturalism has grown in popularity in South Korea over the same period. As Kim (2015) notes, South Korea is an exceptional case that contrasts with the ‘retreat’ from multiculturalism, with ‘a multicultural explosion’ in academic literature, popular discourse, and public policy (Kim, 2015: 727). Facing the surge in the number of migrants from Asian countries since the late 1990s, the South Korean government has established relevant institutions including laws and policy programmes relating to immigration and integration of migrants. Media coverage calling for the acceptance of ethnic minorities as a section of the South Korean society has also increased (Chapter 4 provides a detailed account of multiculturalism in South Korea).

The point I wish to make at this stage is that Korean multiculturalism requires the understanding of its background and of the developmental desire to raise the national profile by accepting international norms, such as equality and human rights, and by justifying immigration as a contribution to the national economic growth (Kim, 2015; see also Chapter 4). Korean multiculturalism and its policies and migrant support activities have developed – without the voice of migrants and ethnic groups – as a way of managing migrants and differences (Yuk, 2014). The contrast between the debates around the ‘fall’ of multiculturalism in the West, particularly in the United Kingdom, and the rise in South Korea, interested me in how debates about multiculturalism have largely centred on Anglo-European countries and how multiculturalism develops and is challenged will vary in different contexts.⁸

In South Korea, the geographies of migrant settlement and ethnic diversity are uneven, largely concentrated in the metropolitan or industrial cities or rural areas where lower-skilled jobs, particularly in agricultural, construction, manufacturing, and service industries, are available for labour migrants. As mentioned in the introduction, Wongok-dong is one of the urban neighbourhoods with the highest number of migrants from different national, ethnic, and

⁸ Though there are research on multiculturalism in different contexts including some countries in East Asia and Latin America (e.g., Kim, 2015; Kymlicka and He, 2005; Nagy 2014; Sieder, 2002), the Western views on and cases of multiculturalism are still dominant.

cultural backgrounds. Considering their participation in the local economy, and cultural diversity as a source of tourism, the Ansan city government has promoted Wongok-dong as a place where people with different cultures coexist well, and where visitors experience diverse food (see Chapters 5 and 6). Seeing this local project of making a multicultural city and place, I wonder how such a project works and how people experience living in the area.

Lived, everyday multiculture in an urban environment

This relates to the body of literature that has grown in academia concerning local, lived, and situated multiculturalism. Against the national understanding of multiculturalism and the association of cultural difference or diversity with conflict and segregation, the significance of local sites, local-global or transnational connections and everyday lived experiences have been stressed among scholars as an alternative way of thinking about, and studying, multiculturalism (e.g., Amin, 2002; Berg and Nowicka, 2019; Gilroy, 2004, 2006; Hall, 2012; Neal et al., 2013; 2018; Noble, 2009; Vertovec, 2007; Wise and Velayutham, 2009). Also, the 'multi-cultural drift' with the increasing presence and participation of ethnic groups in many sections of social life (Hall, 1999), and the 'super-diversity' of migrants and multiculture in the 2000s, have stimulated interest in how ethnic differences are experienced or interacted in local sites (Vertovec, 2007). While recognising the importance of the national frame in the ethnic and 'racial' relations in England, Amin (2002) focuses on intercultural understanding and dialogue at a local level. He sees culture as dynamic and interactions between majority and minority cultures and ethnicities as 'a mobile and incomplete process'. In studying how people manage differences, he argues for the importance of local contexts and spatial particularities in understanding ethnic and 'racial' relations, and of daily intercultural practices, such as those of schools and workplaces (Amin, 2002: 960, 975-6).

Literature on everyday social and spatial multiculture has largely centred on 'convivial' features in the interactions of ethnic or cultural differences and urban places where diversity is more likely concentrated. Gilroy (2004) refuses the treatment of identity as 'closed, fixed, and

reified', which reflects the colonial idea of culture and 'race' and the cosmopolitan ideal of civilisation and human rights often used in intervening in others' sovereign territory and/or economy (Gilroy, 2004: xi). He defines 'conviviality' as 'the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculturalism an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and postcolonial cities elsewhere' (Gilroy, 2004: xi). Instead of looking at multiculturalism in terms of political ideologies or strategies, Gilroy focuses on convivial, mundane culture. To quote him:

In this convivial culture, racial and ethnic differences have been rendered unremarkable: in Raymond Williams's distinctive sense of the word, they have been able to become 'ordinary'. Instead of adding to the premium of race as political ontology and economic fate, people discover that the things which really divide them are much more profound: taste, lifestyle, leisure preferences. By making racial differences appear ordinary and banal, even boring, convivial interaction, even when it is promoted by devices like reality TV, has disseminated everyday virtues that enrich our cities, drive our cultural industries and enhance our struggling democracy so that it resists pressure to operate in segregated and colour-coded forms (Gilroy, 2006: 40).

The significance of this idea of conviviality is in rescuing cultural differences from being politicised and governed to being managed or controlled. Instead, it suggests treating cultural, ethnic and racial differences as part of our everyday life, creating happy, conflicting and/or inattentive moments. This leads to another important feature of conviviality in developing how people live together through ordinary practices: through everyday contacts and interactions, what is stressed is the 'creative and intuitive capacity among ordinary people' in managing and overcoming difficulties and tensions between differences (Gilroy, 2006: 6). Therefore, while emphasising a cross-cultural understanding, dialogue and resistance to racism, conviviality offers a normative connotation, 'the vision of peaceful present and a sustainable future' (Nowicka and Vertovec, 2014: 347).

As Wise and Noble (2016) acknowledge, ‘the capacity to live together’ is a concern of contemporary research, with debates around social cohesion and conflict with increased migration in a culturally complex, post-colonial, global and transnational world (Wise and Noble, 2016: 423). Neal et al. (2018) also stress the significance of looking at ‘living multiculture’, ‘the ways in which people routinely manage difference and the ways in which cultural difference evolves and develops dynamically – shaping, converging and changing *all* cultures’ (Neal et al., 2018: 2, emphasis in original). An increase in empirical research on everyday experiences of diversity, interethnic contacts and interactions, and identity (re-)formations over the last two decades reflects the growing research interest in the mode of lived multicultural life. For example, the book of ‘everyday multiculturalism’, defined as the ‘everyday practice and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and spaces of encounter’ (Wise and Velayutham, 2009: 3), demonstrate a range of mundane encounters in various spaces (including neighbourhoods, shopping streets and eateries), and cross-cultural practices from sharing food, giving presents and shopping to caring and sports and leisure activities, involving both pleasant and tension-filled experiences.

In exploring everyday multiculture, the sites of encounters and interactions have become important, particularly urban spaces. Cities are where diverse people pass by, intermingle, unite and divide, although cities, particularly their residential areas, are highly segregated.⁹ The existing literature has examined how the combination of urban spaces and lifestyle shape multiculture in various ways: street markets in London with newer migrant and older white local traders and shoppers as sites of conflict, mediation and ‘rubbing along’ between cultural, ethnic differences (Watson, 2009); the space of everyday bus travel in Birmingham and the formation of intercultural relations through bodily movements and proximities, tacit codes, rules or passenger obligations, habits and effects (Wilson, 2011); the role of physical proximity of shops and bodies

⁹ For the importance of cities, urban spaces/places in studying the contemporary life living with differences, see Young, 1990; Sandercock, 2003; Massey, 2005.

through working and social practices in urban streets (Hall, 2012); the role of parks in the cities (Leicester, Hackney and Milton Keynes) as a space bringing people together (Neal et al., 2015); other public spaces in Berlin, such as community centres, apartment blocks and working places, offering various encounters and different qualities to negotiate differences and to counter prejudice and racism (Matejskova and Leitner, 2011). Studies have also analysed suburban areas, often considered as homogeneous or white neighbourhoods, with their changing demographic and cultural landscapes (Watson and Saha, 2013; Wise, 2005).

While recognising the importance of cross-cultural contacts, tensions, negotiations, and exchanges in forming urban, mundane multiculture, it is important to avoid exaggerating conviviality in everyday intercultural encounters and interactions. Valentine (2008) warns that romanticising urban encounters may ‘implicitly reproduce a potentially naïve assumption that contact with “others” necessarily translates into respect for difference’ (Valentine, 2008: 325). She maintains that positive encounters between individuals may cause positive mutual understanding, but, while remaining on the individual level, this does not mean that collective attitudes towards, and opinions about, other groups change (Valentine, 2008: 332).

I here want to note the importance of exploring how people evaluate their experiences and cultural others in studying everyday multiculture. While mundane practices and interactions contribute to living together, what people feel or judge also matters for people’s everyday lives have a normative dimension. We not only observe what is happening and do what we do, but evaluate things and decide what to do. To draw on Sayer (2011a), people have their relations to the world through their ‘concerns’. People care about what happens around them and around the world, and about their and certain others’ well-being. Sayer (2004; 2005a; 2005b; 2011a) notes that this normative aspect relates to the most important questions in our life, such as how we treat one another, how we should act or behave and what things going on are good or bad. Though social actions take place with little conscious monitoring, many involve conscious or semi-conscious evaluations in response to things they come across, whether they are about private,

public, daily, or occasional matters. To understand everyday evaluative aspects, researchers need to study people's ordinary and daily assessment of, and emotional responses to others and the world, while not reducing them to discourse, norms or socialisation, though not ignoring these things either (Sayer, 2005b: 7).

In studying everyday multiculture, I suggest that it is important to seek everyday expressions of what people are concerned or care about, how they feel about them and how they assess things going on, besides asking what people do. This thesis thus explores both events and practices in Wongok-dong regarding cultural understandings, but also people's experiences of, and judgements about, living in the area. In Chapter 7, I analyse the non-migrant Korean residents' complex emotions, indicating their concerns about migrants in public places, the public policies supporting them and their economic interest in Wongok-dong tourism. In Chapter 8, I investigate the residents' experiences of, and moral judgements about, migrants resulting in the everyday racialisation of the migrant groups. Probing these evaluative aspects is important as they are normative issues regarding whether people feel treated fairly or how they (mis-)recognise others, all of which affect the quality of their daily lives. Furthermore, the social definitions of class, gender, 'race', ethnicity, and sexuality, as well as of equality and inequality, often inflect conscious or semi-conscious evaluations. People may act respectfully towards others, but it does not mean they do not have prejudices or recognise others as equal. Therefore, it is important that an ethnographic study of everyday multiculture reflects upon the participants' emotional responses and evaluative judgements.

Meanwhile, the body of the literature on urban multiculture developed over the last two decades has deepened our understanding of experiences and places of multiculture by examining the diverse ways in which cultural differences are 'imagined', 'performed' or 'negotiated'. They foreground mundane practices of ordinary people in making sense of urban neighbourhoods with diversity and how everyday practices (re-)form cultural understandings of ethnic or 'racial' relations. Thus, it is helpful to explore and recognise the importance people attach to daily

practices, such as disposing of rubbish (see Chapter 8), or local places, such as schools (see Chapter 7), through which they come to engage with others. Yet, while this existing literature contributed to reframing multiculturalism at local and everyday levels, I want to point out that it has been based on the premise of cultural or ethnic differences as the sole constituent of multiculture. Here, to develop my argument, I want to look at the critique of methodological ethnicity (Schiller, 2008; Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen, 2006; Vertovec, 2007). In migration studies, Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen (2006) rightly observe that ‘the ethnic lens’, depending on ‘the ethnic group as either the unit of analysis or sole object of study’, has tended to shape research on settlement and integration of minorities or migrant groups in a local, urban society (Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen, 2006: 613). Much research on migrant practices, belongings, identities, and socialites have assumed that ethnic related elements – religion, values, customs, or networks – are fundamental to migrant people’s lives (Schiller and Çağlar, 2013: 495). In developing the concept of ‘super diversity’, Vertovec (2007) also indicates that ‘there is much to be gained by a multi-dimensional perspective on diversity, both in terms of moving beyond “the ethnic group as either the unit of analysis or sole object of study” (Glick Schiller et al. 2006: 613) and by appreciating the coalescence of factors which condition people’s lives’ (Vertovec, 2007: 1026). Therefore, non-ethnic elements, such as the intersection of migrants’ residential status, age, gender, occupation, and transnational practices, become an entry point in exploring multicultural environments and migrants’ settlement (Çağlar, 2007; Crang et al., 2003; Hall and Datta, 2010; Meissner and Vertovec, 2015; Schiller and Çağlar, 2009; Vertovec, 2007). These projects contributed to moving our focus from ethnicity to other migrant-related variables and provided a promising example and guide for a multi-dimensional understanding of the multicultural or migrant settlement in local settings. Also, by emphasising local and transnational pathways of migrants’ lives, these authors seek to resist hegemonic, national agendas that stress ‘cohesion’ and ‘integration’ from the standpoint of ‘toleration’. However, their focus remains on migrant groups or the elements related to them, which I refer to as the ‘migrant lens’.

The way of making sense of local and everyday multiculturalism focusing on ethnicity or migrant elements limits itself to cultural difference. The studies on everyday multiculturalism, convivial multiculturalism or multicultural drift explored earlier foreground the ordinary, local, and spatial dimensions, often overlooked in early works that centred on multiculturalism as national and policy projects. They treat cultural differences as practice, performance, or process, rather than as fixed and stable, and minority ethnic or migrant groups as ‘not an alien homogenous population, defined as “other”, but a heterogeneous population of ethnic minorities, who occupy different places in the labour market, live in a variety of places and practise a diversity of cultural practices’ (Watson and Saha, 2013: 2019). However, even though the concept of conviviality or everyday multiculturalism suggests we should treat differences as a section of our daily lives, rather than a special phenomenon, the stress on the encounters and interactions *between* diverse cultures paradoxically gives the impression that cultural differences or similarities are still special.

Indeed, cultures, faith and values matter to us. However, we cannot reduce all concerns of people to cultural similarities or differences. Our lives are about other issues, too, particularly economic aspects related to getting jobs, making a living or getting financial support. Economic interests may motivate national or local multicultural policies. This economic aspect of our life may intersect with multiculturalism and ethnicity to an extent, playing a role in shaping people’s or governments’ attitudes towards, and perceptions of, cultural, ethnic others. Cultural difference is necessary to a multicultural society, but it does not have to be the sole element. Therefore, I suggest another lens is required to identify other forces that play a significant role in shaping multiculture. To do so, I introduce the cultural and political economic perspectives that I draw on in my study of multiculture.

2.2. Towards a cultural and political economic approach to multiculture

As the system of meanings, representations, practices, symbols or values in a broad sense, ‘culture’ has been a key object and lens for studying social practices and relationships. A growing number of theoretical and empirical studies have examined culture in this sense, focusing on discourse,

identity, interpretation, semiotics, and everyday practices. The debates about ‘the politics of identity’, ‘the politics of difference’, ‘the politics of recognition’ and ‘decolonisation’, developed over the last several decades, demonstrate the importance of making meanings and representation in our social lives. The so-called ‘cultural turn’ that emerged in the 1990s and early 2000s has contributed to rescuing the autonomy of culture from the reductionist treatments of it as secondary phenomena or reflection of material conditions or circumstances (Ray and Sayer, 1999: 2). Also, it has brought to the fore issues relatively unnoticed by the old materialist view on culture, such as (symbolic) consumption and social divisions based on differences, such as ‘race’, ethnicity, gender, and sex.

The cultural turn has also involved attempts to reconsider the relationship between culture and (political) economy, particularly among scholars taking (political) economy as an object of study. For example, some view culture and (political) economy as analytically independent as irreducible, but as influencing each other and, thus, as practically interdependent (Hudson, 2004; Jessop and Sum, 2001; Ray and Sayer, 1999; Sayer, 2001). Others consider that culture and economy are a phenomenologically entangled entity (Amin and Thrift, 2004; 2007; 2008) or ‘economics as culture’ (du Gay and Pryke, 2002). There is also the postmodernist idea of the culturalisation of a (political) economy with the increased importance of culture in the production and distribution of goods and services and in other economic life, such as business or working (Lash and Urry, 1994). While I do not intend to explore all approaches, this current integrating cultural-(political) economy reflects the social reality that culture and (political) economy depend on, and are inflected by, each other (Lash and Urry, 1994: 64). Economic activities are now more studied in sociology in their cultural aspects or as section of cultural activities. Cultural industries are an example of economic activities that profit out of culture or ‘consumption as cultural practice’ (Amin and Thrift, 2004: xii).¹⁰ Therefore, it is not only that

¹⁰ Though here culture can be defined as in a narrower sense as to what Williams distinguishes, ‘the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity’ (Williams, 1976: 90) and the more popular culture including arts, entertainment, fashion, leisure, sports and so on (Ray and Sayer, 1999: 5).

separating culture and economy from each other within one empirical event would be hard, but also that looking at only one aspect would provide only a partial explanation or description of the phenomenon. In this sense, as Amin and Thrift suggest, we can study culture and economy, considering the two as ‘a hybrid process of aggregation and ordering that cannot be reduced to either’ (Amin and Thrift, 2004: xii).

Yet, even if the practical boundary between culture and (political) economy blurs, we may still need the analytical separation between them (Fraser, 2003; Ray and Sayer, 1999). I want to use the debate on the relationship between recognition and (re-)distribution to underpin such a view. The politics of recognition and (re-)distribution are ‘[o]ne of the most striking political aspects of the relationship between culture and economy’ (Ray and Sayer, 1999: 11-2). (Re-)distribution is one of the major political projects for social justice, advocating the equality of resources and goods among all people, particularly redistribution from rich to poor, based on the egalitarian and liberal tradition seeking distributive justice.¹¹ Recognition, on the other hand, often associated with the politics of identity and the politics of difference, is largely discussed from the dialogical, intersubjective approach to recognition of cultural differences and individual or group identities (Honneth, 1995; 2001; Taylor, 1994; Young, 1990; see also Fraser and Honneth, 2003).

Although the politics of recognition and the politics of (re-)distribution come from different philosophical traditions, the issues they raise overlap (Fraser, 1995; 2003). In heterosexual-oriented societies, for example, gays and lesbians face nonrecognition or misrecognition in many social institutions or relations, such as family, workplace, or the military. Their suffering from the denial of recognition, then, often leads to economic insecurity. Conversely, people’s lower incomes are often interpreted as evidence of cultural or moral inferiority, influencing recognition. Therefore, the politics of recognition and the politics of

¹¹ For distributive justice, see Rawls 1999 [1971]; Dworkin 1981a, 1981b.

(re-)distribution do not correspond with culture and (political) economy, respectively, and similarly, the social divisions, such as class, gender, ethnicity, and ‘race’, can be simultaneously cultural and (political) economic (Fraser, 2003: 60-4). However, the experience of racism and hate crime based on our appearance cannot be reduced to redistribution, for it affects our quality of life regardless of our economic status. Likewise, the issue of poverty and deprivation cannot be wholly reduced to the ethnic, racial or gender categories, though it is significantly weighted towards minority groups. Therefore, recognition and (re-)distribution are entwined in practice, but analytically separated without reducing them to each other.

Understanding this relationship between culture and political economy is critical in this thesis, for it helps identify elements or forces which intersect in the making of Wongok-dong as a multicultural special place (Chapters 5 and 6). Furthermore, it enables me to examine the tension between recognition and redistribution in exploring non-migrant residents’ experiences and evaluations of changes in Wongok-dong, following the special zone project and the increase of migrants and multicultural policies (Chapter 7). Moreover, the approach to cultural and political economy helps discuss the relationship between class and ethnicity/‘race’ in this thesis. The dynamics from class and ‘race’/ethnicity are complex in Wongok-dong, where the economic and cultural environment highly depends on labour migrants. As Fenton and Bradley (2002) put it, class and ethnicity share ‘the prolonged occupation of excluded, restricted or segregated social positions’ (Fenton and Bradley, 2002: 19). Studying Wongok-dong sheds light on how social and spatial position of class and ethnicity, particularly in its relation to migration, is reproduced through institutional and everyday practices. For example, while labour migrants are incorporated into the local economy working in low-income jobs, the cultural discourse of embracing them focusing on the benefits of diversity involved in the project of making Ansan and Wongok-dong a multicultural city obscures our understanding of the class issues such as exploitation of labour and poor living conditions that migrants often face (Chapters 5 and 6). The understanding of the relationship between recognition and redistribution explored above

also helps examine how people's concerns about economic inequality and welfare benefits often prompt them to resent migrants and multiculturalism (Chapter 7). Furthermore, the thesis also examines how the public perception of Asian migrants is largely based on the hierarchical perspective of national economies, often used in racialising migrants by attributing certain qualities to migrants and treating them as workers from poorer countries (Chapter 8).

With this relationship between culture and political economy in mind, I next outline the approach to neoliberalism as a process, and the key features of neoliberal urban development. The latter will be examined in the empirical chapters on the making of Wongok-dong as a multicultural place (Chapters 5 and 6).

2.3. Neoliberalism in practice

Neoliberalism as process

As a 'theory of political economic practices' (Harvey, 2005: 2), neoliberalism is a set of political economic idea(l)s and actual economic, political, and social processes that seem to be pervasive, but are specific in time and space, in the capitalist world. Neoliberalism as a political economic theory presupposes 'the assumption that individual freedoms are guaranteed by freedom of the market and of trade' (Harvey, 2005: 7). To realise this ideal, neoliberalism advocates the reduction of state intervention and extending market power, denouncing allegedly inefficient resource distribution by the state and the alleged suppression of individual freedom in socialist societies and/or Keynesian welfare states (Hayek, 2001 [1944]). Such ideas of the minimum state were put into practice in the economic restructuring projects in Chile, the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1970s and 1980, through the privatisation of public companies and social security, the selling of public housing to individuals, the reform of fiscal policies, the deregulation industries and the weakening of labour unions.

Yet, despite its theoretical principle that national states 'must be kept to a bare minimum' (Harvey, 2005: 2), neoliberalism in practice over time, as acknowledged, has allowed increased national government involvement in expanding and deepening market logic. For example, in the

United Kingdom and the United States, while states remained rather passive, they still intervened, ‘liberating’ capitalists and companies from state regulations and the power of labour unions in the 1980s’. Thatcherism and Reaganomics played a more active role in not only political economic management, but also ‘more socially interventionist and ameliorative forms epitomized by the Third-Way contortions of the Clinton and Blair administrations’ (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 388-9). Moreover, while in theory, neoliberalism presupposes self-regulating free markets that allegedly generate an efficient distribution of resources, the reality at the global, national, and local scales has been intensified economic inequalities and polarisation, uneven geographical and spatial development and social insecurity (Peck et al., 2009: 51). These features suggest that neoliberalism should be regarded as a loose bundle of processes, rather than ‘a coherently bounded “ism” or “end-state”’ (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 353). In this sense, it is important to focus on the ‘uneven, contradictory, and ongoing *process of neoliberalization*’ (Peck et al., 2009: 51, emphasis in original) to understand the realisations of neoliberalism in diverse historical, geographical, and societal contexts (see also Brenner et al., 2010; Peck and Theodore, 2012).

The case of South Korea exemplifies the context-specific and path-dependent development of neoliberalism. Some argue that neoliberal projects in South Korea have taken shape in the extension of the political economic paths built under developmentalism with its legacy over decades, thus described as ‘developmental neoliberalism’ (Choi, 2007; 2012; Yoon, 2009). Here, developmentalism denotes ‘an ideology holding that economic progress is best achieved when the state leads the nation in promoting economic change’ (Hill et al., 2012: 6). The developmentalist economic growth with industrialisation and urbanisation in South Korea during the 1960s and 1980s was led by the state controlling strategies, policies, capital, and economic structure to foster and protect domestic industries. However, over the last two to three decades, neoliberal restructuring in the national economy seems to have dominated, introducing deregulation and privatisation policies aiming at liberating the financial and capital market,

opening the national market to imports and decentralising some central governmental roles by restoring the local municipal system with local elections. Particularly after the 1997 Asian financial crisis, neoliberalism gained more prominence in South Korea through the restructuring of the national economy following the IMF Bailout programme. This required the country to accept neoliberal reforms, including austerity and high-interest rate policies, the opening and liberalising of foreign exchange, capital and trade markets, state downsizing, dissolution of the *jaebol* (Korean large conglomerates) and public service curtailment (Yoon, 2009: 51; Choi, 2012: 102). This has also impacted the internal labour market, for many businesses went bankrupt due to the high-interest rate and credit crunch, resulting in rising unemployment and increasing labour market flexibility (cf. Ji, 2011: 218).

Nevertheless, there have been many policies in South Korea that seem to be at odds with neoliberalism in theory, such as the state intervention in the interest and exchange rates and the national financial support for private companies in response to the economic crisis. Also, the expansion of welfare and redistributive policies, such as introducing comprehensive real estate holding and increased property transfer taxes, seem to be against the trend of neoliberalism in the Western context (Yoon, 2009: 53). In providing his analysis on neoliberalism in South Korea, Yoon (2009) argues that neoliberal policies in the country, combined with the growth-prioritised national developmentalism, often involve policy intervention against market principles for economic growth, and ‘are used as a mobilising strategy to achieve national competitiveness and developmental goals such as high(er) growth rate, increase in export and catching up (with rich countries)’ (Yoon, 2009: 51, 55). Therefore, as Choi (2011) suggests, the developmental neoliberalisation helps understand how neoliberal globalisation is differently accommodated and internalised in the South Korean context (Choi, 2011: 464). However, it is also important to note that economic policies are often different from neoliberalism in theory, as ‘pragmatic and opportunistic considerations play an important part’ (Harvey, 2005: 71) in state practices to win votes and stay in power.

Based on the understanding of neoliberalism regarding the discrepancy between theory and practice, with the example of neoliberal process in South Korea, this thesis provides labour migrants are incorporated in South Korea following the industrial restructuring and the increased demand for a cheaper workforce. In addition, the thesis shows how Korean multicultural policies and discourses arose under the developmental mantra of improving the national economy and the neoliberal imperative of being competitive (see Chapter 4).

Urban neoliberal development

Cities have become central sites in neoliberal scholarship for studying the temporal and spatial unfolding of neoliberalism (Brenner and Theodore, 2002), as neoliberal policies and practices play out against a background of weakening city governments, post-Keynesian fiscal constraints, the retrenchment of the welfare national state, the increasing (speculative) global movement of financial capital, and global location strategies of transnational corporations and competition between localities (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 367-8; Peck, Theodore and Brenner, 2009: 49, 57-8; Peck and Tickell, 1994: 281).¹² There appears to be a consensus in urban scholarship that, under neoliberalism, cities have become strategic spaces for attracting capital, and reconstructing urban discourses, representations, policies, institutions, or governance in pursuit of neoliberal market-oriented economic growth (Harvey, 1989a; Hall and Hubbard, 1998; Peck and Tickell, 2002).

To grasp the transformation of neoliberal urban governance, I note the concept of 'urban entrepreneurialism', an economic growth-first and innovation-centred discourse, strategy and form of local government/governance (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Hall and Hubbard, 1998; Harvey, 1989a; 2005; Jessop, 1997; 1998; Parkinson and Harding, 1995). Noting the shifting trend of contemporary cities in their role from providing services to attracting capital and jobs, Harvey (1989a) defines urban entrepreneurialism as a mode of urban governance based on

¹² For the summary of recent literature on urban neoliberalisation, see Morange and Fol, 2014: 6-7.

‘public-private partnership’ seeking (external) funding sources, investment, employment, speculative activities, such as property development, and ‘the political economy of place’, including city image upgrading and constructing cultural, shopping and office centres and industrial complexes (Harvey, 1989a: 7-8). Jessop (1998) also notes how the entrepreneurial urban process involves introducing new markets, new sources of labour supply or new (methods of producing) urban place/space for production, consumption, living, working, and servicing, which often entails remaking the city image, or repositioning of the city in interurban competitions (Jessop, 1998: 79; see also Jessop, 1997; Jessop and Sum, 2000). What is distinctive in the urban entrepreneurial process is that, while there could be a promotion of the existing industries, many post-industrial cities take a more neoliberal form of selling themselves by (re-)making of the self-image of a city through the narrative of an entrepreneurial, creative, or cultural city (Jessop, 1997; 1998; Jessop and Sum, 2000; Wu, 2003).

This is where my study is particularly related. Although I rarely use the term ‘urban entrepreneurialism’ or ‘entrepreneurial city’ in this thesis, I examine the key features of neoliberal urban governance, such as ‘public-private partnership’, ‘the political economy of place’ and the narratives or discourse of (re-)imagining city in analysing the DSZ project of promoting Ansan and Wongok-dong as a multicultural city and special place. In Chapter 5, I explore the narrative of the self-image making of the Ansan multicultural city and the outsourcing relationship between public and private groups in providing services for migrants. In Chapter 6, I focus on the activity of promoting Wongok-dong’s multicultural food street to attract visitors. Through these two chapters, I examine how multiculturalism is politically imagined, how it materialises with the economic practices and how the area transforms, showing the gap between the imaginary and reality of the multicultural city/place.

However, it must be borne in mind that the urban neoliberal process can unevenly developed among regions, and not all events in cities are neoliberal. As Scharenberg and Bader (2009) point out, discussions about neoliberal cities overlook the alternative actors and activities

resisting neoliberalism (Scharenberg and Bader, 2009: 326). It is also important not to treat all political economic activities in the contemporary cities as entrepreneurial, or, conversely, to interpret all entrepreneurial activities as economically driven (Jessop, 1998). In addition, some argue that the thesis of urban entrepreneurialism underplays the role of local governments (Boyle and Hughes, 1994; Lawless, 1994) or their continuous managerial service provision for citizens (Owen, 2002). Moreover, the image construction of the entrepreneurial cities can be overstated, as it may remain only at the level of imagery and rhetoric (Hubbard and Hall, 1998: 7) or it may be resisted (Kenny, 1995). What these suggest is the importance of looking at specific contexts urban development to see how and to what extent the features of the neoliberal urban processes discussed at the theoretical level are present and what are the contingent elements or forces that affect the observed phenomena.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to connect key perspectives and concepts to empirical discussions in this thesis. While recognising the importance of everyday social or spatial practices of contacts and interactions across cultural or ethnic differences, I problematised the tendency to focus on ethnic or migrant status in scholarship on urban everyday multiculture, arguing that understanding ethnicity and migrants is not sufficient for understanding multiculture. To develop this view, I introduced an approach to culture and political economy which treats them as analytically separable but practically interdependent, and suggested considering political economic dimensions, particularly urban neoliberal process, in analysing the (re-)shaping of urban multiculture in Wongok-dong. By so doing, this thesis aims to expand our understanding of multiculture to something constituted by both cultural and political economic elements. I have also argued that it is important to explore people's experiences and evaluations of multiculture, in relation to what they do and how they inhabit the multicultural space. Having located urban multiculture in the relationship between culture and political economy in these ways, I now move to the methodology, methods, and research ethics of the study.

3. Methodological consideration and the research methods

This chapter outlines the methodological approach to the study and the research methods utilised for data collection and analysis. Firstly, ethnography is discussed as a way of understanding local, everyday multiculture. This is followed by a consideration of how the research was conducted in terms of collecting data through ethnographic fieldwork from December 2017 to May 2019 in the study area, involving mixed methods of participant observations, interviews, group discussions, and archival/desk research. A computer software package was used to code the materials following the completion of the field work. Finally, a reflection upon the fieldwork and ethical issues raised in the field is provided.

3.1. Methodological approach

Ethnography as interpretive and explanatory research activity

This thesis seeks to identify underlying cultural and political economic forces at work in the construction of a multicultural special place in Wongok-dong, including gaining an understanding of people's experiences and interpretations of the process. To achieve this aim, ethnographic fieldwork was chosen to obtain empirical materials.

Ethnography is a research perspective, activity, and written product which reconstructs the research subjects' (people's) everyday experiences, based on the researcher's fieldwork, to understand their culture and the meaning of their everyday practices. Such a first-hand exploration is ideal for capturing data about the lives of the research participants at a specific time and place, by producing descriptive texts providing the participants' subjective interpretations of their practices and of their social environments, places and spaces, events, activities and so on. In addition to representing the participants' point of view, ethnographic analysis seeks to *understand* their 'the structures of signification' (Geertz, 1973: 5-10, 43): the ways in which meanings are produced, perceived, and interpreted by and between the people in the shared culture. As such, the role of ethnographers in this interpretive tradition is to provide what

Geertz (1973) popularises as ‘thick description’: an analysis of the culture under study by adding the researcher’s own ‘interpretation and translation into a language or means of representing’ (Freeman, 2014: 828). Therefore, from this view, good ethnographic description performs the dual task of ‘[researchers’] own constructions of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to’ (Geertz, 1973: 9).

Yet, while recognising an interpretive or hermeneutic aspect in studying human activities and social phenomena to understand their meaning(s), it is also worth noting that ethnography is also about acknowledging processes that people under study are not aware of, but which affect their lives. Social research not only takes people’s experiences and interpretations of events or practices seriously to understand the society, but also aims to provide explanation by seeking to identify elements or conditions that may contingently give rise to an event and influence people’s experiences and interpretations therein. From the critical realist perspective, societies depend on people’s concepts and activities, yet such concepts and activities presuppose pre-existing structures (Sayer, 2000: 18). For example, the popular perception of ethnic minority group(s) in a society presupposes the society has ethnic, ‘racial’ relations which have formed over time under the influence of other forces, such as migration. Such structural forces cannot be reduced to the structures of signification. As Davies (1999) argues, while ‘ethnographers are encouraged to explore the phenomenological reality of actors’ understandings and interpretations and their effects on social structure’, it is important ‘not to take these interpretations as fully constitutive of social structure’ (Davies, 1999: 20). In other words, while ethnographic study foregrounds both the research subject(s) (people) and the researcher’s interpretations, it should not entail the reduction of social life to our understanding of it. Instead, by seeing the social world as the interaction of human agency and social structure that ‘human action is enabled and constrained by social structures, but this action, in turn, reproduces or transforms those structures’¹³, everyday

¹³ Cf. Archer 1995; Bhaskar 1989

life and places can be considered as a site to examine the effect of that relationship (Porter, 1993: 593). In other words, conducting ethnographic research should be sensitive to the unacknowledged conditions of what the individuals or groups being studied are doing, as well as the unintended consequences of their activities or practices, while recognising the importance of people's own understanding of the world (see Sayer, 2000: 13-18).

The question that arises here is how such ethnography can be conducted. This is considered in terms of the field of ethnographic study on urban, everyday multiculture in the following paragraphs.

Urban, everyday multiculture and ethnography

Many of the empirical studies in the literature on urban, everyday multiculture have been based on ethnographic fieldworks in culturally diverse sites such as buses, housing complexes, streets, markets, parks, neighbourhoods, and public schools, and in various local and national settings (e.g., Hall, 2012; Neal et al., 2015; Noble, 2009; Watson, 2006; Wilson, 2011; Wise and Velayutham, 2014). Ethnographic fieldwork is useful in exploring the 'local liveality' (Amin, 2002: 959) of multiculturalism, which involves the micro-level, mundane, and situated encounters and negotiations between ethnic, cultural differences (see also Berg and Sigona, 2013). Spaces, or places, have become particularly important due to the increasing geographic dispersion of migrants and uneven experiences of interactions and tensions between different ethnic or cultural groups (Neal et al., 2018). For example, built environments facilitate social mixing and interactions; spaces like franchised cafés or eateries in cities provide a routine, familiar, relaxed environment for customers, where they know what to do, creating ordinary practices and interactions between people with different cultural ethnic backgrounds (Jones et al., 2015; Wise, 2011).

While observing daily mixings and negotiations in 'prosaic sites' (Amin, 2002: 959) when studying local multiculture is clearly important, undertaking ethnographic fieldwork that could identify cultural and political economic process(es) shaping multiculture in Wongok-dong was

an aim of this work. Here I draw upon Massey's concept of a 'global sense of place' which views places as 'moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale' (Massey, 1994: 154), which go beyond a specific local place, to the regional, national, transnational, or global scales. As Massey rightly points out, the 'persistent identification of place with "community"' entails 'misidentification' (Massey, 1994: 153). A place is not composed of a single group or a single identity: certainly, heterogeneous groups or identities are necessary to make a place multicultural, although this does not entail a multicultural place is all about the presence of diverse culture and communities. Rather, places can be (re-)imagined as consisting of a mixture of processes, conflicts, and sets of linkages to the outside and wider scales, accumulated histories, and elements from a globalised but geographically unevenly developed world (Massey, 1994: 155-6). When approaching Wongok-dong from this perspective, the neighbourhood is not simply a particular locus where migrant and non-migrant residents live or come and go, (re-)forming their identities and ethnic or 'racial' relations. It is where many different activities take place and many different practices occur, with relations between individuals or groups often intersecting and connecting further, to outside of Wongok-dong, the Ansan city, and South Korea. For example, the promotion of a multicultural food street and DSZ is a local project led by the Ansan government, but it is linked to the wider political economic process, such as the inter-city competition for regional or national institutional or financial support for local areas (see Chapter 5). The incorporation of migrants in this local city is better explained within the context of regional labour migration in Asian and the global uneven capitalist development (see Chapter 4). Therefore, while visiting Wongok-dong to observe what is happening and who the actors are in such events, and to listen to what people say, attempts were made to trace any relations or links that they have. Therefore, access to as many different groups in the area as possible was sought, rather than spending a long time with any particular individual or group, so as to better picture the relations between them. To uncover

the structural influences on the activities, archival and desk research for collecting related data, such as history, discourse, and policy, can also be included as an ethnographical method (more on this later).

A similar approach can be found in studies exploring the transnational connections and practices of migrants. For example, Schiller and Çağlar (2013) provide ethnographies of everyday migrant entrepreneurial practices that form multiple social relations and social fields situated in local cities in Germany but are also extended to other cities and countries through supply chains and family ties (Schiller and Çağlar, 2013: 499). While these works focus on how migrant groups or migrant related variables make a place transnational (see Chapter 2), the current study goes beyond such a scope, viewing migrants as a part of Wongok-dong by locating them within their relation to migrant support groups, to the local government, to non-migrant residents, or to other migrant groups. By avoiding associating Wongok-dong solely with migrant communities or cultural diversity or difference, this study attempts to make sense of the area as a complex web of social relations and cultural, social, and political economic processes that influence what happens there and how people experience and evaluate the things going on.

In the next section, I describe what was done in the field and how an attempt was made to do the ethnographic practice discussed above.

3.2. Research methods of the study

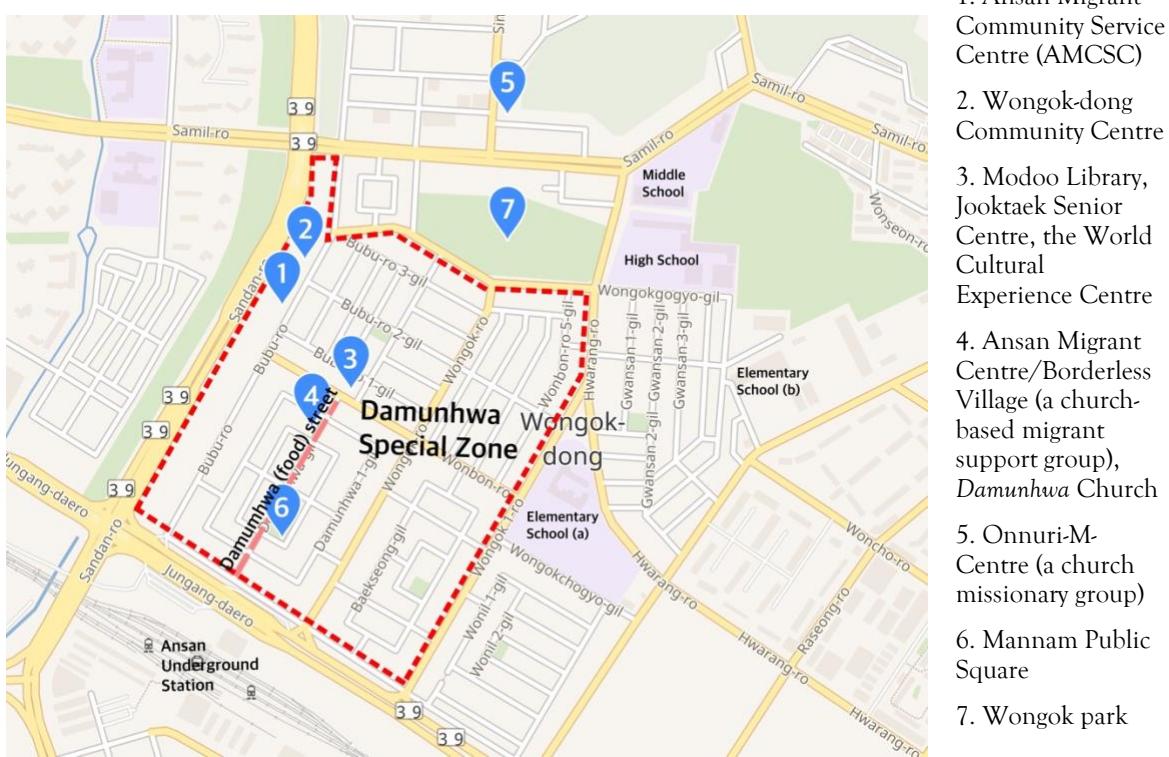


Figure 1. Fieldwork map of Wongok-dong (local actors and places visited marked)

My ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in Wongok-dong from December 2017 to May 2019 on a part-time basis, with visits to the area once or twice a week in the earlier stages and later, as the research proceeded, an average of three days a week. The fieldwork involved: a) participant observations of local places and group activities; b) interviews with local actors, including activists, public officers, ethnic Korean migrant and non-migrant residents; and c) group discussions with the non-migrant Korean residents. Archive and desk research was also conducted and visual materials such as leaflets were collected during the fieldwork to collect supplementary materials.

Observations of the migrant support groups

One of the most important activities in ethnographic fieldwork is participant observation. Observation allows an ethnographer to create a (relatively long-term) presence in certain settings to study, experiencing and reflecting the social life and processes that take place there. During

the fieldwork for this study, the researcher participated in some local group activities, mainly through voluntary work, taking pictures of the events and talking to people. The observed groups include a research and education group for migrants' human rights, a small library for migrant children, a senior centre, and a church-based migrant support centre (see figure 2.), though not all of these observations are used in the analytical chapters (this is explained later).

Name of groups	Period	Observed activities and sites
Gyeonggi-do Research and Education Group for Migrants' Human Rights	December 2017 - March 2019	Regular (once every quarter or more often) public-private network meetings between activists, public officers and researchers to discuss different current issues in relation to migrants
Modoo Library for Migrant Children	December 2017 - February 2018	A cultural programme for migrant children to experience of different traditional games and a candle craft class for migrant mothers
Ansan Migrant Centre (Borderless Village)	April - December 2018	Cultural events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dance performances at the public square - migrants' football match at one football field - cultural experience programme for students at one elementary school in near Wongok-dong - teaching migrant women to make candles - Christmas party at the centre
Onnuri-M-Centre (Church missionary group)	September - December 2018	The piano class for migrant children the Korean language class (each once per week) at the centre

Figure 2. List of the participant observation groups (including activities and sites)

The participant observation began with a research and education group for migrants' human rights, located in the Ansan city. To establish contacts in the area, one of the researchers who I worked with in South Korea in my previous job introduced me to a local actor, Kim Min-ho, who became the gatekeeper of my fieldwork. He was working for the research and education group and let me participate in a group event: the local network meetings. By attending these meetings, I met other local actors, including public officers of the local governments, pastors and priests helping migrants, and researchers, which enabled visits to some of them at a later stage.

At one of these network meetings, I met a researcher, Kang Eui-jeong, who was working as director of the library for migrant children in Wongok-dong. When I first met her, she took me to the library, showing me the place and explaining the activities which were taking place

there. That library is one of seven libraries for migrant children, in seven different cities, which were established by a civilian group in 2008 with financial support from a large private trading company in South Korea as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The company suffered financial difficulties leading it to cease its funding, so the library was incorporated into the Ansan government and outsourced to a local university to which Kang is associated. As such, local actors, the local government, and the local university run the library and construct local multiculture in Wongok-dong. I was given permission to observe and assist the library staff at one of their cultural weekend events for migrant children. The event allowed the migrant children attending, who were presumably mainly Chinese as they spoke Chinese, to learn about the traditional cultures of different countries. Here, a few young female migrants from different countries – China, Indonesia, and Thailand – participated by reading a book to the migrant children in both Korean and presumably their home country language. They also showed the children how to play traditional Chinese, Indonesian, and Thai games, such as Chinese jump rope and Indonesian jacks. Although this observation is not used in the subsequent chapters, this experience demonstrated how the public (the local government) and private (a local university) relationship can work to provide a cultural programme for migrants to include them in the local society (see Chapter 5). This library was also helpful during the fieldwork, particularly in the early stages, as it became somewhere to go in Wongok-dong even if I had no one and no place to visit. As the library always welcomed me, I was able to just come to this place, read a book, drink coffee, or talk to Kang, who gave advice about doing fieldwork and talked about the neighbourhood.

While the library became an entry point into the organisations in the neighbourhood, as well as a place to sit and relax, the experience of participating in and observing an event as a voluntary worker helped me access other places in Wongok-dong because I felt less shy about volunteering. From Spring 2018, I was able to observe some outdoor events, such as migrants' dancing and singing performances and a migrants' football match. The events were held by the

Ansan Migrant centre/Borderless Village, a local protestant church-based migrant support group, established in Wongok-dong for over two decades, which provides food, education (e.g., Korean language classes), space for temporary stays, particularly for refugees, and church services. At the events, I handed out flyers which introduced the performance participants to those who had come to see the event, collected rubbish left by the players and cleaned the square after they left, and retrieved balls that had gone over the net. After participating in the group's events during the year, I was able to ask for an interview with a group leader.

My voluntary work continued with a protestant church group, Onnuri-M-centre, in Wongok-dong. Established in 2005, the group provides Korean classes, cultural classes (for example, piano, violin, dance), free medical services, free legal counselling, and so on. I participated in their language and cultural classes for about four months, teaching migrant adults Korean language and migrant children how to play the piano. The migrants were mostly young migrant workers and refugees and their families from more than 20 countries including China, Myanmar, the Philippines, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. While helping, I was able to see how those migrants gather using the spaces and services of the group.

As mentioned earlier, many of my observations of the activities, such as cultural programmes for migrant children in the library and teaching the Korean language and piano to migrants are not analysed in the empirical chapters. Nevertheless, they are described here because some people I met during observations are included in the analysis chapters and, more importantly, because the whole process of the participant observation helped me to sense the way in which Wongok-dong is lived according to the interaction between the local actors and migrants. Through my participation as a voluntary worker, I learnt about the social relations between migrants and support groups, and between private and public groups. I witnessed the ways in which the migrant support groups provide educational, religious, and other cultural services, as well as how migrants use the services and attend the events, and heard about the partnership or outsourcing relationship between the local groups and the local government for

implementing public policy programmes and services for migrants (see Chapter 5). Also, I observed the networks between activists, researchers, policy makers, and other actors engaged in migrant-related activities, and the agendas and issues regarding the inclusion of migrants in the society.

Interviews and informal talks

As I became familiar to the local groups and built trust with them, some of those I had met during the participant observation came to participate in the interviews later on or helped me to find other interviewees. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 17 participants, including activists, public officers, shopkeepers, and residents, asking them a set of prepared, written questions with prompted, supplementary questions where necessary.¹⁴ The questions differed depending on who was being interviewed. Residents were generally asked about their personal background or stories of living or working in Wongok-dong, the spatial and social changes in the area and of neighbours, and views on *Damunhwa* in terms of living with different cultural ethnic groups, and the future of the neighbourhood, such as Wongok-dong as a multicultural tourist destination. The occupation of the interviewee was an important factor in determining questions. For example, residents working as property agents were asked about the property market in Wongok-dong: the prices of the houses in the area and who the landlords were. Activists and public officers were asked more about their perception of public policies and programmes regarding the DSZ project and their relationships with other actors.

In addition to formal interviews, informal conversations took place with people I met during my participant observations in different places, such as at the corner of the public square, the rooms of the senior centres, the church-based migrant supporting centres, and the outdoor events. These spontaneous talks also particularly helped me learn about how the people who are not in the specific migrant related groups or organisations, or the local/national governments

¹⁴ For the list of the research participants included in these interviewees, see Appendix 1.

perceive Wongok-dong, their migrant neighbours, and their social, cultural, and economic life. For example, I visited two senior centres (day centres) to observe the daily life of the long-term migrant and non-migrant residents, who were mostly ethnic Koreans, and to talk to them. One of the centres for non-migrant Koreans, usually attended by seniors over 65 years who have lived in the neighbourhood for decades, is a social place for them to have a meal and spend time together. After I introduced myself as a PhD student in my first visit, I helped serve food and wash the dishes, and joined them in playing the Korean card game, *hwatu*, as well as doing physical exercise from my second visit. I also tried to converse with them, asking about their experiences of the changes in the neighbourhood. Many of them were willing to tell me a little bit about the past of the area when there were little or no foreigners, and about their personal experiences of migrant neighbours. I also visited another senior centre, this time for Korean Chinese migrant seniors, and subsequently interviewed the leader of the centre.

Most of the interviewees and informal talk participants were ethnic Koreans – non-migrant Koreans and migrant Korean Chinese – the majority ethnic group in Wongok-dong. This was partly due to the language differences between migrants and myself, which affected the range of the people I met and could talk to and build rapport with. However, more importantly, the ethnic Koreans were more likely long-term residents, including the elderly in the senior centres and the participants in the discussion group described below, and therefore more actively involved in activities or events in Wongok-dong.

Group discussions

Following an interview in January 2019 with a public officer, Park Hyeon-ju, who was working as the head of the Wongok-dong Community Centre, I received a useful invitation. After talking about her perception of Wongok-dong and ideas to make the area a better place to live in and attract visitors from outside, she asked me whether I could come to the centre every week to talk with a group of residents about developing the story of Wongok-dong to sell as a tourist place. I gladly accepted her offer, seeing it as a great chance to meet more residents. The total

number of participants in the resident group was 20, although not all of them regularly attended the meetings. The residents were composed of those who were currently living in Wongok-dong and/or had been working in the area for decades, mostly non-migrant Koreans with a few migrant Korean Chinese, and in the 40-60 age range.

During the first five of the seven meetings with these residents, I gave short, 30-minute lectures on neighbourhood regeneration, storytelling as a place marketing technique, and successful cases of making an area attract more visitors. A group discussion followed each of these. I asked them what they knew about their neighbourhood, such as the history, culture, and economy, what their concerns were about living in a multicultural area with cultural or ethnic others, and what they thought is important for making Wongok-dong more attractive to visitors. The last two meetings were held outside and involved walking around Wongok-dong together while we talked about the past and the present of the places in the neighbourhood. We also visited the Wongok park, where mostly (Korean) Chinese people would gather to walk, dance, play badminton and other physical activities, observing them and talking about the cultural differences between Chinese and Korean people (see Chapters 7 and 8).

As a data collection technique, this group discussion constituted a kind of focus group as the activity in the group was focused on debating a specific set of topics about Wongok-dong. Yet, as Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) acknowledge, the term focus group is used in different ways and can be confusing (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999: 4). The group discussion in my study is an example of this as it involved not only the residents' participation in talking about their neighbourhood, but also my participation in encouraging them to talk to each other and imparting a little of my knowledge on local/urban regeneration and storytelling place marketing. Also, walking around the neighbourhood and visiting places is a creative way of involvement in group interaction, and when combined with participant observations, exemplifies how ethnographic methods can be unpredictable and occur spontaneously. This group discussion was not in my fieldwork plan, but it proved helpful.

Secondary data collection

‘To understand a phenomenon, you need to know its history’ (Glesne, 2011: 85). Likewise, to understand a local place, you need to know its wider context. Thus, archival materials were collected, including the historical records of the city and Wongok-dong, photos and central and local government policy documents, political activities related to the promotion of the DSZ and the multicultural food street, and the integration of migrants, all of which provided examples of public discourses. The sources of data were online and offline public institutions, including the Ansan City Office and the National Folk Museum of Korea, the library of the local university, and both national and local mainstream newspapers.

Another enjoyable aspect of the fieldwork was collecting visual materials. Whenever possible, I picked up leaflets displayed in public places. Often written in several languages, the leaflets include information such as the available educational, medical, and other welfare services, a guide to recycling, a Wongok-dong food map with a list of multicultural ethnic eateries, and a note of caution on social behaviours. These materials are of particular importance as they are related to the public services for migrants and the local government's DSZ and multicultural food street project. The visual images and texts in the materials facilitated analysis of how the local government represents multiculturalism (see Chapter 5 and 6). Moreover, some of the leaflets indicated the main concerns for residents and for public officers. For example, many leaflets and posters around the neighbourhood were about waste removal (see Chapter 8). These materials are explored further in the empirical chapters later in the thesis.

3.3. Data management, coding, and translation

Following the completion of fieldwork materials collection, the process of transcribing them verbatim was undertaken. They were not translated into English at this stage because it would have prevented me from appreciating some nuances, tones, or contexts of what was said. Following transcription, the data were loaded onto Atlas.ti, software which is designed to aid qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2019), for coding. This software proved particularly helpful

in categorising and managing data. Integrating documents into one place and coding texts helped me easily search for words and attach notes, as well as structure the large bodies of data thematically. Moreover, it was useful to identify key findings through the segmented texts attached to different categories of actors, activities, relations, contexts, and issues/phenomena. The coding outcome also showed which activities were more likely to occur, as well as which issues were more often mentioned among the research participants. Displaying the numbers of coded incidences within each category enabled checking of whether the results of the software output accorded with what I had found during my fieldwork. However, I should mention here that frequency is not always an indication of significance; some things which are less mentioned or less observed in fieldwork can be the most important issues in the study of the object. Therefore, I prioritised my own experience of and judgement about the fieldwork while using Atlas.ti. to help generate or modify research questions and analysing data.

The materials were translated into English for the thesis, although this was far from straightforward. The Korean language, especially when spoken, requires the understanding of the meaning from its context. Often, a sentence is missing the subject, which must be understood from what the speaker has already said: this was the main reason for using many square brackets when quoting participants. Furthermore, reading emotions is sometimes tricky. Though the Korean language is relatively direct in terms of people showing their emotions clearly compared to other languages which use euphemisms a lot, this depends on both the individual and the context. Therefore, when some a participant says something like ‘good’, I needed to be cautious about whether they said it in front of others and were simply being polite, or whether the person is always circumspect about what they say.

3.4. Reflections on the fieldwork

In conducting their fieldwork, ethnographic researchers come to be positioned somewhere at the intersection of the involved social relations. Considering the dynamics of the intersected, shared,

or conflicted meanings and positions between the researcher and the researched requires consideration of reflexivity in the research. Reflexivity entails acknowledging the presence of the researcher as, to a certain extent, part of the studied social world, as well as the inevitable influence of the researcher on both the research process and results. Therefore, ethnographers must recognise that their own social, cultural backgrounds, knowledge, and values are intertwined, interacting with their whole research process, especially when forming relationships with the researched people and/or place during fieldwork (Davies, 1999: 1-3). Next, I briefly describe how I navigated between the different people I encountered in the study area and how people read me in terms of class, sexuality, and ethnicity.

Feeling a stranger

Ethnographers often lack ‘a local vantage point’ at the early stage of ethnographic research, instead expressing their own views of the researched site (Kusenbach, 2003: 460). My prior conception of Wongok-dong involved two seemingly opposing images: one of multicultural food with ‘authentic’ Asian restaurants and a street food market: the other of Asian male migrants who are often represented and stereotyped in the South Korean media as poor and (potentially) criminal.¹⁵ Accordingly, my initial position in Wongok-dong was between a tourist in a multicultural attraction of the city and a stranger in a migrant enclave.

My first impression of Wongok-dong was not too pleasant. The place looked lively with migrants presumably shopping, eating, and hanging out, but many of them were young male Asians and walking near these men made me uncomfortable as they often looked me right in the eye, which is commonly considered rude in South Korea when people are strangers. It seems likely that the prevalent stereotype emphasised in public news media and online of Asian males as potential sexual or violent criminals contributed to how I felt during the visit, and indeed, this affected my visits to the area during the whole period of the fieldwork. I did not go there after

¹⁵ I discuss this more in Chapters 4 and 8.

dark, and I was careful to dress wearing loose fitting clothes and trousers, even though I felt guilty about having such prejudice at the same time.

Despite feeling nervous walking in an area so dominated by men, I was enthusiastic about the place, looking for various cultural scenes and international food, as well as eating some South Asian food. As Hage (1997) argues, searching for authentic ethnic food, often by the middle class, majority ethnic group of a society, is partly a way of accumulating cosmopolitan capital, differentiating themselves through consuming cultural difference in inner-city eateries. Though my visit was for my research, my expectation of authentic Southeast Asian food could also be seen as a kind of cosmo-multiculturalism that many Koreans with cultural and economic capital enjoy in eating ethnic food in restaurants.

As I visited Wongok-dong on a more regular basis, I began to feel less afraid or excited, gradually feeling more normal. However, even though I was in part becoming acquainted with the places and people, I often felt distance from them, mainly because I was a research student with the time to spend doing this fieldwork, rather than doing a normal job. I often felt momentarily embarrassed when migrants asked me what I do as I cannot talk about my research job, like when I met them in a Korean language class in a church. If I said that I do not work, some made awkward faces as if they were wondering how I live. When I was able to reveal my job, I still felt distance. One day in the middle of the dance performance event, I had a chat with one young Vietnamese migrant woman, who was probably in her 20s. I asked her where she was from and where she lived, as well as how she finds life in South Korea. When I asked her what she did, she said that she worked in a small factory near Wongok-dong that produces electronic components. Then she asked what I do, and I told her that I am a researcher – which soon brought an end to the conversation. This experience taught me that it is important to find common ground with the people I meet to enable a prolonged conversation.

Speaking English

Language is one of the most important elements of ethnographic research as it mediates the

relationship that researchers have with their research participants, helping or preventing the flow of conversation. While language similarity and difference affected the range of people I met and the communication I had with them during my fieldwork (as mentioned earlier), language itself made me reflect on the class dimension of Wongok-dong. On some occasions, I used English to talk to migrants from countries such as the Philippines and Nigeria. One day I happened to talk to a young male asylum seeker in his 20s from Liberia at the Ansan Migrant Centre building. With a look of surprise and pleasure, he told me that he usually could not find Koreans who speak English. What he said was interesting as it made me wonder about the pathway of his migration and who he had met since arriving in South Korea, as well as where he had been in the country. I did not hear about his background in Liberia: I ran into him twice, but as an asylum seeker, he was staying in South Korea on humanitarian grounds, eating and sleeping in a room in the building of the Ansan Migrant Centre. Listening to him, I contemplated how his experience would have differed had he come to South Korea as an international student or an English language teacher, where he could have had many chances to meet Koreans speaking English in a school, university, or private educational institution. That he saw me as a rare case of a Korean speaking English told me a little bit about class in Wongok-dong.

As a young woman

Conducting ethnographic fieldwork in Wongok-dong as a woman was a challenge: I often felt vulnerable when seen or approached by men. One young male African asylum seeker, for example, who told me of his perception of Koreans' English skills, asked for my phone number and texted me several times asking whether I have a boyfriend. Another Vietnamese man I met at the Onnuri-M-Centre also texted me several times asking what I was doing at the weekend and inviting me to parties. They had not shown their interest in me when they asked me for my phone number, and I naively viewed it as a chance to ask about their stories of coming to South Korea and their life in the country. However, after their texts asking me out, I realised my mistake. Furthermore, one employee at the centre told me that many young male migrants approach

young Korean women looking for relationships so they can get married and get a visa to stay in South Korea. Although I thought it might be a kind of unfounded rumour about migrants, I could not ignore what she said because I felt uncomfortable and vulnerable because of those approaches. After that, I took care to keep the boundary clear with young male migrants, not giving my personal contact information.

3.5. Ethical reflections on the fieldwork

Informing the research(er)

Transparency about the research was one of the main ethical issues I was confronted with in the field. In ethnographic fieldwork, the line between informed and uninformed is often unclear (Thorne, 1980: 287). Although I tried to introduce myself as a researcher when first meeting people, there were many occasions where this was not necessary, such as in the middle of observation working as a volunteer. Also, while I obtained informed consent from the formal interview participants and consent from the organisers of the activities that I participated, this was not the case for the people with whom I had short, spontaneous conversations nor for the participant observation of group discussions as I did not want to interrupt the ongoing activities. However, I usually let the people know that I was conducting a research study on multiculturalism in Wongok-dong, unless I was asked *not* to reveal myself as a researcher. For example, Kang, from the library for migrant children, told me not to mention that I am participating in order to observe the cultural programme due to their concern about the female migrants feeling uncomfortable if they knew. For these reasons, I had to choose to be overt or covert, depending on who I talked to or where the talks took place.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Good, ethical research ensures the confidentiality of the conversations between researcher and participants, with anonymity premised (Silverman, 2013). Yet, it was often difficult to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity in the middle of fieldwork, particularly during the interviews, as

some interviews were interrupted by a third person. Although sometimes the third person became another interviewee, or their presence was helpful to get more information, I was concerned that some interviewees' responses were exposed to others, even though the respondents seemed not to mind. Some respondents even let other people know that they were in the middle of an interview, seemingly proud of being interviewed.

Moreover, the confidentiality and anonymity of the study was affected by the bounded geographical and social scale of the field site. Although there were more than 27,000 residents in Wongok-dong (as of January 2019), plus more visitors from outside of the area, the number of residents regularly participating in the resident communities was much lower, meaning it is highly likely that they knew each other. Therefore, remaining completely confidential in terms of who I spoke to proved nearly impossible. For example, some informants asked me whether I had met a particular person (which I had), so I had to be honest with them to avoid them contacting that person to introduce them to me. However, I was careful not to reveal any details of the talks I had with others, and nobody asked me about what others said.

The names of all research participants in this study are pseudonyms (see Appendix 1), and attempts have been made not to disclose the exact position of the participants in their workplace (for example, I often use the words like a staff member, an employee, or a public officer). However, some local actors, including activists and researchers in the public groups, had been working in the same place for a long time, meaning they are probably well known, at least among the researchers and postgraduates in the field of studying multiculturalism in South Korea. As such, even if the research material is published or presented anonymously, it may be possible for some readers, especially in South Korea, to know who some of the participants are.

Taking photographs of people

There is often more than one party or agenda influencing ethical considerations in conducting ethnographic research, with each having their own guidelines or clarifying the personal or security protection of those represented (Pink, 2013: 60). Taking photographs of people was an

often confronted issue, particularly in places where children were participating. In observing the cultural activities, like playing traditional games and experiencing different national costumes, food, musical instruments, and plays at an elementary school and at the library, I was told not to take pictures of children or students. One staff member from the Borderless Village, who was in charge of holding the cultural experience programme, told me that previously they had some complaints from parents of students attending their programme after they put the photos of the children in the activity on their website. Taking photos of people in a religious group was also refused at the Onnuri-M-Centre, particularly to protect some of the congregation who had converted from other religions to Christianity. For these reasons, great care was taken when taking pictures of children and people while focusing on activities and places. More importantly, although I personally have many pictures taken during my fieldwork, the thesis features photos of places, buildings, signs, and posters for the most part. In the few photographs of people's activities which are used in the study, their faces have been blurred if they are recognisable from the picture. Where possible, pictures taken from a distance were used when people featured to make them less identifiable.

Reward for interview participants

Before I began the interviews, I was advised by one researcher/ethnographer in the local university to pay interview participants, and I decided to follow that advice as they were more experienced in doing ethnographic research in South Korea. So, although the participants were recruited without financial incentives, as stated in the research participant information sheet, after the interviews were finished, I offered about ₩50,000 (equivalent to £33) to the first three interviewees in return for their time. However, only one of them accepted, with the other two refusing on the grounds that I am a student. Subsequently, I prepared some small gifts, such as a set of candles I made and gave these to the participants after the interviews to thank them for their participation (the gifts were not mentioned in the participant information sheet, nor in the recruitment or arrangements for interviews, participant observation, or any other activities in my

fieldwork). While the resident interviewees accepted the gift with pleasure, those from public offices did not as they are legally not allowed to receive any financial or material reward from others.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the methodology, methods, and ethics of the current study. The ethnographic research process has been described: collecting and analysing data drawing on the conception of place as an articulation of social relations, experiences, and understandings, which are often linked to the processes on wider scales. Wongok-dong is often seen simply as a migrant concentrated or multicultural neighbourhood in academic works or media in South Korea, as was mentioned in the introduction. However, Wongok-dong represents much more than just the presence of ethnic or migrant groups or cultural diversity. In visiting places, participating in activities, and meeting people in Wongok-dong, I tried to place myself somewhere between the complex web of individual and group relations and their understandings, which are embedded in the structural elements or processes that are extended from the local area to regional, national, or global level. The research participants and groups of the study have been outlined in this chapter to provide the context of Wongok-dong in the following chapter, which all together set the scene of the following four chapters of data analysis.

4. Historical, geographical, and discursive contexts of Wongok-dong

This chapter sets the scene for the remaining chapters (5, 6, 7, and 8), delineating the historical, geographical, and discursive contexts to understand Wongok-dong in relation to labour migration and multiculturalism in South Korea. First, it outlines how Wongok-dong has transformed into a labour migrant neighbourhood in the contexts of global and regional labour migration and the national and local economic and manufacturing industrial restructuring. Next, the discursive context of multiculturalism in South Korea is provided, which focuses on how transforming into a multicultural society has been justified and how migrants are represented in the public discourse and policies. The different representation of marriage migrants and their families as targets of social integration, as well as low-skilled labour migrants, particularly Asian migrants, as potential criminals, which Wongok-dong has often been associated with, is highlighted by exploring the political, economic, and discursive background of Wongok-dong.

4.1. Wongok-dong in Asian labour migration

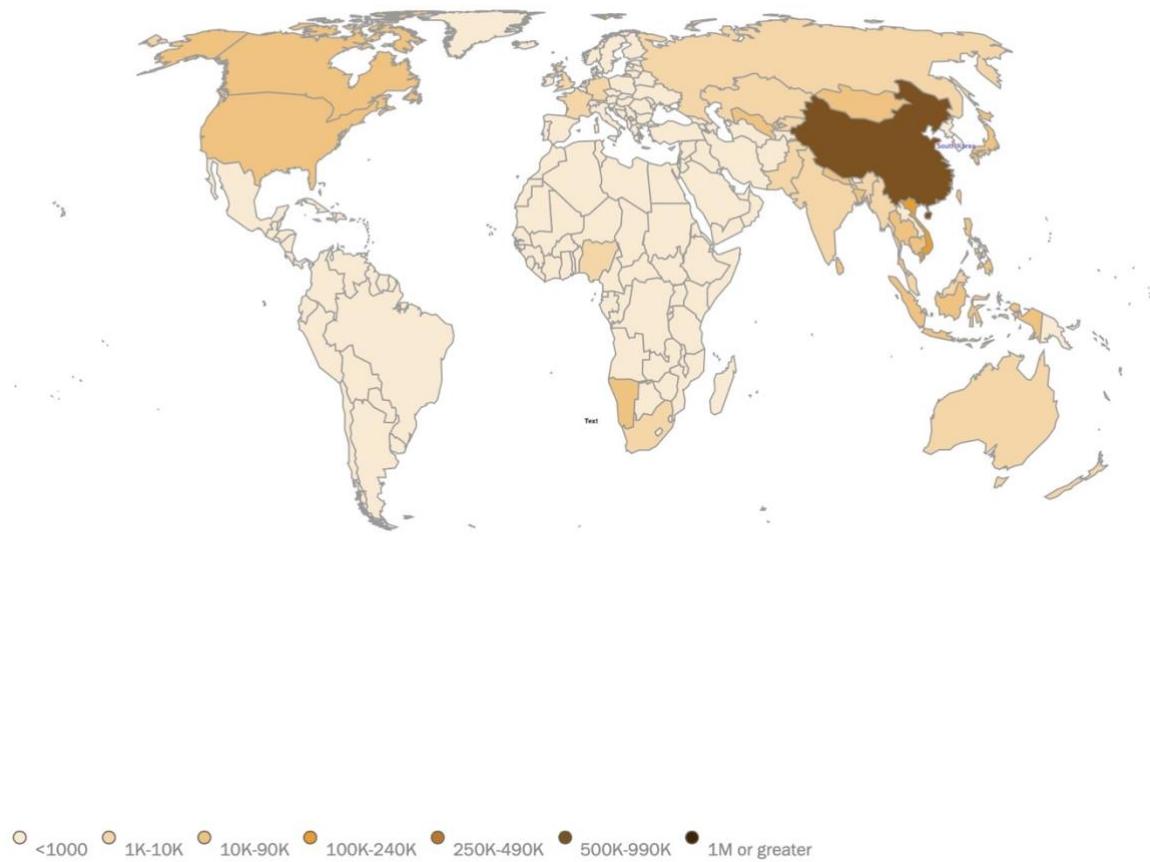


Figure 3. Incoming migrants to South Korea from the map of Origins and Destinations of the World's Migrants, 1990-2017¹⁶

Migration has been viewed as a means of mobilising labour for capital, particularly to meet the demand for a cheap workforce (de Hass et al., 2020: 49). In this sense, global migration can be considered a 'global labor supply system', absorbing a number of people into world labour markets, particularly from poor to rich countries (Sassen, 1988: 31-6). In the regional labour migration in Asia, South Korea has emerged as one of the main migrant-receiving countries in the 2000s, a change from its past.¹⁷ In terms of labour supply, South Korea mainly relied on domestic rural-to-urban migration during the second half of the 20th century, coupled with the

¹⁶Source: Pew research Centre. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/interactives/global-migrant-stocks-map/> [accessed 12 July 2021].

¹⁷ Among the OECD countries, South Korea is the top destination country for Asian migration as of 2018-9 (Asian Development Bank Institute, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and International Labour Organization, 2021).

baby boomer generation which followed the Korean War (1950-1953), to sustain its labour-intensive manufacturing industries (Bauer, 1990; 1995). The use of the foreign workforce began in the late 1980s, following the increase in labour demand in the labour-intensive industries, such as manufacturing companies and coal mines, and particularly in small and medium businesses. This was also a time of nationwide structural changes: economic development, democratisation, the rise of the labour movement, an increased level of education and income, decreasing numbers of the economically active population, high-tech industrialisation, and the expansion of the service industry.¹⁸ Of particular importance was the unionisation of Korean workers following their labour struggles, mostly taking place at the large companies, which resulted in them getting higher wages, contributing to the imbalance of labour wages between large and small-medium companies.¹⁹ Furthermore, in the context of globalisation, international competition and South Korea's manufacturing-based export-led economy intensified the higher dependence of small-medium sized companies on cheap labour. This is particularly the case for a number of small-medium sized vendors in hierarchical sub-contracting relationships with large companies or conglomerates as they are under pressure to reduce costs. Therefore, the influx of low-skilled labour migrants from developing countries in Asia has come about to solve the problem of lowering labour wages and having competitive prices in the global market. In this context, labour migrants, mostly young male Asian workers, have come to fill the low-skilled jobs in South Korea.

Low-skilled labour migrants usually enter South Korea with a Non-Professional (E-9) Visa under the Employment Permit System (hereafter, EPS) for non-Korean ethnic foreigners, or

¹⁸ This does not mean that the labour migration into South Korea at the early stage was only about those migrants working in the above-mentioned industries – for example, it was reported in one of the major newspapers, Dong-ah Ilbo, in 1987, that there are Filipino domestic workers in Gangnam, the richest region in Seoul, signalling the beginning of hiring foreign workers in the country (Seol, 2003).

¹⁹ In 1987, following the end of military authoritarian government returning to the direct presidential election following the June Democratic Uprising in Korea, local Korean workers also secured human and labour rights demanding higher wages and a better work environment through a national general strike (the 1987 Great Workers' Struggle) in July-September.

Work and Visit (H-2) Visa for ethnic Korean foreigners. The EPS is a set of laws concerning the employment of foreign workers in Korean small-medium sized businesses, which have a shortage of (Korean national) manpower in construction, farming, fishing, livestock, manufacturing, and a few service industries. The EPS specifies the duration of the foreign workers' stay, which is designed to prevent them from becoming a Korean citizen by limiting their right to stay up to four years and ten months (or six years in the case of re-entry). Furthermore, the EPS restricts the migrants' rights to choose their workplace by only allowing them to change their workplace up to three times within three years (or up to two times within the extended period), and only when the reason to change their workplace is accepted by the Minister of Employment and Labor following the Act on the Employment of Foreign Workers. Therefore, the EPS provides a condition for effectively utilising foreign workers in the above-mentioned industries. As a result, labour migrants are often exposed to labour exploitation, such as long working hours and overdue wages (late payments).

Unlike the Non-Professional (E-9) Visa, the Work and Visit (H-2) Visa is designed to allow overseas Koreans with foreign nationality to enter Korea on a five-year visa and seek employment in low-skilled jobs in South Korea. This system was established in 2007 to open the national border particularly to the over eighteen-year-old ethnic Koreans in China and the Commonwealth of Independent States (hereafter, CIS). Migrants with this visa can work in low-skilled jobs, mainly in the construction, manufacturing, and service industries in South Korea. Though there is still the limited period of sojourn and jobs they may take, the ethnic Korean migrants²⁰ are allowed to enter South Korea freely with the valid visa and can change their workplace freely without the government or employer intervening, a stark contrast to the non-ethnic Korean foreign workers under the EPS.

²⁰ I use this term, 'ethnic Korean migrants', to refer to Korean diasporas, also called 'overseas Koreans' or '*dongpo*' used by the Korean government and in colloquial Korean language, who are largely living in China, Japan, the CIS, Canada and the United States.

Besides low-skilled labour migration, international marriage is another major trend of migration between some Asian countries and South Korea. International marriages in South Korea in the past were mostly between Korean women and American soldiers stationed in the United States Army bases in South Korea from the Korean War (1950-1953) until the 1960s, although there were some marriages between Koreans and non-Korean nationals in foreign countries where the Korean stayed for study or to work abroad between the 1970s and 1980s (Gang et al., 2018: 38). In the early 1990s, however, female marriage migrants started to come to South Korea due to a shortage of brides in rural areas in South Korea (but also in urban areas in recent years), with the concerns about the falling economically active population and the issues that local authorities might face, such as securing allocations of funding and administrative staff based on the size of the population (Kim, 2008: 46-7). This included concerns about a falling birth rate, as well as the economic gap between developed South Korea and some other developing Asian regions such as Cambodia, China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.²¹ This inflow of female marriage migrants has caused an increased rate of international marriage as a proportion of marriages within South Korea, and has continuously grown since the 1990s, reaching its peak, 11.2%, in 2010, and dropping to 7.4% by 2016 (Yoo and Kim, 2017: 47).²²

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
All residents	44,553,710	46,136,101	47,041,434	50,515,666	51,529,338	51,849,861
Foreign residents	269,000	491,234	747,467	1,261,415	1,899,519	2,524,656
Foreign residents as a share of the Korean population	0.60%	1.07%	1.55%	2.49%	3.69%	4.87%

²¹ This is not to overlook the love relationship in international marriages or the agency of marriage migrants. In this thesis, however, international marriage between Korean men and Asian women is more likely considered a way of labour migration given that a number of those migrants get married through marriage brokers and the Korean local governments support this, and that the large number of them come to be incorporated into the care or domestic labour (Kim, 2008: 42, 45-6).

²² It is analysed that the dropping rate of international marriage comes from the general decline of population in rural areas in South Korea and the lower interest in marrying Koreans among the Korean ethnic migrants, one of the majority marriage migrant groups in South Korea, following the introduction of the work permit visa for them (Kim, 2015).

Figure 4. Estimates of the foreign residents in South Korea, 1995-2019²³

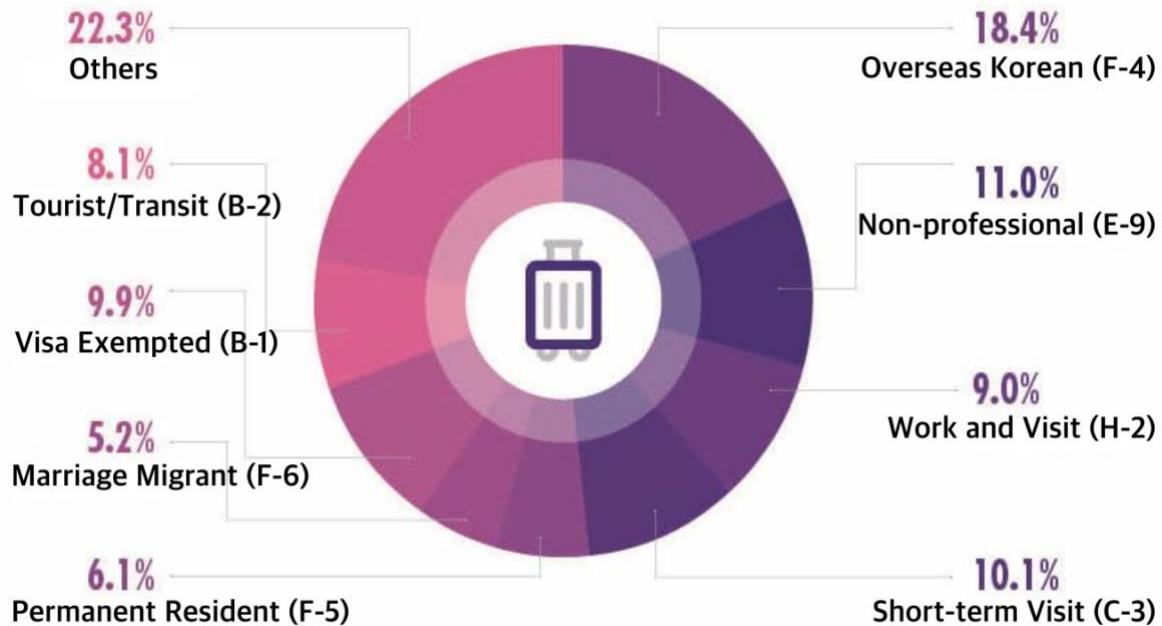


Figure 5. Composition of foreign residents in South Korea by sojourn status, 2019²⁴

Over the last three decades, female marriage migrants in Korea have been rapidly incorporated into the Korean labour market, participating not only in unpaid domestic work, but also other economic activities, including farming in rural areas (Kim and Yu, 2013). In this sense, these female migrants can also be regarded as labour migrants, as Piper and Roces (2003) importantly point out, labour migration and international marriage are often interwoven, making it hard to categorise female marriage migrants as only either ‘wife’ or ‘worker’ (Piper and Roces, 2003: 4). Moreover, given that a number of the female marriage migrants have married Korean men in lower income levels and their occupations in Korea are largely service and low-skilled jobs, it is

²³ Source: Korea Immigration Service, Ministry of Justice, 2005; 2010; 2015; 2019.

²⁴ Source: Korea Immigration Service, Ministry of Justice, 2019: 42.

clear that they are in the migrant working-class in Korean society, along with the male labour migrants explored earlier.

The industrial city of Ansan and Asian labour migrants

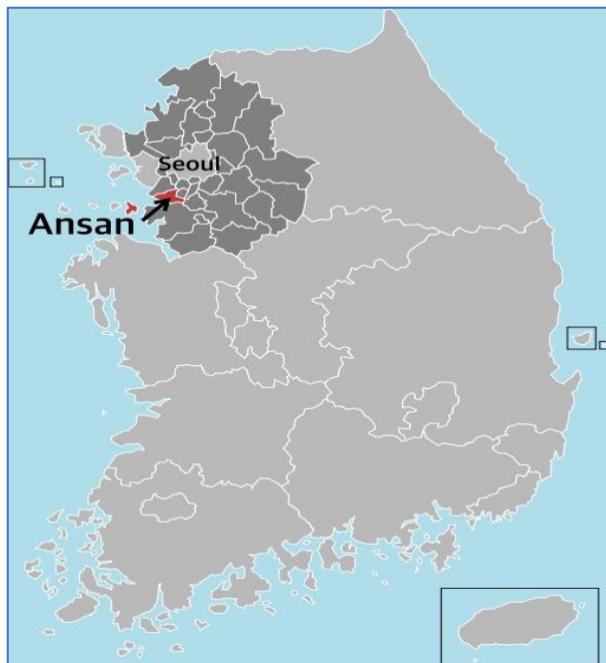


Figure 6. The location of Ansan in South Korea²⁵

Ansan, where Wongok-dong is located, is a medium-sized industrial city in the metropolitan area of the capital, Seoul (see the figure 6.). Ansan's history as an industrial city derives from its urbanisation, led by the central government's Balanced Land Development project in the context of its export-oriented manufacturing industrial economy in the 1960s and the early 1970s (Park and Markusen, 1995: 88). Ansan was developed as a new city in the late 1970s and into the 1980s, along with the Korean government construction of the Banwol Industrial Complex next to Wongok-dong. This industrial zone was established to solve several problems: decentralisation of industrial companies and employment from the main industrial cities was needed, particularly to deal with the overconcentration of population and industries in Seoul, and small-medium

²⁵ Edited by the author, source: Wikipedia. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ansan> [accessed 15 September 2020].

sized and/or noxious, polluting factories needed relocating from the city (Park and Markusen, 1995: 82, 94, 101). During its early development period, Ansan received a number of local Korean labour migrants from the rest of the country, incorporating them into manufacturing activities, such as electronic machinery and electronics, fabricated metal, leather, machinery, paper, plastic, textiles, and transportation equipment (Park and Markusen, 1995: 93). The majority of those workers worked for small-medium sized single-plant companies seeking a competitive advantage by keeping labour costs down (Park and Jung, 2004: 808).²⁶

Since the late 1980s, the city has become a destination for foreign labour migrants, incorporating them into the local economy, particularly in manufacturing companies seeking to lower their labour costs following the nation-wide structural changes mentioned earlier, such as the labour movement and the wage gap between large and small-medium companies. In the late 1990s, following the Asian Financial Crisis (known as the IMF (International Monetary Fund) crisis in Korea) and massive structural adjustment of the big industries in Korea, a number of small-medium sized companies in Ansan closed down, with the Banwol Industrial Complex filling with smaller, town-based factories (also known as *machikoba*, borrowing a Japanese term, meaning a town/village factory). This restructuring in the local industrial complex led the local workers to leave the city in search of new jobs or higher wages, while foreign workers were employed in the *machikobas* for lower wages (Oh and Jung, 2006: 75). Furthermore, the intensified international competition of manufacturing industries from China and elsewhere, coupled with the increasing trend of outsourcing to seek cheap labour in China and Vietnam, have resulted in higher demand for low wage foreign workers among the companies in the city.

The industrial restructuring of the last few decades led to an increase in the number of foreign residents, the majority of whom are labour migrants from Asian countries. The

²⁶ The current manufacturing industry in Ansan is largely composed of the following divisions: 1) Electronic, components, computer, radio, television, and communication equipment and apparatuses; 2) Fabricated metal products; 3) Electrical equipment and other machinery equipment; 4) Rubber and plastic products; 5) Chemicals and chemical products; 6) Basic metals; 7) Textiles; and 8) Motor vehicles, trailers, and semitrailers (Ansan City Hall, 2018c: 182-195).

introduction of the EPS and the Work and Visit (H-2) Visa, the mechanisms for receiving low-skilled labour migrants mentioned in the earlier section, has encouraged an inflow of Asian labour migrants to Ansan as those schemes link South Korea and other Asian countries. Under the EPS, non-ethnic Korean foreigners are from 16 countries in Asia – Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the Philippines, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. The ethnic Korean foreigners with the Work and Visit (H-2) Visa are mainly from China and the CIS. This national accommodation of foreign workers has certainly met the demand for a cheaper labour force among the small-medium sized manufacturing companies in the city. Consequently, a sizeable number of labour migrants have been employed on production lines in the Banwol and Sihwa Industrial Complexes in Ansan and Siheung, the neighbouring city. Furthermore, foreign migrants working in construction and service industries, such as restaurant businesses and hospitality, have been repopulating and revitalising Ansan city (Ansan City Hall, 2018a: 25-34).

	Nationality	Total (@+①)	Registered foreigners ①	Non-Professional	Work and visit	Marriage migrant	Training /Studying	Professional	Refugee	Family visitor /Dependent family	Permanent residency	Others	Overseas Korean ①
		86,240	56,877	6,299	24,419	4,723	1,188	579	1,513	10,080	7,749	327	29,363
		100%	65.95%	7.30%	28.32%	5.48%	1.38%	0.67%	1.75%	11.69%	8.99%	0.38%	34.05%
1	China (Ethnic Korean Chinese)	48,687	27,504	31	17,954	1,299	23	-	4	2,353	5,813	27	21,183
2	Uzbekistan	8,454	6,648	235	4,846	80	51	2	20	1,383	18	13	1,806
3	China	8,323	8,323	84	-	1,822	539	193	122	3,661	1,813	89	-
4	Russia (Ethnic Korean Russian)	5,563	213	-	4	11	-	-	-	150	48	-	5,350
5	Vietnam	2,327	2,327	830	-	643	109	70	38	605	9	23	-
6	Kazakhstan	2,260	1,752	4	1,014	10	5	2	359	353	2	3	508
7	Indonesia	1,254	1,254	1,156	-	33	13	27	3	14	-	8	-
8	the Phillipine	1,141	1,141	860	-	159	11	19	8	63	1	20	-
9	Russia	908	908	1	-	42	4	6	64	781	9	1	-
10	Nepal	838	838	732	-	21	6	25	22	24	1	7	-
11	Cambodia	674	674	547	-	75	3	3	-	39	-	7	-
12	Ukraine	559	520	-	365	3	-	1	1	149	-	1	39
13	Thailand	537	537	407	-	89	3	-	14	14	-	10	-
14	Myanmar	466	466	425	-	5	17	1	17	1	-	-	-
15	Sri Lanka	451	451	430	-	8	3	3	3	3	-	1	-
16	Bangladesh	426	426	310	-	13	12	13	10	55	1	12	-
17	Pakistan	391	391	73	-	44	80	10	96	68	-	20	-
18	Kyrgyzstan	360	285	20	181	8	4	-	-	71	-	1	75
19	Mongolia	326	326	128	-	55	59	11	11	59	-	3	-
20	the U.S.	291	79	-	-	30	6	23	-	14	4	2	212

Figure 7. Top 20 Foreign Residents in Ansan by nationality and sojourn status (as of January 2019)²⁷

²⁷ My translation, source: Ansan City Hall, 2019b.

The transformation of Wongok-dong as a working-class migrant neighbourhood

Wongok-dong, the neighbourhood this study was conducted in, was developed in the 1970s as a residential area for the internal Korean migrants. This aligned with the central government's plan of locating the large-scale Banwol and Shihwa Industrial Complexes on the land where they were living. These Koreans, who are now considered as the native residents of Wongok-dong, settled in the neighbourhood, living in their own houses, built on the land that they received from the government in return for forced relocation. The population of Wongok-dong grew through the 1980s with an inflow of Korean workers as the factories in the complexes came into operation.²⁸ At the same time, local industry began to expand in the neighbourhood to service the Korean workers, for example in restaurants and entertainment venues. Accordingly, Wongok-dong grew as a residential and commercial town for Korean internal migrants through to the 1990s. However, following the national and local restructuring of manufacturing industry and the economic downturn mentioned earlier, Korean workers started to leave the industrial zone in search of higher incomes in other cities, causing the population of Wongok-dong to fall from over 30,000 to less than 20,000 by the mid-1990s (Park and Jung, 2004: 809). Furthermore, the development of new towns within Ansan city during the 1990s reinforced the hollowing out of Wongok-dong (Gwon, 2011: 17-18). As the Korean residents and workers left the neighbourhood and the city, the rent rate in Wongok-dong, which was already cheaper than other areas in the city, became even lower (Gwon, 2011: 19).

²⁸ Ansan city transformed into an industrial city with more than 1,000 companies locating in the Banwol Industrial Complex by 1991 employing more than 85,000 (Korean) workers (Park and Jung, 2004: 808). Following this, the number of residents in Wongok-dong also increased up to 34,000 by the late 1980s (Park and Jung, 2004: 809).

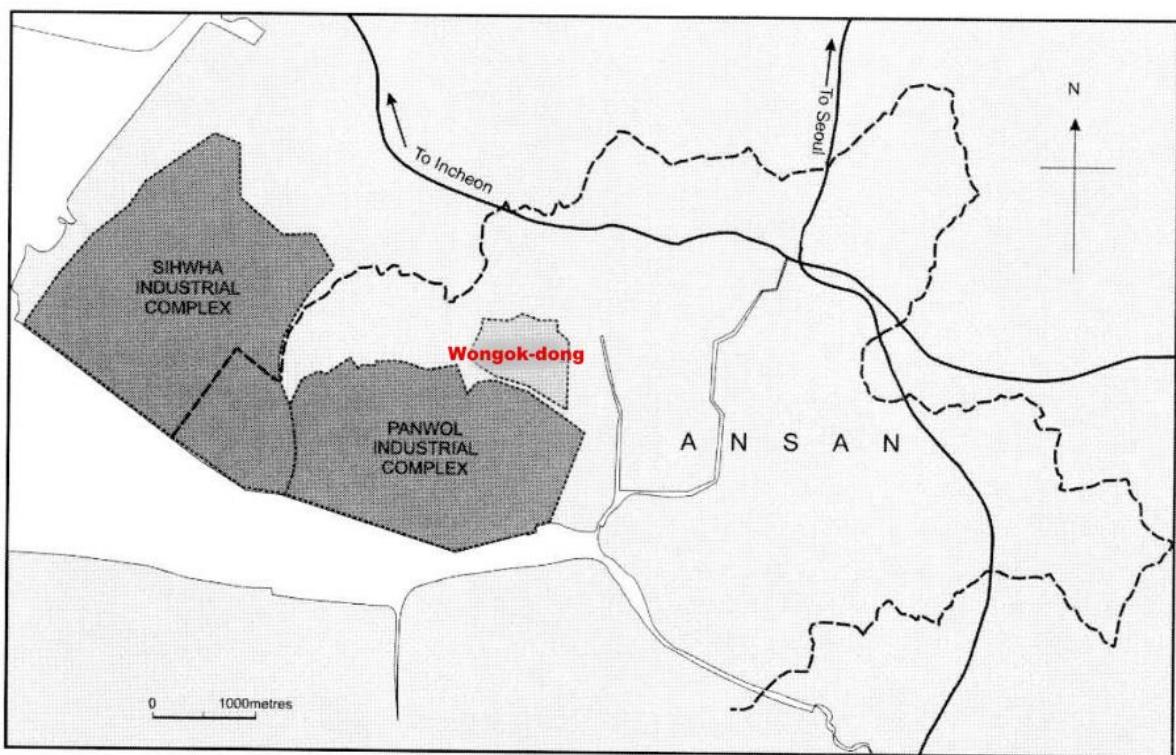


Figure 8. The location of Wongok-dong in Ansan²⁹

Foreign workers began to fill this depressed Wongok-dong in the late 1990s and 2000s, with a number of them being employed in the *machikobas* in the industrial complexes. Beginning with the ethnic Korean Chinese and the ethnic Korean Russians coming to the area in the late 1980s, more Chinese and South-east Asians came to Wongok-dong following the introduction of the guest worker system, the Industrial Technical Training Programme (hereafter, ITTP)³⁰, the former scheme of bringing low-skilled foreign migrants, and the EPS in the 1990s and 2000s. The number of foreign residents in Wongok-dong in 2019 was 20,245, which accounted for 74.1% of the total number of residents in the neighbourhood, 27,319.³¹ The majority of the

²⁹ Source: Park and Jung, 2004: 804, edited by the author.

³⁰ The ITTP was initially established for Korean companies that had invested in or formed partnership with foreign firms to teach and transfer skills to developing countries but expanded later in response to a labour shortage in low-skilled jobs within Korea (Seol and Skrentny, 2009: 153-4).

³¹ As of January 2020, the number of the foreign residents is 30, 407 which accounts for 82.10% of the number of total residents, 37,033.

foreign residents are ethnic Korean Chinese, followed by Uzbeks, non-ethnic Korean Chinese, ethnic Korean Russians, Vietnamese, Kazakhs, Indonesians, and so on.³²

There are several reasons Wongok-dong is a popular destination for foreign labour migrants to live and visit. Firstly, its proximity to the industrial complex and transportation infrastructure, such as the train station, the Ansan station, and bus stops, enables residents in Wongok-dong to experience an efficient commute. Likewise, the location provides migrants who live in a workers' dormitory in the industrial zone easy access to the Wongok-dong consumption market. Secondly, the neighbourhood provides low-cost, multiple-dwelling houses for single and/or poor residents, such as *beoljip* (beehive) and *goshiwon*, a residence with a tiny room and shared kitchen and toilet(s), and so-called *oneroom*, a studio equipped with a toilet and kitchen (for the type of housing for labour migrants in South Korea and Wongok-dong, see Seol, 2011: 146-7; Yun, 2011: 55-6). Thirdly, migrants can access social networks and institutions, such as religious organisations, ethnic communities, and governmental and non-governmental support groups. Fourthly, as more migrants occupy the area, Wongok-dong has been developed more as a commercial area with a growing local (migrant) business. For example, there has been an increasing number of ethnic restaurants, grocery shops, and places selling international calling cards and mobile phones opening.

Meanwhile, the transformation of Wongok-dong into a migrant residential and commercial area has led to the neighbourhood becoming isolated from the rest of the city, despite the good transport mentioned above, in the sense that non-migrant Koreans rarely visit. This may largely derive from the prevalent public perception of Wongok-dong as poor and unsafe, based on the public discourse on migrants, particularly the ethnic Korean Chinse group, called *Joseonjok*, portraying them as (potential) criminals and Wongok-dong as a hotbed of crime (I come

³² There are no statistics for foreign residents by nationality in Wongok-dong provided by public offices, including the Ansan City Hall and the Wongok-dong Community Centre. Therefore, I assume the majority of migrants in Wongok-dong are Chinese (including ethnic Korean Chinese) and other Asian origin, based on my fieldwork and the statistics of the foreign residents by nationality in Ansan.

back to this in the next section). Even if this perception exaggerates the real crime rate of the area, it has a strong impact, segregating the neighbourhood from the other parts of the city. However, the changes in Wongok-dong in terms of the expanded consumer market and public services for migrants have led more migrants to live and visit the neighbourhood (see Chapter 5). As a result, Wongok-dong has become a migrant-concentrated neighbourhood, with more and more non-migrant Korean residents having left the area in response to the growing number of migrants and migrant-centred places and services (see Chapter 7). The cultural environment in the area also affects the public perception of Wongok-dong. For example, there are many adult entertainment businesses in the area, such as karaoke bars, massage shops, and *ticket dabang*.³³ This local business for male labour migrants led Oh and Jung (2006) to state ‘Wongok-dong, [is] filled with gambling places and adult entertainments, . . . [and has become] . . . a cultural ghetto that Ansan citizens shun’ (Oh and Jung, 2006: 842). The lack of educational facilities is another reason Korean citizens prefer living in other neighbourhoods.³⁴ Furthermore, the residents often complain about quarrels or fights between people from different backgrounds, as well as among members of the same ethnic groups, and violations of public rules, such as jaywalking and littering (see Chapter 8). These features of Wongok-dong are discussed further in the following chapters.

4.2. Discourses on migrants, multiculturalism, and Wongok-dong

Having explored the background of labour migration flowing into South Korea, Ansan, and Wongok-dong, it is worth expanding on the way they are incorporated into the national discourse and policies in the South Korean context. In this section, I focus on two different public discourses: (1) multiculturalism at the national level and marriage migrants and their

³³ *Dabang* is a place that serves coffee, tea, or other non-alcoholic drinks. A *ticket dabang* is a kind of *dabang* delivering coffee and sexual services.

³⁴ From an interview with a woman living in Wongok-dong, conducted by a Korean researcher, Lee (2008), with the interviewee saying that she wants to provide a better educational environment for her children but, due to her economic situation, she cannot move out of the neighbourhood (Lee, 2008: 141), which shows why young parents leave the area.

families; and (2) foreigner crimes usually associated with Asian labour migrants and Asian labour migrant towns including Wongok-dong.

Towards multicultural Korea

It is irreversible for Korea to move towards a multiracial and a multicultural society. We must try to integrate migrants through multicultural policies. (President Roh, Pressian, 27 April 2006, translated in Kim, 2009: 100)

In April 2006, at the national task meeting, then President Roh pronounced the turn of the country toward a multicultural and multiracial/multi-ethnic society. Whether President Roh himself acknowledged it or not, this statement is significant in the modern and contemporary history of South Korea, for it was an official declaration by the central government that the country is 'multiracial' and 'multicultural', which is in contradiction to the homogenous national identity that has formed the modern Korea. Although it is widely agreed that most contemporary countries are ethnically and/or culturally heterogeneous, South Korea has been acknowledged as exceptionally and relatively ethnic and culturally homogenous (Connor, 1994; Hobsbawm, 1990: 66; Kymlicka, 1995: 196; Shin, 2006). This partly derives from the limited immigration into South Korea during the post-colonial and Cold War times. While migration in the past mainly consisted of the emigration of Koreans to Germany as mine workers and nurses, to the Middle east Asian regions as construction workers, and to the United States looking for a new life and opportunities, immigration to South Korea was highly restricted due to the country being poor, with very few economic opportunities for foreigners, and the border being closed to those from the communist regions until the end of 1980s.

Yet, more important than the lack of non-Korean ethnic minorities during the 20th century in South Korea is the notion of a homogenous Korean nation, which had been

developed through modern nation-building.³⁵ The sense of *dani-minjok* (single-nation or unitary nation as a mono-cultural and mono-ethnic community) Korea, along with a strong belief in common ancestry and blood, and a peace-loving national identity in contrast to Japanese imperialism and North Korean communism developed during the Japanese Rule (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-3) (for the history of the building of the Korean nation, see Park, 2016; Shin, 2006).³⁶ These notions were then reproduced and consolidated during the second half of the 20th century in the context of the inter-Korean (South Korea v North Korea) economic and ideological competition (Shin et al., 1999).³⁷ In addition to the desire for economic advancement, ethnocentric nationalism was strengthened during the Park Chung-hee government (1961-1979), becoming mobilised to incite the public to contribute their labour to the country's economic growth and sustain the military authoritarian regime. The economic development discourse, for example, the 'export-first policy' or 'live well for once', proved an effective ideology for gaining the public support, serving as the impetus for the Park regime (Kang, 2012: 59-60). The public consent to, and participation in, the economic growth reflects what Park argues was not only the people's desire to be free from poverty after the Korean War, but also their perception that economic achievement is a matter of life-and-death to maintain security under the conditions of the Cold War tension between South and North Korea (Park, 2019: 63). This economic nationalism was accompanied by actual economic activities, such as the Heavy and Chemical Industry drive in the 1970s under the Park government, with foreign financial

³⁵ Although there were a few non-Korean ethnic minorities within the territory of South Korea, such as the Chinese who migrated to the Korean peninsula in the mid-nineteenth century, their presence was completely ignored during the construction of the South Korean nation.

³⁶ *Minjok* can be understood as both nation and people depending on the context of its usage. The definition of the term in the National Institute of the Korean Language is “social group living in a certain area together for a long time and sharing the same language and culture which does not necessarily accord with *injung* (race) or *kungmin*” (political community composed of people of a state) (National Institute of the Korean Language, cited in Yuk, 2014: 106).

³⁷ Shin et al. (1999) argue that while the Korean nation's ethnic identity and purity became critical to oppose the Japanese assimilation of Koreans into the Japanese empire, the notion of a homogeneous Korean nation and imperative to reunification were shared and reinforced through the political conflict or competition between the two, divided Koreas – anti-communism in South Korean and anti-American) imperialism and *juche* ideology, promoting 'self-sufficiency and self-reliance in politics, economy, culture and ideology' in North Korea – by regarding each other as 'national traitor' (Shin et al., 1999: 475-80).

support and loans, and the state's support for the growth of *Jaebeol* – the large-sized, often family owned/run industrial conglomerates.³⁸

Furthermore, during Park's rule, cultural nationalism was assisted by restricting the import and spread of non-Korean traditional culture, such as Japanese popular music, as well as purifying the Korean language by preventing the public from using Chinese characters and Japanese vocabulary (Lie, 2014: 10-11). Indeed, imports of all Japanese popular culture were prohibited until 1998, although cultural exchange and mix did occur. For example, some Japanese TV programmes were shown without visual elements identified as Japanese, such as Japanese language or Japanese costume (Kim, 2017). Ethnic purifying was also done by treating ethnic others within the country as a national threat. This is exemplified by the minority ethnic group, *Hwagyo*, a Chinese group who migrated to the Korean peninsula from the 1880s following the civil war and impoverishment in China: the *Hwagyo* faced government restrictions on their economic activity, including running businesses and owning property, between the 1950s and the 1980s (Kim, et al., 2017: 185; Lie, 2014: 13). During this process of nation-building, ethnocentric nationalism developed through the construction of the myth of a mono-ethnic, mono-cultural Korean, promoting ethnic purity and a culturally homogenous society, and defining the Korean national identity in a way that equated *gookmin* (nationhood based on citizenship) with *minjok* (ethnic group/peoplehood based on bloodline and culture) among Koreans (Seol, 2014: 280; Yuk, 2014: 50). By all accounts, the cultivation of the image of the Korean national identity and ethnic homogeneity, upheld by ethnocentric and economic nationalism, accompanied the cultural, political, and economic process in the post-colonial and Cold War background explored above.

³⁸ The export-oriented industrialisation in South Korea was heavily dependent on financial support from abroad – for example, from Japan, following the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (June 22, 1965), from dollars secured by joining the Vietnam War (1955-1975) between 1964 and 1973, and from the International Economic Consultative Organization for Korea (IECOK, 1966-1984), which was organised by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) with the participation of nine countries including Japan, the United States, and West Germany, as well as world organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) (Sa, 1994: 179, summarised in Park, 2019: 68).

While the vision of homogeneous Korea was strengthened with the help of the restrictions on travel and foreign culture to the country under the military dictatorship in the post-colonial and the Cold War era, reforms began as Korea came to open its border to the world, particularly to the communist regions. In the late 1980s, following the 1986 Asian Games and 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul and the improved diplomatic ties with China and the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, ethnic Korean migrants came to be allowed to visit South Korea (as mentioned earlier). Receiving these migrant groups was part of the world-scale change incorporating the non-liberal states into the global economy, and the South Korean government's drive for 'Northern politics' – northern diplomacy calling for the improvement of economic and foreign relations with North Korea and other communist countries, such as China and the Soviet Union – and *seyehwa* (globalisation) in the 1990s.³⁹ Yet, in including these Korean diaspora, they were framed as 'a de-territorialized national community among Koreans', which reinforced, rather than challenged, ethnocentric nationalism: 'calling for national unity in order to survive and gain leadership in the international community' (Park, 1996). The number of those Korean ethnic migrants coming to South Korea was very small and there was an absence of immigration policy and public debate on it at the time. As a result, receiving the migrants was treated as a matter of reaffirming the national identity by expanding the scope of the Korean nation to beyond its borders.

The statement (above) of multicultural and multi-ethnic/multi-racial Korea in 2006 was a major shift away from the building of homogeneous Korea based on the idea of mono-cultural and mono-ethnic people throughout the second half of the 20th century. Yet, rather than seeing the government's re-orientation of Korea to being multicultural as a complete turnaround, it should be viewed as a strategy in the continuation of the developmentalist idea of national growth. The change needs to be seen as deriving from global, national, and economic changes,

³⁹ The end of the Cold War and the national economic development meant that North Korea was no longer considered as the main competitor of the country and South Korea could turn its attention toward its position in the world economy.

such as the increased labour migration from low-income to rich countries and the neoliberal restructuring of industries searching for a cheap(er) workforce. The development of multiculturalism in South Korea has accompanied the inflow of economic migrants from developing countries, particularly those in Asia, including marriage migrants and low-skilled labour migrants.⁴⁰ As such, it is important to look at how the country has dealt with the growing number of foreign-born migrants: how has it attempted to justify the acts of receiving migrants and turning to a multicultural society, and how (or to what extent) has it gained public consent?

Multiculturalism functions as 'both a *description* of a society and a *prescription* for controlling that society' (Malik, 2005: 362, emphasis in original). This also relates to the 'witnessing, questioning and imaging' of the past, present, and future of the nation, as Fortier (2008) argues, in which multiculturalism involves the mobilisation of producing 'desires, identities, anxieties, and so on, in the reconfiguration of what connects inhabitants of the national space to one another, as well as to the nation itself' (Fortier, 2008: 3). In a similar sense, the declaration of the change to being a multi-racial/ethnic and multicultural society not only diagnoses the current demographic and social change, as well as prescribing for the current and the possible issues may will arise, but also presents the future that South Korea aims for (Kim, 2008: 39). Kim (2015) argues that multiculturalism has been accepted by the state in the context of national development and its self-repositioning in the world 'as a means, indicator, and object of (individual and national) development' to move from the middle to the top of the global (economic and symbolic) hierarchy (Kim, 2015). During the Kim Young-sam administration (1993-1998), South Korea strived to achieve higher international status through the *seyehwa* initiatives, not only in terms of national economy, but also in terms of symbolic position. This involved the government's pursuit of membership of international organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the adoption of

⁴⁰ Though there are a number of migrants under non-working visa entry such as international students and skilled workers, the discourse and policies related to migrants and multiculturalism are largely developed focusing on marriage migrants and low-skilled workers. For this reason, this chapter only consider these two types of migrants.

international standards (Kim, 2015: 732). Under the *seyehwa* initiatives, South Korea began to receive migrants and accept international norms, such as cultural tolerance, gender equality, and human rights for migrants/minorities, viewing these factors as a means to measure the economic and cultural development level of the country.

In line with these changes, the discourse on multiculturalism since the 2000s has been promoted to improve the global position of the country. As Cho and Seo (2013) rightly argue, welcoming multiculturalism has been justified through the idea that ‘multicultural competitiveness’ is what ‘global Korea’ should possess, with the languages of ‘national competitiveness, advanced country, national profit’ constructing the new present and future of South Korea (Cho and Seo, 2013: 128). In this context, children from migrant families are often described in newspapers as a ‘our asset’, ‘the future of the Korean multiculture’, ‘bilingual global talent’, or ‘bicultural hybrid global talent’, with the role of their parents in educating them being emphasised, particularly in teaching ‘the language of their mother’s country’ – here ‘mother’ refers to international marriage migrants (Cho and Seo, 2013: 123-4). Therefore, governmental support for migrant children is rationalised as providing the next generation of national growth power. In other words, while the multicultural idea of recognising cultural and ethnic differences has fuelled the development of public policy and programmes of incorporating migrants into the Korean society, in justifying such a process, multiculturalism, associated with the rhetoric of global Korea and motivated by the desire of improving its ‘global rank’ (Kim, 2015: 727), has been mobilised in the reassertion of a developmentalist national identity.

Creating the *Damunhwa* group through the reformation of the national identity

While the multicultural discourse in South Korea has been mobilised to promote ‘global Korea’, it has also played a role in reshaping the single-nation identity, *danil-minjok*, explored earlier, as well as immigration and integration policies. For example, as mentioned earlier, ethnic nationalism has legitimised the ethnic return migration from outside of the country, such as from China and the CIS since the end of Cold War, as well as from the United States, home of

the highest number of overseas Koreans, by encompassing overseas Koreans, called ‘*dongpo*’, into the name of Korean nation. Here, the term, ‘*dongpo*’, meaning a) sibling(s) from the same parents or b) an affectionate word to refer to countrymen or a person of the same nation (National Institute of Korean Language), reflects the approach to ethnic Korean overseas, regarding them as family of the Korean nation. In an attempt to further integrate overseas Koreans, the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans was established in 1999. The Act ensures the *dongpo* group’s legal status in South Korea, including their entry into and exit from the country, sojourn and work in the country, and the same rights with Korean nationals in the transactions of real estate, finance, foreign exchange, and health insurance.⁴¹ Although this law imposes some restrictions on overseas Koreans entering the country⁴², the separate legislation allowing ethnic Koreans to stay and work in South Korea under the name of ‘*dongpo*’ still provides them with privileged benefits resembling citizenship.

Ironically, the popular myth associating a shared lineage with a common culture has crumbled as the Korean public witnessed over time the profound cultural differences between incoming overseas Koreans, particularly the ethnic Korean Chinese, *Joseonjok*, and themselves. The public discourse on *Joseonjok*, portraying them as criminals, has strengthened the distinction between non-migrant Koreans and the Korean Chinese (I come back to this in the next section). Meanwhile, local Korean's strong belief in a mono-ethnic Korea came to be challenged with the growing number of non-Korean ethnic migrant residents within South Korea in the 2000s, with

⁴¹ In this Act, the term *Jaewoe-dongpo* (overseas Korean) refers to a person who falls within one of the following subparagraphs: ‘1. A national of the Republic of Korea who has acquired the right of permanent residence in a foreign country or is residing in a foreign country with a view to living there permanently; 2. A person prescribed by Presidential Decree from among those who, having held the nationality of the Republic of Korea (including those who had emigrated abroad before the Government of the Republic of Korea was established) or as their lineal descendants, have acquired the nationality of a foreign country’ (Article 2 (Definitions)). Available at: https://elaw.klri.re.kr/kor_service/lawView.do?lseq=45919&lang=ENG [accessed 29 July 2021].

⁴² For example, those who want to get the Overseas Korean Visa (F-4) under the Overseas Korean Act are required to have skills or higher-education, unless they are over 60 years old, which has in turn prevented many of those overseas Koreans from developing countries such as China and Russia from applying, whereas those from rich countries such as Japan and the U.S. are more likely to be eligible for the visa. Instead, those young, economically active overseas Koreans from poor countries have been migrated to Korea through H-2 or E-9 visas for low-skilled jobs. For this reason, the ethnic return migration based on the idea of family-like ethnic nationhood is what Seol and Skrentny (2009) call ‘hierarchical nationhood’.

various national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Interestingly, one event ignited questioning of the homogeneity of being Korean: Hines Ward, an American national, biracial (Korean American) football player, visited South Korea in 2006 with his ethnic Korean mother. Hines was represented as ‘a sporting hero’ (Lee, 2008: 116) and ‘a proud son of Korea and a symbol of what Korea might achieve if it could cease to call itself a single-raced nation and promote multiculturalism’ (Han, 2007: 9). The related media coverage and online debate on *honhyeol* (mixed-blood) minorities called for changes to the discriminatory view and exclusion of them in Korean society, initiating a discussion on race and multiculturalism (Ahn, 2012: 97). It was during this social turn, acknowledging the issues of migrant residents and the limits of the belief in the mono-cultural and mono-ethnic Korean nation, that the Korean government began to steer its way to multiculturalism, with the pronouncement on ‘multiracial, multicultural (Korean) society’ quoted earlier. In this sense, as Castles (2002) puts it, multiculturalism in South Korea signifies ‘abandoning the myth’ of mono-cultural, mono-ethnic nation (Castles, 2002: 1156). In other words, a multicultural society is regarded as something to achieve to overcome the homogenous Korea(n) ideology. In this way, the government saw the public interest in Hines Ward’s visit as an opportunity to ‘overcome the deep-seated “pure-blood” privilege in our (the Korean) society and to embody “an open multicultural society” that complies with the globalisation era’ (Presidential Committee on Social Inclusion, 2006: 1).

However, this is not to suggest the public idea of nation has been freed from the obsession with ‘blood’. For example, the pervasive representation of female marriage migrants and their children in the media demonstrates how international marriage and receiving marriage migrants are justified. The term ‘female marriage immigrants’ refers to foreign-born immigrants who come to South Korea by marrying Korean-national men.⁴³ Cho (2013) notes, in an analysis of newspaper articles, that by representing female marriage migrants as a solution to the low-birth

⁴³ Although policy documents use a gender-neutral term, ‘marriage immigrants’, and there are some male marriage migrants in the country, given the predominant number of female marriage migrants and the academic, governmental, and media focus on them, only female marriage migrants are considered in this thesis.

rate issue in the country, the media encourages social interest in and support for those women (Cho, 2013: 38-42). As Kim (2008) argues, female marriage migrants and their children can be regarded as Koreans who belong to their Korean husband and father through the traditional patriarchal and paternal line modes of thought, allowing for paternal lineage to be maintained even if the ‘*daniel*’ (homogeneous/single) and ‘*soonhyeol*’ (pure blood) do not apply (Kim, 2008: 59). Also, media discourse on female marriage migrants has sought to garner public support for them by presenting them as fitting the traditional daughter-in-law role. Hong (2010) finds that the conservative press in South Korea tends to illustrate the happy married lives of female marriage migrants with stories such as ‘making Korean food’ and ‘supporting parents-in-law’ (Hong, 2010: 658). Therefore, while emphasising that the migrant spouses can play the traditional role of women in a patriarchal society, these discourses often overlooked that they are also labour migrants.

The combination of the homogeneous national identity, patriarchy, and the increase of female marriage migrants has resulted in the Korean-specific integration of migrants. This is perhaps best explored through the policies related to *Damunhwa gajok* (multicultural family), which covers the social integration of marriage migrants and their family members.⁴⁴ This group is particularly targeted by migrant integration policies as they are more likely to be considered long-term residents in South Korea, whereas other migrants, particularly low-skilled labour migrants, face restrictions on long-term settlement and citizenship. The formation of the group, ‘*Damunhwa*’⁴⁵, is of particular relevance: literally translated from multicultural/multiculture, *Damunhwa*, is a key term to understand state-led multiculturalism in Korea. The word ‘*Damunhwa*’ was coined in 2003 by a coalition of non-governmental organisations, *Geongang*

⁴⁴ While this policy is focused on integrating the multicultural family group, including education, safety, health, and so on, there is the Act on the Treatment of Foreigners in Korea, the guideline of Korean immigration-related policies, about basic matters concerning the registered foreigners residing in Korea in order to assist them in adjusting to Korean society as well as to foster a social environment in which foreigners and Korean nationals understand and respect each other.

⁴⁵ Throughout the thesis, I use single quotation marks when the term *Damunhwa* is used in referring a certain migrant group.

gajeong Simin-yeondae (Citizens United for Healthy Families), which proposed that the popular, discriminatory term, ‘*honhyeol*’, meaning ‘mixed-blood’ or ‘mixed-race’, be replaced with ‘*Damunhwa gajok/gajeong (multicultural family)*’, ‘*Damunhwa gajeong 2-se*’ (second generation of multicultural families) (Choo, 2011: 67, cited in Yuk, 2014: 167; National Institute of Korean Language).⁴⁶ Following this, the Korean government started to use the term in its plans for the social integration of female marriage immigrants from 2006, and it was reflected in subsequent legal measures for migrants, such as the *Damunhwa Families Support Act* of 2008. Furthermore, as Yuk (2014) notes, using the term, ‘*Damunhwa*’, has been considered and circulated in the country ‘as a politically correct way of naming migrants instead of the commonly used term, “mixed-blood” with the advice on discarding the discriminative terms, ‘*soonhyeol* (pure-blood)’ and ‘*honhyeol* (mixed-blood)’, given by a UN-affiliated organisation in South Korea, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), in 2007 (Yuk, 2014: 38). What is interesting here is how ‘biology’ is replaced by ‘culture’, in a way that culture is used as an alternative framework to categorise others, and particularly other ‘races’. Therefore, the term ‘*Damunhwa*’ serves as a ‘qualifier for racial others’ in Korean multiculturalism (Yuk, 2014: 164).

Through policy setting and the process of the diffusion of multicultural related discourse, institutions, programmes, and so on, the word *Damunhwa* has become attached to migrants, sharply distinguishing them from non-migrant Koreans. The term ‘*Damunhwa*’ in the *Damunhwa Families Support Act*, for example, defines families as being comprised of a non-Korean national (or naturalised) migrant and a Korean national as a couple – ‘*Damunhwa gajok* (multicultural family)’. The term’s use in other policy measures for migrants, such as ‘*Damunhwa gyoyuk*’ (multicultural education) has seen it spread through public discourse (including media) over the last decade, with the word ‘*Damunhwa*’ now often being perceived as and used in referring to migrants who receive social benefits. For example, Chapter 7 explores how the non-migrant

⁴⁶ Before the 2000s, the term ‘multiculturalism’ was used to report on Western situations and offer brief information about them in Korean newspapers, but the usage of the word explosively increased in the mid-2000s in journal articles and in the press (Ahn, 2012: 102).

Korean residents use the term '*Damunhwa*' in talking about students with a migrant background in schools, complaining about the national and local governments' educational support for them, which shows how those ethnic others are distinguished from non-migrant Korean students in folk notion.

While marriage migrants and their children are considered to be integrated into the Korean society, the representation of foreign labour migrants focuses on human rights, their economic background, or incidents. Jun (2015) points out that the early reports on labour migrants largely focused on them suffering verbal abuse or physical violence (commonly from their employer) or being exploited by being paid low(er) or late. Such things were acknowledged as moral matters for the Korean society and brought about collective shame (Jun, 2015: 247). Eom (2008) argues that undocumented labour migrants are excluded from the debates on multiculturalism, that is, the integration of migrants into society, yet they are represented as powerless in the media, where the focus is often on extreme cases such as incidents or deaths; alternatively, they are criminalised as a 'dangerous class' (Eom, 2008: 129-130). These labour migrant narratives can cause stereotyping in the public perception. Moreover, as Eom notes, framing undocumented labour migrants in terms of illegal status and a criminality supports social, legal mechanisms that preventing them from struggling for fair treatment, for example through the labour movement (Eom, 2008: 130).

Thus far, this section has explored how multiculturalism and integrating migrants are lauded in the public discourses and policies in South Korea. Yet, it is important to point out that multiculturalism has also been criticised. The critique of multiculturalism by researchers is too extensive to review here, particularly in terms of the discrepancy between the normative idea of recognising minority groups and cultural diversity – respecting them as both different and equal – and the actual practices (for a review of criticism of multiculturalism in South Korea, see Yuk, 2014: 29-41). For example, while multiculturalism is widely considered in debating how the majority and minority groups coexist, little attention has been paid in the literature to how

minority groups can raise their voice and practice cultural rights (e.g., Kim, 2008; Oh, 2009; Oh et al., 2007).

Furthermore, anti-multiculturalism has been on the rise, particularly in the online public sphere.⁴⁷ The anti-multicultural discourse has been formed by insulting defenders of multiculturalism, making non-migrant Korean workers a scapegoat for difficulties in finding jobs, and heightening public fears linking multiculture to social turmoil and cultural and religious conflicts (Kang, 2012). Female marriage migrants are also a particular target of anti-multiculturalists, who allege that they are economic migrants coming to South Korea through 'bride buying' or 'sham/fake marriages'. They are represented as 'morally deficient', being blamed for the high divorce rate of the international marriages between Korean and non-Korean nationals in the country (Yuk, 2016: 126). Part of this sentiment and discourse against migrants and multiculturalism entails criminalising foreigners, which I now turn to.

Wongok-dong and the different face of Korean multiculturalism regarding labour migrants

While the multicultural discourse explored above is more focused on marriage migrants and their families, a '*Damunhwa*' group, Wongok-dong can be seen as a symbolic place in relation to public discourse and the perception of labour migrants. With the increased number of Asian, particularly Southeast Asian labour migrants in Ansan and Wongok-dong since the late 1990s, Ansan has been described in the media as the 'Capital of labour migrants', 'Mecca of Southeast Asians', and a 'Heaven of strangers' (Oh, 2014: 2-3). Also, the number of second-generation children born between non-migrant Korean and other Asian migrant parents or solely between Asian migrant parents, has increased. These second-generation children are dubbed 'Kosian', a portmanteau of Korean and Asian, with the term having been coined by a community of people consisting of the family members of Asian marriage migrants and Korean activists, who meet each other to help the migrants and their children living in Wongok-dong reduce their social

⁴⁷ E.g., *Damunhwa Jeongchaek Banda* (Anti-multicultural policy). Available at: https://cafe366.daum.net/_c21_/home?grpid=1EXp1 [accessed 29 July 2021]. (in Korean)

isolation, meaning the descendants of migrants have received some media attention. The media coverage has centred on their human rights; they face discrimination based on their appearance and residency status. In particular, those without legal residence in Korea, such as children born to undocumented migrants, are denied access to education, health care, and other public services. As Park and Jung (2004) argue, while the need for the importing of a labour force was agreed between national and local economies, labour migrants and their families are largely excluded from public policy and marginalised within the nation-state framework.

While some media attention has focused on labour migrants and their quality of life in Wongok-dong, the neighbourhood also began to be associated with a negative image, particularly in terms of undocumented migrants, as many of them gathered in Wongok-dong in search of work or any support that they can get from the activist groups or migrant community. Described as a ‘lawless world’ or ‘lawless zone’ after dark, Wongok-dong has been portrayed as a place that non-migrant Korean inhabitants leave or avoid visiting after dark due to drunken brawls amongst foreigners, sexual offences against Korean women by Asian male migrants, and so on (e.g., Lee, 2005; Seo, 2007). Since the late 2000s, there has been a rise in the discourse of the term *woegukin beomjoe* (to literally translate, and hereafter, foreigner crimes), with Asian male migrants often being portrayed as potential criminals, reinforcing the negative image of some ethnic towns, including Wongok-dong. ‘Foreigner crimes’ in South Korea can be understood as a set of discourses nationally disseminated through various media, including TV programmes, newspapers, and social media, criminalising migrants. While crime can encompass all kinds of offences, ‘foreigner crimes’ are more likely to be associated with physically violent crimes, with the media coverage and circulated stories or rumours being mostly focused on murders and sexual assaults.⁴⁸ For example, media reports in 2007 focused on the *Joseonjok* gangs in Garibong-dong, Seoul, where the ethnic Korean Chinese group is concentrated. Those news articles

⁴⁸ Though there are also some narratives of other types of migrants, for example, rumours of *Joseonjok* nannies kidnapping babies, stories of fake marriages by Asian female migrants to get a Korean visa or permanent residence, ‘foreigner crimes’ in this thesis only discusses the *Joseonjok* male migrants.

describe gang members as ‘wearing a knife or a hatchet on their legs ... constantly assaulting or extorting money from shop owners’ (Jang, 2007), adding that ‘some shopkeepers work with an anti-stab proof vest, being scared of them (Chinese gang members)’ (Jeon, 2007). In the same year, a dismembered body of a Chinese woman was discovered in Wongok-dong, and it was soon revealed that a Chinese man had committed the crime, stabbing and killing his girlfriend. Several murder cases committed by the *Joseonjok* migrants in the 2010s prompted news and rumours about *Joseonjok* to spread across the country. Most notable was the case of murder committed by Oh Won-choon (Wu Yuanchuan, his Chinese name) in 2012: Wu kidnapped and murdered a non-migrant Korean woman, whose body was reported to have been cut into hundreds of pieces.⁴⁹ The stereotype of Chinese (including the ethnic Korean Chinese) migrants as potential criminals has been disseminated and strengthened owing to these media reports on *Joseonjok* crimes, tainting the public image of Asian migrants, while ethnic Korean Chinese towns, including Wongok-dong, have become stigmatised as hotbeds of crime.

The public discourse on labour migrants described above demonstrates the contrasting representation of migrants in South Korea: while the discourse on multiculturalism and global Korea outlined earlier incorporates marriage migrants and their families into Korean society, low-skilled labour migrants are excluded from such public recognition as legitimate members of society despite their contribution to the national economy. Therefore, the study of Ansan city’s project of the multicultural city, DSZ and the multicultural food street reveals how the city has dealt with contradictory nationwide discourse and with the central governmental policy on labour migrants, in incorporating them into the local economy.

⁴⁹ This incident intensified the public fear of the culprit and *Joseonjok* through the media coverage as the perpetrator was convicted of murder, in the first trial, for the purpose of selling the human flesh. Though the allegation of providing the human flesh was dismissed in the second trial, the case prompted Korean citizens, traumatised by the brutality and the suspicion on the motivation of killing the woman, to associate *Joseonjok* with the image of those who can murder innocent people to eat and sell the dead human flesh and organs.

4.3. Conclusion

Multiculturalism, despite the debates regarding its decline in many western societies (see Chapter 2), has experienced ‘global diffusion’ and ‘codification’, disseminating the normative value of respecting difference, diversity, and minority rights (Kymlicka, 2007; 2016). Yet, it is actualised nationally or regionally in specific ways that mesh with the project of reshaping national (or majority group) identity; even within a nation, there are local-specific versions of it. Ansan has developed its own social and spatial process of multiculturalism. As such, it has a local ‘multiculture’ (see Chapter 2). This is evident through its DSZ project in Wongok-dong. The Project must be understood in the political economic contexts of labour migration in Asia and industrial restructuring in South Korea. The cultural discourse of including the ‘*Damunhwa*’ migrant group in Korean society must also be considered. Each of these factors is related to the vision of a global, multicultural Korea, as well as the criminalising of Asian labour migrants with which Wongok-dong has often been associated. The following Chapters 5 and 6 examine the DSZ project of transforming Wongok-dong. The transformation aims to make it a multicultural, special place as a means of integrating labour migrants into the local economy and (re-)branding the neighbourhood and city. This rebranding is designed to be done through re-imagining and commodifying cultural diversity. Chapters 7 and 8 go on to explore residents’ everyday experiences and evaluations of the relevant changes and migrants in Wongok-dong.

Chapter 5. The urban governance of making ‘the City of *Damunwha*’

This chapter explores the Ansan government’s governance practices in making the city ‘the City of *Damunhwa*’ as part of its revitalising of the local economy. Many (post-) industrial cities have faced a competitive environment for economic growth in the globalised market, as well as inter-urban competition for national funding or other forms of support for local cities in a neoliberal state. In addition, increased migration at the regional and global levels has resulted in a diversification of urban populations, highlighting the importance of social and cultural differences for city administration. Under these conditions, culture has emerged as a critical strategy for urban redevelopment, as evidenced by the growth of urban tourism that incorporates art, food, heritage, or other cultural elements of the city, often involving the creation or reconstructing of urban places.

In its attempts to reinvigorate the local economy, the Ansan government has undertaken the DSZ project, which promotes public services for migrants and tourism in Wongok-dong using cultural diversity. The aim here is to examine the ways in which migrants and cultural diversity are incorporated into the local economy and society through the discursive, spatial, and institutional practices of urban governance involved in that city/place making. To do so, the chapter first explores some theoretical and empirical discussions on the urban governance of local economic (re-)development using cultural diversity. Next comes an analysis of Ansan city’s two urban governance practices: (1) self-image making as ‘the City of *Damunhwa*’ and (2) the DSZ project in Wongok-dong. In doing so, this chapter sets out to answer the following questions: What are the impetuses of promoting a multicultural city? What kinds of political economic elements are intertwined in the process? What impacts do the challenges of, and desire for, economic (re-)development and cultural diversity have on urban governance? In conclusion, an argument is made that Wongok-dong has been transformed as a migrant welcoming place through public-private partnership urban governance, with the provision of public services for

migrants contributing to the segregation between migrant and non-migrant residents in the neighbourhood.

5.1. Urban governance, local economic (re-)development, and cultural, ethnic diversity

Urban governance is a set of practices to govern and manage urban economic and social challenges, often through the interdependent relationships between the participating agents. In the course of urban neoliberalisation, with the pressure of city competition, public-private partnership-based governance has been emerging in local politics (e.g., Fuller and Geddes, 2008; Harvey, 1989a; Jessop, 1997; 2002; Mayer, 2007; Stoker, 1998). The growth of partnership governance in Western cities in the late 1900s and thereafter provides the background for neoliberal restructuring, including '[d]ecentralisation and shifting responsibilities within the state, increased financial constraints, and the development of privatised services utilising both profit and non-profit organisations' (Stoker, 1996: 269). Observing the shift from a relatively uniform and hierarchical form of government, to one which is dependent on the coalition of city authorities and many other social agents in the 1980s, Harvey (1989a) notes the entrepreneurialisation of urban governance in a form of public-private partnership seeking economic development and investment, leading to governance itself being 'speculative in execution and design' and often involving 'the speculative construction of place' (Harvey, 1989a: 6-8). This kind of entrepreneurial governance may be more distinctive in urban projects to attract investors and tourists, often with high-profile 'urban mega-projects' (Olds, 1995). Yet, it seems that today's form of partnership governance is more prevalent in local politics, with a broader scope – seeking not only to attract private capital, but also public finance, or not only to promote economic growth, but also the residents' well-being – and in wider regions (e.g., Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006; Choi et al., 2009; Considine and Giguère, 2008; Geddes, 2005; John, 2001; Kersting et al., 2009; Kim, 2000; Olowu and Wunsch, 2004).

Thus, urban governance varies depending on the specific regional context. In South Korea, the form of partnership urban governance aiming for local economic (re)development can be traced to the 2000s, when uneven regional development came to the fore in the central government policy agenda. In 2004, based on the Special Act on Balanced National Development, which intended to ‘redress imbalance between regions’ and ‘to facilitate local specialized independent development’ (Article 1 (Purpose)), the Regional Innovation System was put in place, with an emphasis on cooperative relationships between governmental and non-governmental groups. At the same time, the Regional Innovation Council, composed of local authorities, local universities, private companies, and civil groups, was organised in the sixteen cities/provinces to promote local industries, universities, human capital, and so on. This council constitutes the initial form of local partnership governance in South Korea, with the participant groups cooperating and negotiating to promote local industries and universities, develop human resources, and so forth (Jo, 2006: 5). The coalition of governmental and private or civil groups in South Korea has been boosted since the Special Act on Promotion of and Support for Urban Regeneration, in 2013, and further local regeneration projects involving the participation of the national and local governments, public institutions, local communities, and residents.⁵⁰

Returning to the theoretical discussion on urban governance, local boosterism governance also involves other strategies besides partnership, such as city- or place-marketing, tax-reduction and land-zoning. City-marketing, in particular, has been acknowledged by local governments as a critical way of regenerating the local economy (e.g., Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Bradley et al., 2002; Doel and Hubbard, 2002; Gold and Ward, 1994; Kavaratzis, 2007; Kearns and Philo, 1993; Kotler et al., 1999; Paddison, 1993; Ward, 1998). In the more recent development of city- or place-marketing, so-called ‘branding’ – a process of attributing certain,

⁵⁰ The term ‘urban regeneration’ in the Act means ‘economic, social, physical and environmental revitalization of a city which is declining due to depopulation, change of industrial structure, indiscriminate expansion of cities, deterioration of the dwelling condition, etc. by strengthening the local capacity, introducing and creating new functions, and utilizing the local resources’ (Article 2 (Definitions)).

usually attractive, characteristics to a place or to a whole city – has become a strategy to gain a competitive edge in both the global and national market by naming a city or a place to evoke a certain image or concept to attract business and tourists (Kavaratzis, 2004). Such marketing or branding of cities or places often involves (re-)constructing their image through circulating a particular image, discourse, or representation. Furthermore, such image making often comes with a (re-)configuration of local politics. As Jessop (1997) remarks:

(T)he city is being re-imagined – or re-imaged – as an economic, political and cultural entity which must seek to undertake entrepreneurial activities to enhance its competitiveness and (...) this re-imag(in)ing is closely linked to the re-design of governance mechanisms involving the city – especially through new forms of public-private partnership and networks. (Jessop, 1997: 40)

As urban imaginaries are intended to change the actuality, they often inform local policies and actual policy practices. However, correspondence between the imagining and the actuality is not always guaranteed. For example, Colombino (2009) examines how people encounter the marketed multicultural image of Trieste in Italy in complex ways depending on their everyday concrete experiences, their own conceptualisations, representations, emotions, feelings, and imagination regarding their city, and their different senses of past and/or present (I discuss everyday experiences of Wongok-dong regarding DSZ marketing in Chapter 7).

Meanwhile, in the study of discourses and/or practices of urban governance, attention has been paid to the relationship between urban economic growth and migrants and cultural diversity (e.g., Baycan-Levent, 2010; Syrett and Sepulveda, 2011; 2012). For example, the importance of (high-) skilled migrants (e.g., Ewers 2007; Florida, 2003; Florida et al., 2008; Lam, 2000; Saxenian, 2000; 2002) is recognised, as seen from the perspective of attracting talented migrants in global(ising) city positioning (Sassen, 2001; Yeoh, 2005). Some studies have focussed on migrant entrepreneurs' contribution to local economies (e.g., Rodríguez-Pose and Hardy, 2015; Schiller and Çağlar, 2009). Furthermore, the association between ethnic diversity and

tourism has become a distinctive feature of urban growth (e.g., Rath, 2007). Chinatowns are a good example of a global phenomenon of developing an Asian migrant neighbourhood as a tourist attraction, which can even be found in neighbourhoods where non-Chinese ethnic migrants outnumber Chinese migrants (e.g., Schmiz, 2017). These empirical studies demonstrate the increased close relationship between diversity, local economic development, and urban governance. As Syrett and Sepulveda (2012) note, this relationship is important, for ‘the nature and extent of economic inclusion and exclusion within the urban economy are fundamental to the lived experience of citizenship for migrants and ethnic minority populations’ as well of experience of relevant changes for non-migrant, or so-called host, populations (Syrett and Sepulveda, 2012; 241).

With the understanding of some features of urban governance, such as public-private partnership and image and place (re-)making, this chapter now explores how urban governance in making Ansan a multicultural city has developed in its specific context in the following sections.

5.2. Ansan, the City of *Damunhwa* in Korea

We are one, we love you!

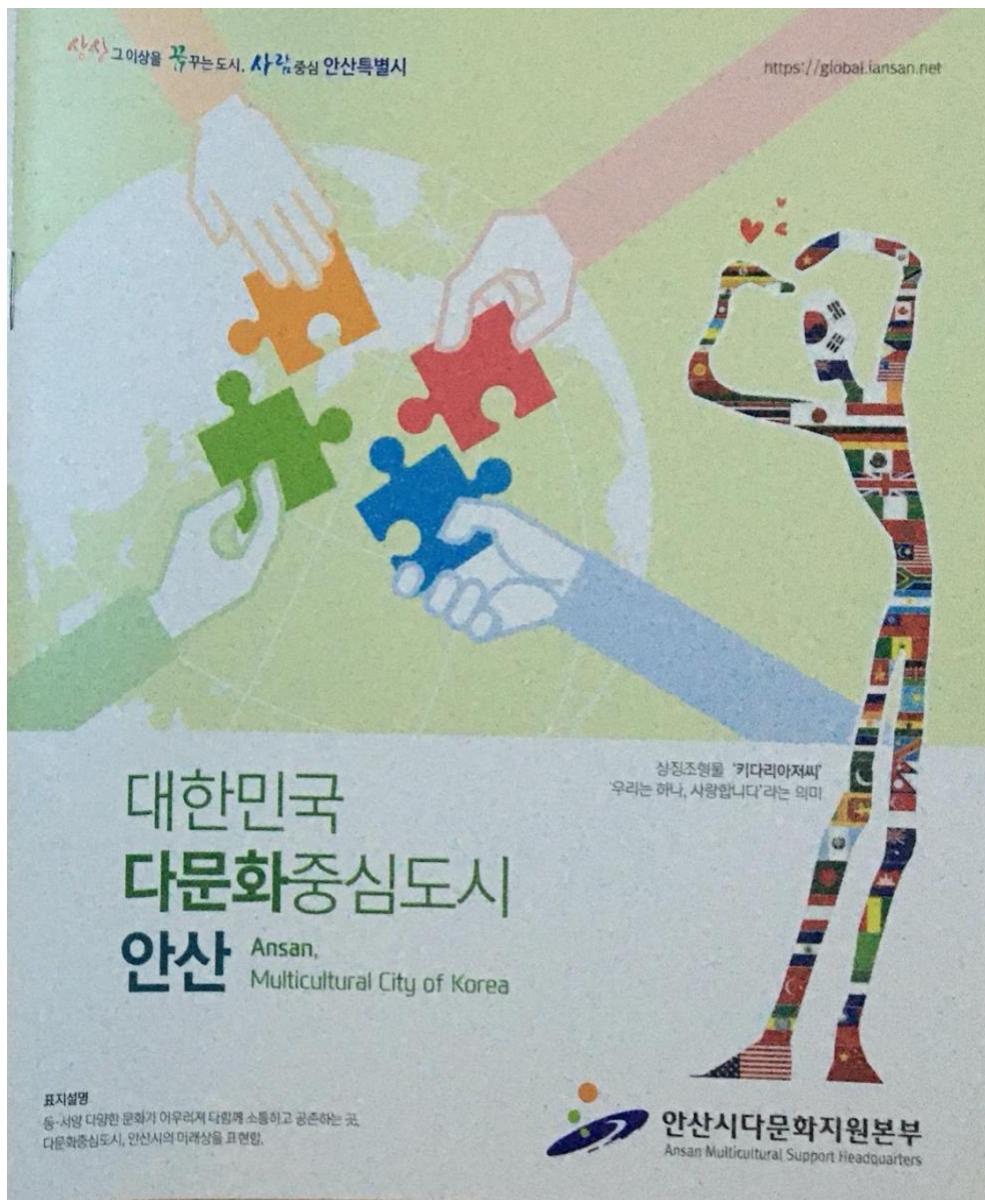


Figure 9. Ansan city brochure 2017⁵¹

In December 2017, the Ansan municipal government issued a brochure (figure 9.) promoting the city as a multicultural centre in South Korea. The cover page of the brochure has an English title – ‘Ansan, Multicultural City of Korea’ – the translation of the Korean title, ‘Daehanminguk

⁵¹ Collected by the author, source: the AMSCS. The name of this centre has been changed several times since its establishment. In 2018, it was the Ansan Multicultural Support Headquarters, as in figure 9. In this chapter, I use the present name, Ansan Migrant Community Service Centre (AMCSC) in referring to the centre regardless of the former name in each context.

Damunhwa Joongsim Dosi Ansan', literally meaning 'Republic of Korea Multiculture/Multicultural Central City Ansan'. The title can be re-translated as 'Ansan, the City of *Damunhwa* in Korea' to deliver the meaning of the Korean title better. Translating the Korean title as 'Ansan, the City of *Damunhwa* in Korea' emphasises the city's goal of becoming the most multicultural-friendly city in Korea, as implied from '*Joongsim Dosi* (Central City)'.⁵² That is, the title suggests that the city intends to invest in multiculturalism-related projects to be *the* city of multiculturalism in Korea, providing public services to migrants and promoting cultural places and events, such as the multicultural food street and multicultural festivals. This multicultural city branding by the Ansan municipal government associates the whole city with the image of incorporating migrants and cultural diversity, making it distinctive from other local cities in Korea as they only promote their migrant neighbourhood or street for visitors, such as China Town in Incheon and the Asian Culture Festival in Gimhae. This brochure presents such self-imagining and positioning of the city.

In addition, the pattern on the cover shows what the city means by *Damunhwa*. Firstly, the puzzle pieces of different colours against the image of the globe seem to signify differences from the world coming together. Each puzzle has a unique shape, and they do not appear to fit together well, so the act of assembling the puzzle appears to suggest coming together *with* differences. Yet, this difference is coming from the globe: it is from outside of the nation. The image of the dozens of national flags comprising an elongated figure on the right side of the page confirms that the differences are from different countries. The arms of the elongated figure, making the shape of a heart which mimics the gesture that is used by some Korean people to express togetherness or love, often when they take a picture, imply embracing other national cultures. Described as '*kidari ajeossi* (a tall long-legged man)', the text on the left side of the figure's knees explains that 'the meaning of "*kidari ajeossi*" is "we are one, [we] love you"'.⁵³ Added to the

⁵² Though the meaning of 'central city' may be different from its usage in the English-speaking world.

⁵³ I put the second 'we' in square brackets for a translation reason as a subject is missing.

arm gesture, ‘we are one, [we] love you’ can be read as ‘we are together, we embrace you’. The sentence in the bottom left of the page reaffirms the value of ‘together’, saying: ‘[the cover page] presents the future of Ansan city, the multicultural city of Korea where various cultures from the East and the West come together, communicate, and coexist’. Therefore, the kind of multicultural city that Ansan seems to aim for in this brochure is one where various national culture come together and co-exist in harmony, as ‘one’.

This brochure’s cover page shows the imaging practice of the city, projecting the vision of the city embracing differences, that is, migrants from different countries. The repeated use of words such as ‘coexistence’, ‘together’, ‘co-living’, ‘communication’, and ‘mutual understanding’ throughout the 24 pages of the brochure reconfirms the orientation of the city. However, in the sentence ‘[we] love you’, there are implicit power relations between ‘we’ and ‘you’. Given the national frame in perceiving cultural difference as coming from outside of South Korea, it has an effect of aligning ‘we’ with a collective national body (c.f. Ahmed, 2014: 1-2) and separating ‘we’ Koreans from ‘you’ non-Koreans, thereby denoting ‘others’. Therefore, to ‘love’ is a prescription to ‘we’ Koreans – we should love (and welcome) others. Also, ‘love’ is a promise that ‘we’ offer to ‘you’ – ‘you’ come to Ansan, and ‘we’ will love ‘you’, international migrants. This gives the power of ‘we’ to ‘love’ ‘you’; it places ‘we’ in the position of those who ‘tolerate’ and ‘welcome’ ‘you’. The question, then, is why do ‘we’ offer the emotion of ‘love’ to ‘you’ strangers? To quote Ahmed’s (2014) analysis on emotion: ‘emotionality as a claim *about* a subject or a collective is clearly dependent on relations of power, which endow “others” with meaning and value’ (Ahmed, 2014: 4, emphasis in original). On love, drawing on Descartes, Ahmed stresses that ‘we do not love and hate because objects are good or bad, but rather because they seem “beneficial” or “harmful”’ (Ahmed, 2014: 5-6). In this sense, it can be seen that Ansan city promises to ‘love’ ‘you’, non-Korean cultural others, as this object, ‘you’, is regarded as beneficial (I later return to the economic benefit of receiving migrants to the city).

The city of diversity

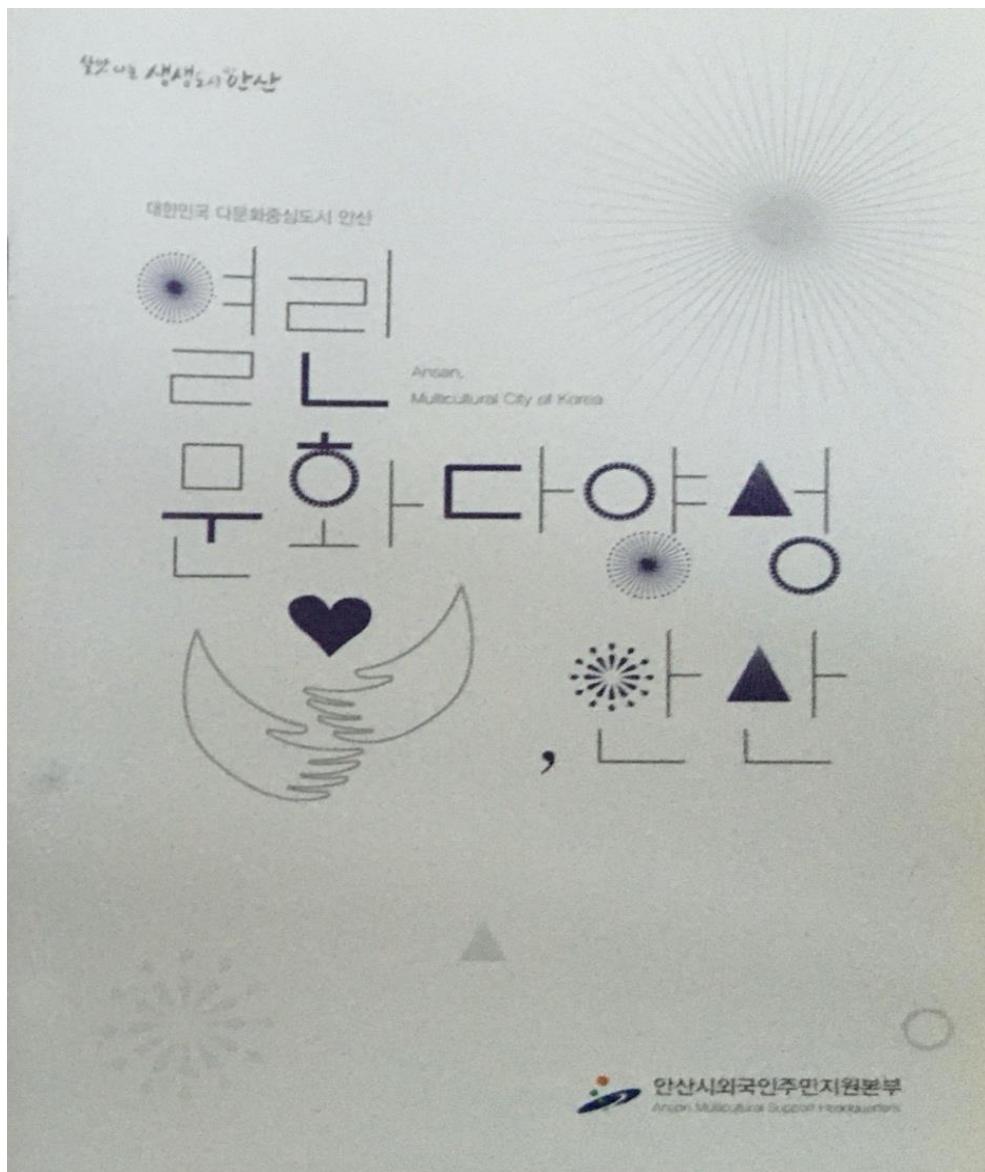


Figure 10. Ansan city promotional brochure 2019⁵⁴

Ansan city updated its promotional brochure (figure 10.) in 2019. Maintaining its identity as the city of *Damunhwa*, a new vision is added in the middle of the cover page in large Korean letters, 'Yeollin Moonhwa Dayangseong, Ansan', which literally translates as 'Open Cultural Diversity, Ansan'. The next page of the brochure elaborates on what this new title means: "Difference" means diversity exists. Diversity is more powerful than a monolithic society. Difference in

⁵⁴ Collected by the author, source: the AMCSC.

nationality, difference in appearance and difference in language are diversity'. The following view from Seon, a public officer in the AMCSC that issued the brochure, provides insights into what this could mean:

[Ansan is] the city of openness and diversity. (...) Openness means that *woegukin* (foreigners) can come to Ansan and live in the city in a much more comfortable way than [living in] other cities in terms of economic activities and other living conditions. (...) Openness means [the city is] opened to cultures from all countries in the world. It means we welcome any nationals who can come to Ansan, settle, engage in economic activities, and bring cultural diversity making [the city] global, a small, living together, global society. [What I mean by] diversity is that 108 countries [where migrants in Ansan come from] is about two-thirds of the 150 countries in the United Nations. That those nationals come to Ansan reside and engage in economic activities finding their future [in the city] means diverse and different cultures coexist and [in turn] generate a new dynamic, a new cultural dynamic for the city. (Seon Eung-lim, interview)

This resonates with the brochure's message of 'open, cultural diversity'. Seon's comment indicates that the Ansan government aims to attract more migrants and support their settlement in the city, recognising their economic and cultural contribution to the city. Yet, from his response, diversity seems to be viewed as a quantitative feature that exercises influence on the quality of city life. By quantifying cultural diversity as '108 countries', 'culture' becomes a category for non-Korean Others. In so doing, 'culture' comes to denote migrants, with it being treated as some quality that migrants have, which is different from what non-migrant Koreans have; it becomes a new quality, a commodity that the city can sell, with the key to the city's competitiveness then deriving from its 'openness' to migrants.

As Yuk (2016) points out, in promoting "presentable" diverse cultures' in the discourse of multiculturalism and cultural diversity in Korea, migrants' culture is regarded simply to mean their national background, while the other variety of cultural categories, such as their personal

identity and lifestyle, sense of belonging, and religion, are ignored (Yuk, 2016: 524). Furthermore, narrating ‘cultural diversity’ in (re-)imagining the city often omits other important social issues, such as class, disability, and gender. For example, many migrants coming to Ansan are low-skilled workers working low-paid jobs in small-medium manufacturing companies or in the service industry. Wongok-dong in particular is a neighbourhood in which those working-class migrants are concentrated. However, the issues they may be confronted with, such as labour relations, social exclusion, and poor housing, are unlikely to come to the fore in terms of public attention when the city and neighbourhood are decorated with cultural festivals and events and street marketing. So, the question is: why is this image marketing with cultural diversity needed?

Explaining the promotion of the City of *Damunhwa*

When further analysing the city’s marketing, with its professed loving and welcoming attitude towards migrants, the question as to the benefits the city would obtain in exchange for love and welcome once again arises. An interview with Kim, a public officer from the Ansan City Hall, offers one potential answer to these questions:

We don’t have positive public attitudes toward foreigners in our country. Then [when the situation is like that] we [Ansan] can’t help but receive [foreigners] and the public attitude is not good, if any crimes [committed by foreigners] are reported, they are exaggerated in the media, which leads to the fear of foreigners. That is a minus for our city. This was a challenge for us [the Ansan government]. We needed to turn this negative image positive. [Then we asked ourselves] what is a positive image [of foreigners]? It’s cultural diversity. Then, we needed to manage the region, while foreigners are residing here [the city], by preventing them from making any problems with our local residents or damaging our region, and by using their [foreigners’] cultural diversity as a tourism asset at best or commercialising it to say it in a bad way (Kim Chan-ho, interview).

In Chapter 4, I pointed out that Ansan and Wongok-dong have often been represented in news media as a hotbed of crime. Although the recent media coverage of them has been more

promotional, focusing on the DSZ and the multicultural food street in Wongok-dong, these areas used to be described as a place where residents in Wongok-dong feel ‘scared’: for example, particularly following a murder in Wongok-dong in February 2007 in which a Chinese man stabbed and killed his Chinese girlfriend according to Kim, some residents said things like ‘I saw many carrying around a knife’ and ‘We should not get into trouble with Chinese (...) they swarm in and take revenge on us’ (cited in Kim, 2007). In December 2011, one journalist spent three nights in Wongok-dong, conducting interviews with the residents and police officers to discover ‘the reality of dangerous Wongok-dong’. The report stated that the residents do not feel as though the neighbourhood is dangerous anymore due to a fall in the number of fights between migrants and because of the increasing security provided by more CCTV and patrolling officers (Kim, 2011). Another news article, issued in March 2015, described a live scene in which the local police were called out to investigate incidents, citing phone calls reporting ‘an illegal business in a karaoke place hiring women’ and ‘a fight between *Joseonjok* people (...) one of them carrying a knife’ (Han and Kang, 2015). Whether (or not) the intention of these news reports is to establish the degree of safety of the area, what is important is that the repeated media coverage has played a role in disseminating and strengthening the stereotype of the Chinese group (including the ethnic Korean Chinese) as violent and dangerous, and in stigmatising Wongok-dong as a criminal neighbourhood, regardless of the actual safety of the area. Yet, it is also important to note that even if, as Kim claims in the interview, such press reports are exaggerated, the criminalising of migrants appears internalised in his words, ‘preventing them from making any problems with our local residents and damaging our region’.

Given the above, it seems that marketing the city as multicultural and culturally diverse may be a countermeasure by the city authority to deal with the increasing number of migrants and the negative reputation of the city as a foreign, criminal town. As Holcomb (1993) puts it, ‘[t]he primary goal of the place marketer is to construct a new image of the city to replace either vague or negative images previously held by current or potential residents, investors, and visitors’

(Holcomb, 1993: 133). The rhetoric of ‘cultural diversity’ in Kim’s comment, as well as in the promotional brochure explored earlier, aims to trade off against the reported negative images of the city related to the foreigner crimes discourse, as Kim confirms. In doing so, as opposed to talking about migrants’ different identities and cultural lives, ‘cultural diversity’ is deployed to gift-wrap the presence of (Chinese) migrants, who are blamed for damaging the image of the city. Tourism and commercialising multiculture are therefore foregrounded in transferring the bad perception of migrants into a good one. Seen from the marketing of Wongok-dong as a multicultural food street (see Chapter 6), ‘cultural diversity’ serves an antidote for the local government to the negative image of Asian migrants associated with crimes, replacing that image with something consumable, such as food.

However, be they associated with crimes or with diverse culture, certain representations of migrants obscure the political economy of receiving migrants. In September 2017, when the first brochure was issued, the number of registered migrant residents was 78,606, which accounted for 10.7% of the total number of Ansan residents at that time (734,223) (Ansan Multicultural Support Headquarters, 2017: 3).⁵⁵ In terms of employment make-up of the city, the Ansan City Social Indicator Report reports a large number of businesses in the city as being wholesale and retail (21.7%), manufacturing (17.3%), and hospitality (lodging and food) (16.9%) industries, with 40.4% of the total employees being in manufacturing, followed by 11.3% in hospitality (lodging and food), and 8% in wholesale and retail (as of 2017, Ansan City Hall, 2019a: 12-3). Although the report does not state where migrants are actually employed, the city’s statistics on registered migrants in the same year confirm 36.55% of them work in low-skilled jobs in the manufacturing and service sectors on working visas such as the Low-skilled Visa (E-9)

⁵⁵ This rate is significantly higher than the percentage of the number of foreign residents in Korea, 3.6%, in the same year, and yet, it would be more than the rate if non-registered migrants were counted (for the demographic information, see Chapter 4).

and Work and Visit Visa (H-2) (Ansan City Hall website⁵⁶), which tells us the migrant residents' participation in local economic activities. Moreover, ethnic Koreans, who have the Overseas Korean (F-4) Visa, account for 33.25% of the total number of migrant residents in Ansan, and they are allowed to work in a range of occupations.⁵⁷ Thus, based on the demography and the main industries of the city, it appears that the contribution of migrants to the local economy cannot be overlooked by the local authority, which explains the self-promotion of the city as the City of *Damunhwa*, reconstructing its city image and identity while incorporating migrants into the city's economy. However, in doing so, cultural diversity is put first, with the affective vocabularies such as 'love', rather than mentioning migrants' contribution to the local economy, which may overshadow the economic integration of them. Promising 'love' and 'openness' is therefore used by the Ansan government as a governance technology for re-imagining the city. Fortier (2007) discusses how emotional and moral injuncts, such as 'mixing', 'embracing', and 'loving', are invested in imagining the multicultural nation through media coverage and public policy documents. She particularly notes how the narratives of encouraging social and spatial interethnic intimacy and mixing targeting deprived neighbourhoods in the 21st century's 'New Britain', after some disturbances in Oldham, Burnley, and Bradford in 2001, serve to manage white working-class (areas) by fostering a sense of neighbourliness (Fortier, 2007: 107). In a similar sense, the Ansan government's promotion of the city by associating it with the image of embracing and loving migrants and cultural diversity is a strategy to redress the negative image of the city and Wongok-dong, particularly in terms of the foreigner crimes discourse, hoping to manage the working-class migrants and neighbourhood by bringing institutions into the area. Such a course of action is now explored.

⁵⁶ As of December 2017. Available at:

https://www2.ansan.go.kr/stat/common/bbs/selectBbsDetail.do?key=&bbs_code=B0685&bbs_seq=93198&sch_type=sj&sch_text=¤tPage=19 [accessed 1 March 2020]. (in Korean)

⁵⁷This visa is for overseas Koreans and their descendants who have acquired foreign citizenship/nationality. These visa holders are allowed to work in nearly all professional activities, with the exception of low-skilled, manual labour and certain professions considered as against social order, such as speculation activities, and in competition with Korean citizen workers.

5.3. Making a multicultural special place

DSZ in Wongok-dong

In December 2008, the Ansan city government announced its plan to develop Wongok-dong as a '*Damunhwa Maeul Teukgu* (Multicultural Village Special Zone)' which was designated as the DSZ in 2009. To this end, the city invested ₩18.6 billion (equivalent to about £12 million) between 2008 and 2013 (Ministry of Knowledge Economy, 2009).⁵⁸ This project involves making Wongok-dong a multiculturally-oriented and economically specialised place. Its aims are a) to boost the Wongok-dong economy using cultural elements of the town as a regional tourism asset to attract visitors to the neighbourhood, and b) to encourage further development of a multicultural-friendly environment in the area, introducing and enhancing migrant-oriented social institutions and public services. It is necessary to reflect on the meaning of 'zoning' in order to fully appreciate this 'special zone' system.

'Zoning technologies', widely observed in the world but particularly prevalent in East Asian countries, involve a sovereign state strategy dividing the national territory and applying a differentiated governing regime, enabling the selected 'zone(s)' to be more competitive in the global capitalist market (Ong, 2004; 2006). In an analysis of this zoning system, Ong (2006) describes how neoliberalism, as a governing technology regarding citizenship and sovereignty, flexibly operates in managing – including or excluding – individuals and spaces depending on their (potential) market value. Using the term, 'neoliberalism as exception', Ong focuses on how a strong state, especially those such as 'post-developmental' East Asian states that employ neoliberal calculation for economic growth, makes the 'exceptions' by reconfiguring space and individuals, fragmenting national territory into various special zones, and differentiating between skilled and low-skilled workers. That is, zoning entails the uneven production and regulation of spaces and populations in line with the neoliberal and global capital market principle of

⁵⁸ This special zone project has been extended until 2023.

competition. Ong's argument about neoliberalism as an exception has been challenged by some, for example by Karl (2007), on the grounds that uneven development is inherently characteristic of capitalism, rather than a feature of neoliberalism. Also, as Park (2017) argues, the state's selective utilisation of national territory for economic development, which took place before neoliberalisation in Korea during the second half of 20th century, created industrial complexes in certain regions and cities, resulting in the uneven development of the national territory and regional (economic) disparity. However, the 'special zone' is considered neoliberal in this chapter because the selective management of space and individuals takes place in the context of inter-city competition for national financial and/or institutional support for local (re-)development.

As such, the 'special zone' system must be regarded within the context of uneven regional development in South Korea.⁵⁹ The term 'special zone' derives from the Specialized Regional Development System (hereafter, SRDS), which entitles local governments to develop and undertake their own regional development plan, provided it is accepted by the central government. The background of this system is in the Balanced National Development (hereafter, BND) Policy. The BND policy, a part of the decentralisation and balanced national development agenda since 2003, shifts from the central government-led regional growth paradigm to a local government-led one, emphasising 'self-sustaining endogenous capabilities in regional development' (Lee, 2009: 354). More specifically, according to Park (2008), uneven regional development intensified in South Korea in the 1960s and 1970s following 'the spatial selectivity of the state's accumulation strategies', which aimed at the growth of export-oriented industry in the Southeast regions, providing suitable conditions for this (Park, 2008: 52). Port cities in Korea, such as Busan and Ulsan, were selected to promote the shipping and shipbuilding industry,

⁵⁹ While the cases of economic special zones in South Korea are more studied focusing on large-sized city projects seeking international investment, property development positioning the cities as a global education or financial hub, international tourist city, etc. (e.g., Jo, 2016; Kim and Ahn, 2010; Lee and Park, 2016; Park, 2017), the 'special zone' in this chapter is more in the context of the regeneration of local areas in the intercity competition for the institutional and financial support from the central government.

which exemplifies such a spatial strategy of the state. Since the 1980s, with the shift of the major industry supported by the central government from 'heavy and chemical industry' to 'knowledge-based and technology-intensive industry', economic activities have concentrated more in Seoul (the capital city) and its metropolitan area (Park, 2008: 52). This process of state-led economic development in South Korea since the 1960s has resulted in economic disparities between Southeast and Southwest regions, and more recently between the capital area (Seoul and near cities) and the other areas. As a result, balanced regional development has been called for to counter the deep-rooted resentment within the less-developed regions against the previous governments, at least for the sake of maintaining political legitimacy (Park, 2008: 53).

The SRDS is part of the BND Policy in response to the need for local development. According to the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Regulation-Free Special Zones and Special Economic Zones for Specialized Regional Development:

The purpose of this Act is to contribute to the balanced development of the State and the innovative and strategic development of each region by establishing an autonomous and sustainable foundation for growth through selective application of special cases for regulation, etc. in accordance with the characteristics of each region by designating and operating a regional special zone. (Article 1 (Purpose))

Within the SRDS, local cities are allowed to undertake their own project(s) to develop the local economy: the responsibility of developing local areas partly shifts from central government to local government. Therefore, in principle, local cities appear to be empowered with the SRDS under the BND policy. In practice, however, they are forced to compete with each other for funds or selective relaxed regulation from the central government. This is a typical form of neoliberalism. The programme usually proceeds with local cities' own visions of promoting regional revitalisation by commercialising or developing their regional resources or services. Then, when local areas are proposed to become special zones by local cities, the central government designates one or more among the proposed local areas. In other words, while the planning and managing

of local development are left to local authorities, the central government maintains power by selecting and evaluating the local regions' proposed projects according to its own criteria.

The DSZ falls within this SRDS. Under the SRDS, the DSZ is subject to selective relaxed or differentiated regulation(s) from the related national policies, such as reduced regulations on immigration, road traffic, and outdoor advertisements. In particular, after Wongok-dong was selected as a special zone, the Ansan government acquired the right to provide recommendation letters for the employment of foreign cooks in restaurants in Wongok-dong, an exception to the general procedure of visa issuance (this is explored further in Chapter 6). Furthermore, the Ansan city government has benefited more from the DSZ as it has become an important route to attract national funding and other advantages:

There is no [direct] funding or tax benefit from the central government for a special zone, as you will see from information about the special zone system, but we expected that we could have other benefits from making [Wongok-dong] a special zone (...) we could propose a project of urban regeneration, for example, by connecting the character of Wongok-dong [as a place] that a number of foreigners [live in], and get national funding, like ₩1 billion or ₩2 billion⁶⁰ if accepted. (...) This was [the main purpose] of applying for the special zone. (...) With this symbolic nature [of the DSZ], we were able to apply for many other projects targeting foreigners. (...) We have actually received quite a lot after [Wongok-dong] was designated as a special zone. (Kim Chan-ho, interview).

This comment suggests that the DSZ has acted as a catalyst for Ansan city to increase funding from the central government, as well as to secure public institutional support and secondary funding from the central government and other organisations facilitating the newly increased national budget on migrants over the last decade. This has allowed the city to expand the staff level of their department for foreign residents, the AMCSC, and to set up partnerships with non-

⁶⁰ Equivalent to about £63,000 or £107,000.

governmental groups. So, despite the active inclusion of migrants as a positive development in the making of a multicultural place through the special zone system, its primary purpose appears to have been to obtain public funding from the government. As such, its future depends on the continuation of such support.

Outsourcing partnership governance

The construction of the DSZ in Wongok-dong has been accompanied by the formation of local multicultural governance. The AMCSC, the migrant-supporting department of the Ansan City Hall, is at the centre of this governance. Established in 2005, this centre began as the Ansan Foreign Workers Centre, taking charge of providing services for foreigners in response to the increasing number of labour migrants in Wongok-dong. The history of the development of the centre indicates how the Ansan city government has perceived migrants and how it has approached their integration into the city. Kim Chan-ho, a public officer from the Ansan City Hall, recalled the time he was working for the centre in mid-2000s:

I was unfamiliar with the word *Damunhwa* as a matter of fact [at the time that I was working for the headquarters]. I called it 'administration of foreigners'. Seeing the increasing number of foreigners in Ansan, I was only able to be aware that we needed to provide some public services for them especially in Wongok-dong but had no idea what kinds of services we can offer and how. (...) There were no previous administrative services [for foreigners] that we can learn from [in Korea], so I looked for dissertations written in the country. There were quite a few theses, including those on Wongok-dong, from which I could get some ideas about what the administration of foreigners is like, what it means to support migrants, what migrants need [living in Korea], what other cases are like in foreign countries. I studied things like that. It was obvious that teaching the local [Korean] language is basic, as same as in other countries, and solving difficulties that [foreigners] experience [living] in the local areas. There could be [public] support for finding a job if we receive them as immigrants, but it is not the case in Korea. Their job

is already decided by the other law [the guest worker system] in our country. So, we didn't pay attention to finding a job for them. There were many more foreign workers than marriage immigrants at that time [when I was working in the centre] so our focus was on foreign workers. We focused on how they adapt to living and working in Korea, particularly in Wongok-dong and Ansan, without experiencing difficulties and go back to [their] home country because the [guest worker] system is set like that [receiving labour migrants for a limited period], and how to alleviate the conflicts with Koreans who live with them [foreigners], our local Koreans experience [of living] with them. (Kim Chan-ho, interview)

Kim's comment reflects the local city's administrative approach to migrants and *Damunhwa*. When Kim was working for the centre, labour migrants from abroad, often called foreign workers in South Korea, made up the majority of migrants in the country. Those migrants worked in low-skilled jobs as industrial trainees – an earlier visa type of guest worker that no longer exists – or with an undocumented status. Many of the migrants in Wongok-dong and Ansan were foreign workers employed in the manufacturing companies based in the industrial complexes in Ansan and the neighbouring city, Siheung (see Chapter 4). Considering the sojourn of those labour migrants who are supposed to work in South Korea for a limited period and 'go back to [their] home county', the local government's primary focus was, as Kim said, helping them live in the city until they left and preventing or dealing with conflicts between local Koreans and migrants. Therefore, the initial response of the Ansan government to migrants in the city was to manage them, supporting their residence on the one hand and dealing with conflicts between migrant and non-migrant residents on the other.



Figure 11. The building containing the AMCSC⁶¹

Now, over a decade later, the AMCSC is responsible for the development and implementation of migrant related policy programmes in Ansan. The three-storey building in Wongok-dong (figure 11.) in which the AMCSC is located on the first floor, presents the spatial, institutional, and material expression of the partnership governance of the making of the multicultural Ansan city. The outward appearance of the building, decorated with the long-legged figure made of a number of national flags, re-affirms the orientation of the city towards multicultural (or multi-national) community. The global signposts in front of the building demonstrate the distance (presumably) from Wongok-dong to the cities in other countries, such as Beijing in China, Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia, and Moscow in Russia. In keeping with other symbolic structures in Wongok-dong, such as the globe sculpture and multinational flags in the main square, these signposts seem to represent the message in the first promotional brochure of the city, '[t]he

⁶¹ Source: the AMCSC Facebook. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/AnsanMCSC> [accessed 28 February 2020]. (in Korean)

multicultural centre city of South Korea, a warm (welcoming) global village crossing languages, races and nationalities'.

The building is occupied by both governmental and non-governmental agents. The AMCSC shares the first floor with the Ansan Migrants' Counselling Support Centre (from the Ansan Jeil Welfare Foundation, a partnered Christian Church-based group in the local city). There is a private bank and a public health centre on the ground floor. In 2017, a branch visa office of the Korea Immigration Office and an Ansan Employment and Labour Office joined the second floor of the building, with public officers sent from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Employment and Labour therein. The building has a small multicultural library in the basement, which contracts out to a university in Ansan, with a collection of books in different languages.⁶² The basement also has classrooms for teaching Korean. By hosting many different services, the building has become like what one interview participant, a local activist/pastor, called 'a department store', in the sense that the local government and its partnered groups take a great deal of migrant-related policy and programmes and offer a variety of services (Kim Guk-heung, interview). Indeed, while the places in the building can technically be used by non-migrant residents, they are more specialised in providing services for migrants. Many of the places, including the Counselling Support Centre and the public health centre, are open on weekends, enabling migrants who work on weekdays to visit. Also, the private bank on the ground floor limits their work to foreigners after 4 p.m., offering an exclusive money transfer service for them.⁶³ The building has been visited by a large number of migrants thanks to its provision of comprehensive services for migrants, from visa and work permit issues to civil services, such as residence, health service, and education, as well as private banking (remittance and foreign exchange) services. According to Seon, the public officer in the AMCSC quoted earlier, the

⁶² I want to note here that the partnered agents mentioned in this chapter might now have changed from the time that I conducted my fieldwork in Wongok-dong, depending on their contract with the Ansan city office.

⁶³ This information is based on my fieldwork seeing the posters on the glass door of the bank saying, 'Transfer centre exclusively for foreigners' and 'No business for Korean nationals after 4 p.m.'

Counselling Support Centre receives about 35,000 visitors every month, leading to plans for expansion of the building (Seon Eung-lim, interview).

One of the key features in the partnership governance in Wongok-dong to note here is the outsourcing relationship between the local government and non-governmental agents, which has a significant impact on the public services provided to migrants in the neighbourhood. The Ansan Migrants' Counselling Support Centre, to take an example, is composed of staff from eleven different nationalities and provides services in fifteen different languages (including Korean), helping migrants deal with any issues they confront when living and working in the country (Seong Ju-il, interview).⁶⁴ Funded by a partnered Christian Church-based charity group in the Ansan city, the services provided by Counselling Support Centre are free to foreign workers, employers hiring foreign workers, and other migrants, including marriage migrants. According to one member of staff at the Counselling Support Centre, Seong Ju-il, the Ansan government has been outsourcing migrant counselling to this centre since 2008, reviewing the outcome of the centre's work every three years. Accordingly, in order to renew its contract with the Ansan City Hall, the centre gives importance to improving the quantity and quality of its work. As a result, the centre has become 'like a welfare centre, taking care of most of the issues related to migrants' (Seong Ju-il, interview). Seong told me that the centre deals with about 2,800 counselling cases per month, covering a range of services from labour issues to personal matters, including health (Seong Ju-il, interview).

This arrangement of local governance based on the outsourcing relationship between local government and non-governmental actors has resulted in Wongok-dong having more migrants and fewer non-migrant Koreans. Kim Guk-heung, an activist who has played an important role in supporting migrants in the area for over 30 years, claimed that there has been segregation of

⁶⁴ I use the English name of this centre as the centre use on their website. However, the work the centre provides seems to include both counselling and consulting, of which I use both according to context.

migrant and non-migrant Korean residents in Wongok-dong following the splitting of the provision of public services for the different groups among different governmental bodies:

After the AMCSC was built [in Wongok-dong], the Wongok-dong Community Centre, which used to take charge [of issues related to both migrants and locals] was to be pulled out [of migrant-related issues in the area]. Then what? It started to be segregated so that Koreans use the [Wongok-dong] Community Centre and foreigners visit the Migrant Community Service Centre. It gets segregated more and more. (Kim Guk-heung, interview)

Kim has been involved in a community activity, Borderless Village, since 1999. It is a grassroots movement that advocates for migrants' rights and is dedicated to bridging the divide between non-migrant Koreans and migrants in terms of nationality, language, skin colour, religion, economic, and cultural background (Park, 2002). During the early 2000s, Kim arranged a community gathering bringing both long-time local residents and relatively new migrants together to take part in cleaning-up streets in Wongok-dong every month. This aimed at solving the litter issue, one which local residents had complained about, blaming migrants for litter in the neighbourhood streets. The activity also provided a contact point for meeting and getting to know each other.⁶⁵ During this time, the Wongok-dong Community Centre provided a space for both migrant and non-migrant residents to meet and deal with the issues they encounter in the neighbourhood.

However, following the establishment of the AMCSC in Wongok-dong, migrant-related issues have been separated from the Community Centre, reconfiguring the social relations in the area. In expanding the size and programmes of the AMCSC, the local civil groups supporting migrants began to be incorporated into the centre through a partner or outsourcing relationship, making the whole Wongok-dong area a centre of public services for migrants. As the Ansan government and its partnered groups provide migrants with comprehensive services, from

⁶⁵ In Chapter 8, I discuss the local Korean residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, migrants in relation to the litter issue in Wongok-dong.

administrative and welfare to education and banking, Kim argued that the opportunities for contact between non-migrant and migrant residents have been diminished by separating migrant-related issues from the Wongok-dong Community Centre (Kim Guk-heung, interview).

However, such segregation is an inevitable consequence of the structure of the governance in which the central government, local governments, and non-governmental local actors are vertically related, based on assessment and competitions to receive public funding. This relationship is conditional on recognition of performance, such as the number of counselling sessions and visitors at the Counselling Support Centre mentioned earlier, or the TOPIK (Test of Proficiency in Korean) pass rate among the students in the Korean classes at the Onnuri-M-Centre, a church-based migrant support group in Wongok-dong (fieldnote, December 22, 2018). Thanks to the performance of the partnered actors and the Ansan government, the DSZ project has been extended every five years since its inception in 2009 (2009-2013, 2014-2018, and 2019-2023), with its budget increased.⁶⁶ Therefore, in this context, the local actors come to be more interested in providing services to migrants rather than the relationship between migrant and non-migrant residents. This has led to the concentration of public services provided by the local governmental and its partnered groups in Wongok-dong. This appears to be well-known among migrants not only in the city, but across the country (fieldnote, September 4, 2018; Park Hyeon-ju, interview), making Wongok-dong and Ansan visited by more migrants looking for assistance, such as learning Korean and getting help with difficulties living or working in the country.

5.4. Conclusion: Ansan, a migrant welcoming city?

This chapter has explored the urban governance practices of making Ansan and Wongok-dong a special city and place regarding multiculturalism. In probing the self-imagining as the city of

⁶⁶ In 2019, for example, the budget allocated to the DSZ project was boosted from ₩26.08 billion to ₩41.68 billion (approximately equivalent to £17.4 million and £27.8 million, respectively) following the extension of the project (Ministry of SMEs and Startups, 2019: 4). The budget spent on the project is from the national government, the local government, and private sectors.

Damunhwa and place promotion of the DSZ, several key points emerge. Examining the process established that it involves cultural narratives of embracing and loving migrants and opening up to diversity and neoliberal characteristics, such as ‘zoning technologies’ and public-private partnerships in the context of inter-city competition for national financial and/or institutional support. As a result of such governance practices, I argue that Wongok-dong has transformed into a migrant welcoming place with the provision of public services derived from the governance structure in which local actors are focused on achieving results that can be positively assessed by the relevant governmental bodies. Therefore, while the project of the *Damunhwa* city and special zone may have contributed to the inclusion of migrants in the city’s public services, it has also brought about the segregation of services between migrant and non-migrant residents within Wongok-dong. In highlighting the discrepancy between the self-image of City of *Damunhwa* that promotes the value of togetherness between migrant and non-migrant populations and the actuality of the ‘migrant-welcoming’ city, this chapter illuminates the intertwined, but often conflicting, relationship between multiculturalism and neoliberal urban political economy.

Chapter 6. The making of the multicultural food street

The previous chapter explored the urban governance of incorporating migrants and cultural diversity in Ansan, specifically focusing on the DSZ project in Wongok-dong as part of revitalising the local economy. This chapter, continuing to look at the special zone, discusses the process of making Wongok-dong a space for diverse ‘ethnic food’ consumption for visitors.

Consumption of food is one of the common themes in transforming urban areas into consumer and tourist attractions. In particular, ‘ethnic food’ and restaurants in a multicultural neighbourhood are commodified and marketized in many high-income countries to attract consumers to dine. In a similar vein, Wongok-dong has been promoted as a multicultural food street by the Ansan government. This place-marketing has entailed various material, institutional, and discursive practices, such as installing signs and sculptures, bringing in foreign chefs and cooks, and developing the discourse on (eating) foreign food and cultural diversity.

Drawing on my observation in the Wongok-dong multicultural food street, the Ansan government’s promotional materials, and the interviews with some local public officers, this chapter aims to critically explore the process of making a space for consuming ‘ethnic food’ in the context of South Korea. The chapter proceeds by addressing the following questions: In promoting a multicultural food street, how is (eating) ‘ethnic food’ imagined? Who are targeted and constructed as consumers? How are migrants and migrant food (culture) represented? What kinds of social relations are (re-)produced? And finally, what counts a ‘multicultural’ in the Korean culinary landscape?

The rest of the chapter consists of both theoretical and empirical discussions to answer those questions. First, ideas on the relationship between cultural consumption, place-marketing, and urban economic (re-)development are introduced, as well as the relationship between ‘ethnic food’ consumption and multiculturalism. I then explore ‘ethnic food’ in South Korea, analysing the promotion of the Wongok-dong multicultural food street, focusing on the narratives involved, how migrants and migrant food are imagined, and the practice of recruiting foreign

cooks. In showing how diversity is valued in commodifying the area, I argue that this place-promotion reconstructs Wongok-dong and migrants as ethnic Other(s) in accordance with ‘ethnic food’ tourism.

6.1. ‘Ethnic food’ consumption, urban (re-)development, and multiculturalism

Cultural consumption, urban (re-)vitalisation, and place-marketing

Cities in the late-modern world have been transformed from a landscape of production to one of consumption (Harvey, 1989a; 1989b; Miles and Miles, 2004; Wynne et al., 1998; Zukin, 1991). Cultural consumption, in particular, has come to the fore in contemporary urban life, often found in both material and symbolic forms of consumption in art, fashion, food, leisure, tourism, etc. (O’Connor and Wynne, 1996; Wynne et al., 1998: 77-98; Zukin, 1995; 1998). The rise of cultural consumption in cities often involves the creation or transformation of urban spaces to be consumed. Urban landscapes such as buildings, streets, parks, and riversides, are (re-)discovered, regenerated, or remodelled for (potential) cultural consumption.

The consumption of culture and space also occupies a central position in urban economic (re-)development. As outlined in Chapter 2, one of the main tasks for city authorities in the context of global and/or local competition has been the promotion of their local regions or places as a centre of cultural consumption (Harvey, 1989a; 1989b; Hubbard, 1996; Miles and Paddison, 2005; Zukin, 1995). In neoliberalism, many cities take market-oriented entrepreneurial strategies for (re-)developing the local economy, often in partnership with the third sector. ‘[T]he spatial division of consumption’ is one of the strategies cities use to increase their competitiveness, promoting a consumer market in their urban areas through the construction or re-design of venues for cultural events, consumption, and entertainment (Harvey, 1989a: 9).

In this intersection between consumption and urban place-/space-making, multicultural districts, as part of urban boosterism, are a particular object of place-consumption (Featherstone, 1991; Shaw, 2007; Shaw et al., 2004; Taylor, 2000; Yeoh, 2005). As Shaw et al. (2004) put

it, 'expressions of multiculturalism in the built environment, along with markets, festivals and other events in public spaces, are presented as picturesque back-drops for consumption' (Shaw et al., 2004: 1983). For example, some historic ethnic neighbourhoods in the United Kingdom, such as Little Italy in Manchester or urban migrant areas like Brick Lane, inner London, have been rediscovered and redeveloped as tourist attractions (Shaw et al., 2004; Taylor, 2000). The role of ethnic food cannot be overlooked in such emerging ethnic or multicultural towns as centres of cultural consumption, although there are many other elements that also attract visitors, such as traditional ethnic festivals and specialty shops selling unique clothing or other ethnic items. Food enjoys a firm place as an important subject of social study, being 'packed with social, cultural and symbolic meanings ... [that] tell us something about ourselves, and about our place in the world' (Bell and Valentine, 1997: 3). Food is also central to the tourist experience because gastronomy is an important factor in identifying with types of food that we get to eat on holiday (Richards, 2002: 3) or while travelling. In this chapter, the interest with regard to food consumption and multicultural places manifests in two questions: How is consuming ethnic food related to multiculturalism? And ultimately, what counts as 'ethnic food'?

'Ethnic food' consumption and multiculturalism

'Ethnic dining' has become an increasingly important part of urban life in many high-income societies today. Consuming 'ethnic food' is not only about spending money on eating something different but is also often interpreted as a symbolic practice. It can entail 'identity work', presenting the self as familiar with, and having a taste for, the authentic, exotic other (Lu and Fine, 1995). For example, Hage (1997) observes that white elites in Australia may use the consumption of ethnic food to demonstrate their distinct cosmopolitan cultural capital. Yet, as he argues, this kind of consumer multiculturalism values the availability of multicultural commodities for 'cosmopolitan' consumers, who are seen as having 'the capacity to appreciate them', having little to do with an exchange between different groups, and is thus 'multiculturalism without migrants' (Hage, 1997: 29). It is also worth noting what hooks (1992)

famously criticises as the mode of ‘eating the Other’, whereby the power relations, particularly racial relations, between the dominant white and the minority people of colour, remain intact while ethnicity is facilitated to add more flavour to the bland white dish (or the bland ‘world’) (hooks, 1992). Although this critique of eating ethnic food emphasises the class-specific or racial-specific behaviour and meaning of the consumption (see also May, 1996; Heldke, 2003), the growing level of ethnic cuisine consumption today may imply that eating ethnic food has become just one of the daily routines for many people. Consumption of diverse kinds of food in search of new experiences can be seen as a contemporary consumer cultural phenomenon, a form of ‘cultural omnivorousness’ (e.g., Peterson and Kern, 1996; Warde, 1997; 2017; Warde et al., 1999).

However, many of these discussions have focused largely on the context of the white or Anglo European dominant societies.⁶⁷ These studies, explicitly or implicitly, seem to imply the common racial stereotype that ‘cosmopolitan’ elites and middle class are mainly white, which overlooks ‘the history of settlement in many cities and the cultural complexity of the existing middle classes’ as Pratt (2004) rightly points out (Pratt, 2004: 132-3). Obviously, food adventures looking for something different, ‘ethnic food’, are not ‘a whites only activity’ (Heldke, 2003: xxi). Narayan, in this sense, reminds us that ““ethnic foods” in Western contexts are not only eaten by “mainstream Western eaters” and by members of that particular ethnic food culture, but also by members of *other* “ethnic groups” as well’ (Narayan, 1997: 183, emphasis in original). Therefore, it is necessary to explore what counts as ethnic food and, in turn, what counts as non-ethnic food, in different contexts.

Defining ‘ethnic food’ in terms of ‘what constitutes “ethnic food” and for whom the term applies’ is challenging for researchers (Dressler-Hawke and Mansvelt, 2009: 300). In western contexts, it seems that there has been an explicit or implicit agreement that ‘ethnic food’ is that

⁶⁷ Though, for a few exceptions, see Duruz and Khoo, 2015; Khoo, 2009; Kim, 2018.

of non-white, minority groups. For example, Cook et al. (1999) note that ‘ethnic foods’ have been perceived as coming from ‘outside Europe’ through the process of production and consumption of food in Britain (Mintel, 1994; 1, cited in Cook et al., 1999: 228), arguing that ‘ethnic foods are “ethnic” through their association with “ethnic” people’, while ‘non-ethnic’ consumers ‘remove themselves from notions of ethnicity’ (Cook et al., 1999: 229). Indeed, ‘ethnic food’ from the dominant perspective and the dominant food culture is rarely marked as ‘ethnic’, instead described as ‘traditional’ or perhaps as ‘national’, as if the dominant group(s) do not have ethnicity, which is a problem. This popular perception seems to be reproduced in many studies on ethnic food consumption and multiculturalism.

In what follows, I discuss what ‘ethnic food’ can be in the context of South Korea, where class, racial, and ethnic relations differ from the Anglo European societies.

6.2. ‘Ethnic food’ in South Korea

‘Ethnic food’ is a growing, yet relatively new concept in the Korean food and dining out industry. The term is often used in media, including news articles, blogs, and some studies, most notably those relating to business and tourism, although the term does not appear to be widely used in everyday conversation. What is commonplace is ‘*woeguk eumsik*’, meaning foreign food in referring to minority food, in the sense that Korean food is considered as ‘national’ or ‘traditional’. According to Statistics Korea, ‘foreign food’ in the restaurant industry is categorised as Chinese food, Japanese food, Western food, and other foreign food.⁶⁸ This classification of different ‘foreign foods’ reflects the rough history of their consumption, though it should be acknowledged that such categorisation itself can be seen as problematic as it reduces many different types of food culture to one culture. While Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cuisine have developed over thousands of years, influencing each other, Chinese and Japanese foods were mainly introduced to Korea in the late nineteenth century and through the 20th century, largely by

⁶⁸ That is, ‘foreign food’ restaurants are defined as the industrial activity that provide general food cooked following Chinese, Japanese, Western and other foreign food recipes (Statistics Korea).

the Chinese workers who came with the Chinese army and Japanese people in the context of the first (1894-1895) and second (1937-1945) Sino-Japanese Wars and Japanese rule (1910-1945).

While those Chinese foods introduced during this period have been localised and diffused largely by the restaurant businesses run by both ethnic Chinese and Koreans in South Korea (I explore this further in the following section), Japanese food permeated Korean society without many recognising its Japanese style or origin. For example, some Japanese style food, such as *omeurice* (*omuraisu* in Japanese language, an omelette dish with fried rice) and *dongaseu* (*tonkatsu*, Japanese style pork cutlet dish), have been Koreanised, becoming an ordinary, daily food that people eat out or cook at home in South Korea. This partly lies in the strong anti-Japanese sentiment in the country following Japanese rule (1910-1945), during which eateries serving Japanese cuisine were prohibited from naming their establishments as Japanese (in either the Korean or Japanese language) or indicating that they served Japanese food; this practice lasted until the 1980s. This shows that the history of food must be viewed within the history of nation-building in the post-colonial context, and the construction of national identity.

Whereas Chinese and Japanese cuisines can be traced back to the modern era, awareness of Western food is a relatively contemporary phenomenon given that some foods considered as western origin in South Korea, such as pizzas and hamburgers, were introduced in the late 20th century. For example, the so-called globalisation (or Americanisation) of food arrived in South Korea around this period, with the introduction of American franchises such as KFC (in 1984), Pizza Hut (in 1985), and McDonalds (in 1988). These settled successfully, gradually being adapted to a Korean style menu, as in the case of the *bulgogi* pizza in Pizza Hut, a pizza topped with *bulgogi*, a traditional Korean beef dish. As those foods previously known as Western or American cuisine, such as fried chicken and pizza, have been Koreanised through many local franchises and eateries over the last three decades, they are no longer perceived as uniquely foreign food.

As has been discussed, the Korean national diet in the 20th century was influenced by the history of Chinese, Japanese, and American food and their Koreanised versions, while maintaining ‘traditional’ (in the pre-20th century sense) Korean cuisine. Korean food culture has seen more diversified selection of food in the 21st century following increased travel abroad among Koreans, immigration from Asian countries, and the growth of food and the dining out industry. During this period, the term ‘ethnic food’ appears to have begun to be used in the media, although its origin is unknown. Media representation in the country shows how ethnic food is perceived in the society. For example, ‘foods with unfamiliar names... the strong feeling of exotic with unique taste and smell’ (Son, 2018); ‘traditional food from countries around the world, especially the third world countries’ food’ (KBS, 2001); or ‘the third world’s unique, foreign food or Southeast Asian food’ (Kang, 2011). In reporting the trend of relatively new food consumption, such as Thai and Vietnamese restaurants opening in metropolitan cities in the early 2000s and the explosive growth of the ethnic food market over the last few years, the word ‘ethnic food’ has been accepted and diffused through popular discourse without any questioning of its connotations.

Note that ‘ethnic food’ is associated with unfamiliarity, uniqueness, and the ‘third world’ in the Korean context. This warrants some reflection. Firstly, what makes food exotic and unique? This may depend on the history of the food in a society. For example, pizza could be regarded as a new food in South Korea in the 1980s, but this is no longer the case today. While when first introduced to Korea, pizzas or hamburgers were called American, Western, or foreign food (at that time there was no such term as ‘ethnic food’, at least in the Korean society), decades of exposure to such ‘foreign food’ has led them to become familiar, and ‘other foreign food’ has been introduced, such as Thai food and Vietnamese food. As such, the short history of these foods in the context of food consumption in Korea may make them new and unique compared to the Chinese, Japanese, or Western food that has Koreanised over time. Therefore, what can be stressed here is the temporal dimension in terms of when a certain food culture is introduced

in a society and how it becomes sedimented into the current food culture of that society over time. That is, in defining what 'ethnic food' is, we need to consider how 'unique' or 'unfamiliar' food becomes 'familiar' or 'ordinary' as time goes by. Besides, we can consider that the term 'ethnic food' is relatively new compared to the term 'foreign food', which has been used since the introduction of those western foods in the 1900s. From the food marketing perspective, calling some food 'ethnic food' presumably sells it as exotic and unique. Therefore, it is also contingent in the sense that the term 'ethnic food' has been introduced into Korea on a similar time frame to relatively 'unfamiliar' food being introduced and spread.

Another interesting aspect to consider is the association of 'ethnic food' with 'third world'. Yet, where is the 'third world' in the Korean context? From whose perspective? If it is from the white dominant perspective used uncritically by the media, food from European countries, such as the Spanish paella or the British fish and chips, that has not been popularised in Korean society as much as other commonplace Western origin food, then may be singled out from ethnic food. Moreover, the term 'third world' itself already reflects the imperialist view of the world, showing such a perspective has been accepted and used in South Korea, though South Korea opts out of the category in the Korean context. Here, I suggest the use of the term 'third world' in describing 'ethnic food' in the media discourse can be better understood from the marketing perspective, that is, to emphasise or give the impression that 'ethnic food' is from somewhere unknown, unfamiliar. In this sense, food (culture) from nearby countries (China and Japan) and some Western regions can be ruled out of the 'third world' moniker as they have become 'familiar' in South Korea through (relatively) recent history.

Although there are a few careful approaches to defining what ethnic food is in Korea in terms of emphasising 'unfamiliarity' and 'difference' in a society or including diverse religious food (e.g., Kwon, 2015; Nam, 2020), there is little in the way of debate about this in the Korean academia and media. Therefore, it seems that 'ethnic food' in Korea denotes cuisines with a short history in Korea and the geographically non-Anglo European world, which are relatively

distinguishable from Korean and Koreanised foreign food that have been in the country for decades or more. I emphasize these geographical and historical aspects in discussing ‘unfamiliarity’ and ‘ethnic food’ because interestingly, they are related to the pattern of labour migration into Korea. This is where thinking about ‘ethnic food’ in contemporary Korea in its wider context of global or regional migration becomes prominent. As explored in Chapter 4 and earlier in this chapter, South Korea had very limited contact with other countries until the late 1900s based on its geographical location between China and Japan – with these two countries constituting ‘the world’ at the time –, and due to the closed borders with many other regions in modern era through Japanese Rule and the Cold War. Therefore, except for China, Japan, and a few Western countries, including the United States, cultural encounters with many other countries only began about 20-30 years ago, with the increased migration and travel abroad having further contributed to introducing new food culture in Korean society.

And so to the promotion of the multicultural food street in Wongok-dong. In Wongok-dong, many eateries or grocery shops are Asian, such as Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese, and Uzbek, and this is closely related to the composition of migrants in the area. Although there are a few Korean restaurants and Koreanised Chinese restaurants that are relatively familiar to Korean consumers, the promotion of Wongok-dong as an ethnic food street is more about emphasising the unfamiliarity and diversity based on the Asian labour migrant culture in the area. Though the Ansan government rarely uses the term ‘ethnic food’ as it is not a common term (as mentioned earlier), my analysis of the ‘foreign’ or ‘*Damunhwa* (multicultural)’ food street marketing in the rest of the chapter is about ‘ethnic food’ consumption and place-marketing, as many of the food cultures in Wongok-dong are based on the Asian migrant culture.

6.3. Promotion of the Wongok-dong *Damunhwagil* food street



Figure 12. The Damunhwagil food street in Wongok-dong⁶⁹

When I first visited Wongok-dong to do preliminary research, it was a very hot summer day, with the temperature over 30C, and the main street was so full of visitors that I could not walk quickly. On both sides of the main street, named *Damunhwagil* (multicultural street), there were lower-level buildings with restaurants, karaoke rooms, recruitment agencies, property agencies, grocery shops, and other outlets. The ground floor level of many of the buildings had market stalls (as seen in figure 12.) selling food, mostly Chinese, such as meat and bread/pancakes, but there were also other Asian foods in the grocery stores and food stalls on the street.

As I was in rather a tourist mode during that visit, I was excited to have an ‘authentic’ pho (Vietnamese rice noodle) from a Vietnamese restaurant as the place was advertised in some online blogs, TV shows, and the Ansan city website as serving the ‘original’ taste of the noodle. Although Vietnamese rice noodle places can easily be found in other towns in South Korea these days, many of them are Koreanised, served without the herbs that are usually used in Vietnamese

⁶⁹ Source: the Ansan City Hall blog. Available at: https://www.ansantalktalk.net/bbs/board.php?bo_table=ebravo4&wr_id=62 [23 June 2020]. (in Korean)

food, such as coriander and mint, which are held back for those Korean eaters who do not like their strong scent and flavour. Unlike those consumers, I was hoping to enjoy a more South-east Asian flavour, with lots of those herbs in the soup.

Apart from the ‘pleasure’ of eating more ‘original’ Vietnamese food, I felt the area was quite ‘unfamiliar’, as if I were walking down a street in another country. Although the physical environment of Wongok-dong is similar to many other working-class neighbourhoods in South Korea, with low-level buildings and small shops, the sense of unfamiliarity I felt came from looking at the people on the streets, largely migrants from different parts of Asia, and the languages on the signs and posters, such as Russian and Cambodian, as well as hearing different languages and smelling curry, lamb meat, and some unknown spices and herbs. This sensual experience on my visit to Wongok-dong at the beginning of my fieldwork made my first encounter with the neighbourhood akin to a ‘touristic’ encounter: such senses function as ‘part of the tourist’s competence of making sense’ of a place (Crouch, Aronsson and Wahlström, 2001: 257). The unfamiliar feelings I experienced, such as the smell of lamb meats and seeing raw cuts of meat, did not stay long though and they became familiar as I visited this area regularly over my fieldwork period.

This section began by focusing on my touristic experience of Wongok-dong to lay the foundation to discuss the promotion and transformation of the area as a tourist attraction in the remaining pages. As of 2017, the DSZ in Wongok-dong has 1,420 registered shops, with 109 of them being restaurants, and 269 shops being owned by foreign nationals, accounting for 18.9% of the total number of shops (Ansan City Hall, 2017).⁷⁰ While the majority of the restaurants are Chinese, there are also other Asian eateries, such as Cambodian, Indian, Indonesian, Nepali, Pakistan, Russian, Sri Lankan, Thai, Uzbek, and Vietnamese. With its variety of ethnic restaurants and food, presumably owned by many migrant entrepreneurs, the Ansan city

⁷⁰ See also the DSZ map in figure 13., which marks many of the ethnic restaurants.

government has invested in branding this market area as the *Damunhwa eumsik geori* (multicultural food street), a phrase that is coined by the local government. The street name sign was placed at the entrance of Wongok-dong, and specially designed banners with the street name and the rainbow-like image, presumably implying different cultures with different colours, were attached to the streetlights. In addition, in the corner of the main square in Wongok-dong, a metallic sculpture, several meters high, of a plate and chopsticks was installed to symbolise (east) Asian food.

(Wongok-dong is) a *living space of foreigners* coming from about 60 countries, such as China, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Vietnam (...) where you can taste the variety of Asian food. (...) There are rows of foreign shops and foreign restaurants, that you might feel confused as to whether you are in a foreign country in Korea or Korea in a foreign country. (Ansan City Hall website, my emphasis)⁷¹

The Ansan City Hall also published promotional materials, including food leaflets and a special zone map. One promotional booklet introduces Ansan city's history, heritage, industry, nature, festivals, and other aspects, and Wongok-dong is included as a multicultural street in the nine tourist attractions of the city. Described as 'a living space of foreigners' and 'a foreign country', Wongok-dong is advertised as if it is outside of the country. Long (2004) explains that culinary tourism offers experiences which are far from daily routines, 'a mode that is out of the ordinary, that steps outside the normal routine to notice difference and the power of food to represent and negotiate that difference' (Long, 2004: 20). In this sense, people are invited to the Wongok-dong multicultural food street with the promise of a foreign-like experience, with 'Asian food' becoming a medium that provides such an exotic, extra-ordinary day. As Hage (2007) notes, 'culinary cosmo-multiculturalism ultimately aims to provide the eater with something like an international touristic adventure' (Hage, 2007: 21-2). In the narrative of promoting and

⁷¹ Available at: <https://tourinfo.ansan.go.kr/content.do?cmsid=10002&cntid=10195> [accessed 29 June 2018]. (in Korean)

consuming Asian food in Wongok-dong, migrants and their culture come to be fixed as ‘foreign’ in order to ensure the international and multicultural food adventure.

Yet, regarding ‘foreign-ness’, it is necessary to consider who would feel ‘foreign’ visiting Wongok-dong? That is, who are the consumers that Ansan city aims to attract? If the visitors to Wongok-dong feel like they are in a foreign country, it suggests that both the food providers and the visitors become ‘foreigners’. Of course, we do not know whether a visitor actually feels ‘foreign’ or ‘exotic’ when visiting. Maybe some of the ethnic food in Wongok-dong is already familiar for local Korean consumers, such as Pho, the Vietnamese rice noodle dish mentioned earlier. However, in promoting Wongok-dong as a multicultural food street, the histories of individual ethnic food (culture), some of which have become familiar to non-migrant Korean consumers, are simply ignored, with all food becoming homogenised as ‘foreign’. By so doing, the city aims to attract visitors by intriguing them, with ethnic food tourism based on emphasising its ‘unfamiliar’ or ‘exotic’ character. In commodifying ethnic food, the targeted consumers are those who would find such ethnic food ‘new’ or known but still ‘special’. As Molz (2007) notes, in culinary tourism: ‘what counts as “Other”, “different” “exotic”, or “novel” can only be named in relation to what it is “Other” or “different” *from*’ (Molz, 2007: 78, emphasis in original). Therefore, in marketing migrant food in Wongok-dong words like ‘exotic’ or ‘foreign’ are juxtaposed to ‘usual’, ‘familiar’, or ‘ordinary’. This in turn differentiates foods between migrant minority and non-migrant Korean mainstream, constructing the latter as the main consumers.

[This Vietnamese] restaurant offers unchanged, the *original* taste of the Vietnamese Pho cooked by a *native* [Vietnamese] chef. (...) We wish that rather exotic food in [this Vietnamese] restaurant, that reproduces the *local* [Vietnamese] flavour the most, is loved by Koreans (AMCSC website, my emphasis).

(The restaurant is) popular among Malaysians [wanting] to eat the real *local* food. It is visited by many Indonesians to meet their friends, particularly on Sundays (...) and

sometimes they improvise as they love to play guitar and sing (...) (AMCSC website, my emphasis).⁷²

The AMCSC published a leaflet introducing some ethnic restaurants in Wongok-dong. In this promotional material, ‘authenticity’ is repeated by stressing the ‘original’, the ‘local’ taste of food. Furthermore, the authenticity of ethnic foods is shaped further when they are advertised as consumed or popular by their ‘original’ or ‘local’ consumers; ‘Indonesians’ and ‘Malaysians’ are mentioned in promoting the Indonesian restaurant to guarantee the authenticity of the Indonesian food in the restaurant. Furthermore, the description of Indonesians spontaneously playing guitar and singing in the restaurant adds a quality of Indonesian culture. Moreover, in illustrating the migrants enjoying their ‘home’ food, what is interesting is how migrants become ‘locals’. While seemingly contradictory, the migrants work in the geographical setting of ethnic food tourism and in the context of consumer multiculturalism. Ethnic foods become ‘ethnic’ food by their ‘difference’, and ‘[t]hey only become recognised as such, after being “disembedded” from their locality and re-imbedded into a new context where *difference* makes them visible’ (Arvela, 2013: 2, emphasis in original). Therefore, while migrant food culture becomes an ‘authentic’ ‘local’ ethnic food in Wongok-dong, the targeted visitors, presumably non-migrant Koreans, are invited to experience such ‘re-imbedded’ migrant ‘locality’ in this food multiculturalism.

Making ‘local’ through migrant cooks

It is worth delving further into the ‘native’ chef mentioned in the promotion of the Vietnamese restaurant earlier. This ‘native’ chef element makes ethnic restaurants in Wongok-dong ‘authentic’ and ‘local’ and has also involved the Ansan government recruiting of foreign cooks from outside the country. Since Wongok-dong was designated as a DSZ, the Ansan government

⁷² Available at: <https://global.ansan.go.kr/multiple/MultipleFamily.jsp?menuId=16033001&id=761&searchField=&searchKeyw ord=&searchCategoryId=category1&searchCategoryValue=cw00000359&mode=S¤tPage=1&articleId=11 21355> [accessed 29 June 2018]. (in Korean)

has been permitted (by the central government) to write invitation letters to bring in foreign chefs or cooks, as Seon, a public officer working at the AMCSC during my fieldwork, explained. This is an exceptional case in which local governments can participate in the visa issuance process in South Korea, which is usually carried out exclusively by the national government. More specifically, inviting foreign chefs or cooks to the DSZ at the local government level is subject to a special case under the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Regulation of the Special Economic Zones for Specialized Regional Development in South Korea. As explored in Chapter 5, the purpose of this Act is to systematically support specialised regional development and help stimulate regional economies and the growth of the national economy by selectively applying special cases for regulations in accordance with the characteristics of each region through the designation and operation of special economic zones for specialised regional development (Article 1 (Purpose)). Under the Regulations of the Special Economic Zones for Specialized Regional Development:

(1) ... the procedure for the issuance of visas to foreigners who undertake or engage in a specialization project and the maximum sojourn period that may be allowed each time may be prescribed for each sojourn status exceptionally by Presidential Decree. (2) Any foreigner who intends to be eligible for the application of paragraph (1) in filing an application for the issuance of visas under the Immigration Act shall obtain certification from the head of the competent local government of the relevant special zone, as prescribed by Presidential Decree. (Article 20 (Special Cases for the Immigration Act)).

This provision supports local governments to actively recruit foreign workers in their local (re-)development project(s). Ong (2006) discusses neoliberalism as 'a technology of government' or 'a technology of governing', noting the ways in which market-based calculations are being applied to managing populations and special spaces (Ong, 2006: 3-4; see also Chapter 5). One of the technologies to comply with market principles, such as competition, is 'subjection'.

According to Ong:

Technologies of subjection inform political strategies that differently regulate populations for optimal productivity, increasingly through spatial practices that engage market forces. Such regulations include the fortressization of urban space, the control of travel, and the recruitment of certain kinds of actors to growth hubs (Ong, 2006: 6, emphasis in original). Inviting foreign chefs/cooks to the Wongok-dong special zone is an example of this technology of managing populations and special spaces, although the scale may be much smaller than other economic zone projects in either other areas in South Korea or indeed in other countries. As an exceptional case under the Special Zone Regulations, the procedure of issuing E-7 visas to foreign cooks became simplified. Here, the E-7 (Foreign National of Special Ability) visa is the one that a non-Korean national who wants to work as a chef or a cook in a restaurant in South Korea needs. This visa category aims to enhance national and local competitiveness by attracting (semi-) skilled migrants who possess special, professional knowledge or skills (Ministry of Justice, Korea Immigration Service, 2021: 155). Whereas about eighty professional/skilled jobs, such as office managers and experts in science/social science fit into the category of skilled migrants, semi-professional positions include many other jobs, such as office workers and service workers. Migrant chefs and cooks fall into this second category. Foreigners who are eligible to apply for this visa must be either experienced in general with over five years of work experience or educated with a bachelor's degree (with one year of work experience) or higher. In the case of chefs or cooks, applicants are likely required to prove their qualification through work experience in culinary or a related field (for example food and beverage) with relevant education (either in South Korea or in other country) and/or a relevant licence (issued by either the Korean government or other country), and/or a relevant award (Ministry of Justice, Korea Immigration Service, 2021: 204).

[We invite foreign cooks] so that the foreign restaurants [in Wongok-dong] can make their own *proper, original* taste. (Seon Eung-lim, interview, my emphasis).

According to the public officers in the AMCSC, around one hundred invitation letters are issued each year by the Ansan City Hall. Over 90% of foreign chefs/cooks working in ethnic restaurants in Wongok-dong have been invited in this way (Na Yoon, fieldnote, November 26, 2018; Seon Eung-lim, interview). Bringing in foreign chefs/cooks through the special zone regulations reflects that they are expected to contribute to the promotion of Wongok-dong's multicultural food street (and eventually to revitalise the local economy). They are invited to Korea and employed in the ethnic restaurants in Wongok-dong to provide the 'proper, original taste' mentioned in Seon's comment above. As such, they are expected to have some intrinsic trait or special ability to cook their 'original' ethnic or cultural food.

However, in conducting fieldwork in Wongok-dong, I found that bringing a foreign, 'native' chef or cook does not necessarily guarantee the 'authentic' taste of ethnic food. One interviewee, Ji, a Korean owner of an Indonesian restaurant, told me that the 'local' taste is more likely to come from migrants selling street food than foreign cooks with more than ten years of work experience in a hotel because those experienced chefs/cooks are more prone to preparing 'fusion' food. This firstly raises questions about whether there is 'original' food in any cuisine and what 'original' food is, which are at best very difficult questions to answer (and beyond the scope of this research). Moreover, whereas migrants from Indonesia or individuals familiar with Indonesian food, such as Ji, may be able to tell whether the food in the restaurant is 'original' or 'fusion', it is unclear how many customers, particularly non-migrant Koreans would be able to discern the difference. Therefore, the 'proper, original taste' that Seon emphasised may be nothing more than promotional language in this case. Whether food made by a foreign, 'native' chef who is supposed to cook 'local' food is or is not completely authentic may not be the main issue in place-marketing: the acts of inviting foreign chefs/cooks from 'local' areas and advertising 'native' chefs/cooks in restaurants sell the Wongok-dong food street by presenting the 'authentic' image.

Meanwhile, although the narrative of ‘authentic’, ‘original’ taste and food legitimises the demand for ‘local’ cooks, the demand for cheap workers is hidden behind the promotion. According to one immigration research institute’s report in Korea, the employment of foreign cooks likely involves a much lower level of payment than stipulated in the relevant law, according to which the wage rate for a migrant chef/cook must be either more than ₩1,500,000 (roughly equivalent to £1,000) per month or over 60% of the wages of Korean chefs/ cooks (Choi and Hyeon, 2017: 6-7). While this minimum wage regulation is part of a policy of protecting jobs for local Korean workers, rather than in place for migrants (Choi and Hyeon, 2017: 6), the law itself encourages and legalises this kind of pay gap between migrant and non-migrant workers, encouraging the recruitment of foreign chefs, thereby undermining non-migrant Koreans’ job security. Given the reported trend of the employment of foreign cooks with lower wages, it is reasonable to assume that foreign cooks may work on low income in Wongok-dong.

Migrants are generally involved in the tourism economy in two ways: ‘as low-skilled employees’ such as cooks, dishwashers, and waiting staff, and ‘as self-employed entrepreneurs’ opening many different, but often food and retail, businesses (Hall and Rath, 2007: 5-6). However, the actual process is neoliberal, with the market logic of improving urban competitiveness operating through deploying migrants to meet the demand for low-paid foreign workers and commodifying migrant culture and places.

Space of food diversity

You can encounter a *diversity* of foods and products from Asian supermarkets and Asian restaurants such as Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Indian, Uzbek, Indonesian, and Sri Lankan. (Ansan City Hall website, my emphasis)⁷³

Multicultural districts like Wongok-dong are often seen as commercial opportunities, with their ‘a babel of national dishes’ (Muncott, 1996: 66) displayed on the streets, providing visitors with

⁷³ Available at: <https://tourinfo.ansan.go.kr/content.do?cmsid=10002&cntid=10195> [accessed 29 June 2020]. (in Korean)

pleasure in seeing, smelling, and tasting diversity. The area is privileged in this sense, offering visitors such sensual experiences from the variety of ethnic cuisine, largely brought about by migrants from different parts of the world, all in one place. In their discussion of 'the world on a plate' in metropolitan London, Cook and Crang (1996) suggest the display of the national cultural (food) mosaic in one place and time can be seen as a local articulation of 'globally extensive networks and flows of foods, people and culinary knowledge', particularly in the context of migration and tourism (Cook and Crang, 1996: 132, 137-140).



Figure 13. Map of the DSZ⁷⁴

The promotional map in figure 13. shows how national food diversity plays out in promoting a space for ethnic food consumption. On this map, the DSZ is within the pink dotted lines, and ethnic restaurants within the zone are indicated by the pink circled numbers. The fifty-five

⁷⁴ Source: the AMCSC website. Available at: https://www2.ansan.go.kr/global/common/cntnts/selectContents.do?cntnts_id=C0001008 [accessed 20 October 2021]. (in Korean)

restaurants, with their name and contact number provided, are divided into the nations, as seen on the left and right side of the map, including Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

My first impression of the map is that it looks like a menu. Although the map does not include more details about the food each restaurant offers, it is possible to guess from the name of the restaurants what kind of food they serve, such as lamb skewers and Phat Thai. The name of regions, such as Samarkand (in Uzbekistan), Tashkent (in Uzbekistan) and Yeongil (in China), and symbols which represent a certain area, like Taj Mahal (in India), suggest the origin of the food there. The map becomes like a world map with this collection of regional names and foods, so visitors may feel that they are in a miniature world, or more accurately, Asia. So, what matters in this map is diversity: diversity comes to the fore in ethnic food consumption and the flows of people and foods, suppressing their networks and stories as less important to consumers and promoters. Moreover, difference is more fetishized: diners consume not only the difference *from* their cultural background, but also the difference between differences (see Hage, 1997: 26; see also Molz, 2007). Therefore, if the availability of diversity becomes a key concept in promoting a space for ethnic food consumption, a lack of diversity may lose its attraction for tourists from the promoter's view. Kim, a public officer in the Ansan City Office, indicated how 'diversity' is valued in the project of DSZ and the multicultural food street:

[When we initiated the DSZ project], we expected that [Wongok-dong would be] full of cultural diversity. However, it's not now, contrary to our expectations. I didn't expect Chinese, *Joseonjok* [the ethnic Korean Chinese] would dominate this much. What I mean, one [migrant] group makes up the majority too much. (Kim Chan-ho, interview)

Wongok-dong is composed of diverse migrant groups from different regions, mostly from Asia, and lately from Africa, following the global trend of the increasing number of African asylum seekers and refugees. However, the majority of migrants are from China, particularly *Joseonjok*, the ethnic Korean Chinese group. This has been particularly facilitated by the introduction, in

2007, of the Work and Visit (H-2) Visa for ethnic Koreans overseas, enabling them elevated migrant rights in terms of employment and entry.⁷⁵ These migrants are given a visa valid for three years and allowed to stay in South Korea for up to four years and ten months when the visa is extended. The visa allows them to enter South Korea freely without needing re-entry permission. Compared to non-Korean ethnic low-skilled workers (E-9 visa holders), the ethnic Korean groups are given preferences from the Korean government as they are allowed to work not only in so-called 3-D jobs, such as in the construction and manufacturing industries, but also in the service sector, which is prohibited for E-9 labour migrants. Moreover, while ethnically non-Korean workers are restricted in terms of changing workplaces – only being allowed to change up to three times, and with specific reasons, within their initial three years of the visa period and up to two times within the extended visa period – ethnic Korean migrants are not subjected to any such condition. This group can also benefit from changing their working visa to a resident's visa; after staying five years in the country, Work and Visit (H-2) Visa holders can apply for the Overseas Korean (F4) Visa, which gives eligible ethnic Korean migrants 'quasi-dual citizenship rights', including the rights to stay longer in Korea, bring their family member(s), acquire real-estate in the country, enjoy the national health care system, and so on.

This ethnicised immigration policy has resulted in an increasing number of *Joseonjok* workers in the Korean labour market as a whole, and in Wongok-dong in particular. Accordingly, the food market has also grown to target Chinese customers, with Chinese restaurants outnumbering other ethnic eateries, as the special zone map (figure 13.) demonstrates. This domination of Chinese food in Wongok-dong comes to be a concern for promoters, for, as Kim noted, it looks like the neighbourhood is losing its 'diversity' as the Chinese group 'makes up the majority too much'. However, viewing diversity in terms of keeping the balance of difference may generate decontextualization of the Chinese groups. In the promotional narrative resonating

⁷⁵ This visa is established for ethnic Korean migrants over the age of eighteen, permitting free entry and departure between South Korea and their home country for five years working in low-skilled jobs.

from the Ansan City Hall and Kim's comment, diversity is valued when it promises a variety of national food. Therefore, although there are over fifty ethnic groups in China, including the majority Han and other minorities, and different cultures from different regions within the country, in Wongok-dong tourism, such diversity may easily be erased by homogenising China as one culture. Quantifying diversity in terms of national difference results in the differences among many Chinese restaurants in the map simply being ignored and categorised into one Chinese food. Thus, celebrating multicultural dining in making Wongok-dong a multicultural food place results in a limited understanding of migrant communities in the area, reducing them to a homogeneous national/regional group.

6.4. Conclusion: making 'ethnic' other through 'ethnic food' place-marketing

The creation of a multicultural food street by the Ansan city government is a part of the local economic revitalising project promoting small businesses, including ethnic restaurants, in the neighbourhood. However, during the process, Wongok-dong and migrant food and eateries in the area have been reconstructed as 'local' in a 'foreign' place. Imagined as 'exotic' in the promotional narratives, and differentiated from non-migrant food (culture), migrant foods are at the same time homogenised as their individual difference is underestimated or overlooked. In addition, by imagining migrant food as 'authentic', it denies the (potential) intercultural contacts, as if the food does not or will not change at all. However, it's not known if any restaurants serve Kimchi (Korean salted and fermented vegetable with Chinese cabbage and Korean radish) as a side dish, or if there might be some migrants who add some Korean Chilli pepper power to their 'home' food after living for years in Korea. Furthermore, in an attempt to make ethnic cuisine in Wongok-dong more 'original' and 'authentic', semi-skilled migrant chefs or cooks are recruited through the market-oriented 'special zone' technology that facilitates a cheaper workforce to revitalise the local (and eventually national) economy.

The Ansan government's promotion of Wongok-dong as a multicultural food street demonstrates how food multiculturalism is (re-)shaped by both cultural discourse on migrants

and migrant food (culture) and neoliberal governing practices of managing certain individuals – migrant cooks/chefs – and spaces – the food market and eateries in the Wongok-dong DSZ – for improving local economic competitiveness. However, in this commodified food multiculturalism, what is valued is diversity and difference, yet the difference is to be bounded within regional or national culture, and diversity is to be ‘properly’ balanced through difference between differences. Moreover, the enticing narratives which make migrant food and places attractive for consumers emphasise cultural authenticity, diversity, and difference, and tend to conceal the instrumental economic elements of the consumer-cum-tourist multiculturalism. As Arvela (2013) puts it, ‘[e]thnic foods are called into being in their encounter with the foodways of the other. They are defined by difference’ (Arvela, 2013: 2). Therefore, by imagining migrant food (culture) as attractive products, while the value of difference and diversity becomes the market value in this local tourism industry, migrants, represented as the ‘local’ of the ‘foreign’ food, or recruited as the provider of such food, remain as the ‘ethnic’ other in this ‘ethnic food’ place-promotion.

Chapter 7. Residents' responses to changes in Wongok-dong

This chapter is concerned with Wongok-dongs' non-migrant residents' complex responses to the multicultural and neoliberal processes in their neighbourhood. Based on my participant observation in the group-discussions at the Wongok-dong Community Centre⁷⁶ and a senior centre, as well as the interviews with residents, public officers, and activists, this chapter explores the concerns and interests that the residents have regarding various public policies which support migrants, the large presence of migrants in the neighbourhood, and the local economy. In analysing their responses expressed through their everyday discourse, I identify elements and contexts that affect the ways in which the residents respond, and examine the emotions engaged in their responses. In doing so, I argue that the residents' ambivalent responses, depending on what they are about, lead to their conditional acceptance of migrants and diversity.

7.1. Public responses to migrants and multiculturalism and local contexts

Public attitudes towards cultural or ethnic diversity are intertwined with various issues, including national identity, local community cohesion, and racism. Class can be also an issue when it comes to sharing public goods, such as public housing and welfare benefits, particularly for low-income or vulnerable members of a society. In response to the increased emphasis on 'racial' or ethnic groups' rights in public discourse and public policy in many plural societies, with accompanying measures such as positive action, there have been examples of collective backlash. This has often manifested in the rise of far right populist parties and anti-immigration campaigns, and a reverse discrimination or reverse racism discourse (e.g., Betz, 1993; 1994; Hewitt, 2005; Hughey, 2014; Nelson et al., 2018; Pincus, 2000). Some studies have given significant attention to the host community(-ies) or the majority ethnic group(s), most notably in Western countries such as Australia, North America, and the United Kingdom (e.g., Beider, 2011; 2015; Hellwig

⁷⁶ The Wongok-dong Community Centre is a public place for Wongok-dong residents, providing public services and spaces for physical activities like yoga and education, and learning computer skills, by the local government (see Chapter 5).

and Sinno, 2017; Thomas et al., 2018), but also in other contexts, such as in Asia and Africa (e.g., Diop et al., 2017; Gordon, 2017; Tunon and Baruah, 2012; Zhou et al., 2016). These studies have examined various factors, including economic interests, sense of interracial relationship, cultural proximity or difference, and concerns over welfare benefits. They have highlighted the importance of context, types of migrants, and discourses regarding different migrants, ethnic or ‘racial’ histories, and political economic conditions. In studying the perceptions of the majority groups, emotions like fear and resentment have also been identified as playing an important role in (re-)constructing ‘racial’, ethnic relations by mediating how people make sense of what is happening, animating processes of excluding, othering, or racialising migrants and (re-)shaping (imagined) national or cultural identities (e.g., Bloch and Dreher, 2009; Fenton, 2012; Hage, 2003).

While the research on people’s responses to diversity and migrants has contributed to our understanding of what people living in contemporary multicultural societies are concerned about, including what kinds of emotions underpin public attitudes, many of those studies tend to focus on negative responses involving the politics of resentment and/or fear (e.g., Meseguer and Kemmerling, 2016; Neocosmos, 2008; Rhodes and Hall, 2020; Ware, 2008; Wells and Watson, 2005). The reason for this partly lies in the fact that these works have studied the public responses at the national level, focusing on some attitude or sentiment distinctively expressed through political parties or violent events. However, as some recent research at the local, everyday level has demonstrated there can also be mixed feelings and attitudes among research participants towards ethnic or cultural diversity, (e.g., Bloch and Dreher, 2009; Thomas, et al., 2018). Bloch and Dreher (2009), for example, find that while the residents of Rockdale in southern Sydney largely supported multiculturalism, there was also prejudice and hostility toward Arab or Muslim groups, perceived as a threat to the local community. This suggests the possibility of more complex attitudes and feelings about the multicultural nature of the society and migrants in local places. Moreover, investigating local context enables the identification of

elements that play a role in shaping local-specific responses, such as types of class, gender, ethnicity, 'race', age, and migrant status of the residents in the local area. However, I also acknowledge the importance of forces formed at a wider scale, such as a sense of nation, racial perceptions, and public discourse on migrants and their integration.

This chapter explores how non-migrant Korea residents have experienced some changes related to migrants and multiculturalism in Wongok-dong and, more importantly, how their responses are (re-)shaping multiculture in the area. The following section addresses the residents' experiences and evaluations regarding governmental support for minority ethnic students in public schools, the large presence of migrants in day-care centres and schools, the local economic downturn, and making Wongok-dong a tourist destination.

7.2. Resentment against multicultural policy

Multicultural education and making '*Damunhwa*' students

Since 2006, the Korean government, through the Ministry of Education⁷⁷, has supported minority ethnic students through a distinct policy called *Damunhwa gyoyuk* (multicultural education), recognising that children from international marriage families in the country face difficulties adjusting to school due to their differences in appearance, culture, and language. As such, they established the Plan for Supporting Education for Children of Multicultural Families to prevent minority ethnic students from being isolated from public education (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2006). In response to the growing number of minority ethnic pupils either born in South Korea or having migrated to the country, the Ministry of Education has developed an annual plan, albeit with slightly revised titles, contents, and specific institutional measures.

⁷⁷ The name of this national body has changed several times, including the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2001-2008), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2008-2013) and the Ministry of Education (2013-present). I use the Ministry of Education in the thesis except in references.

In the process of introducing and implementing the multicultural education policy, minority ethnic students have been classified as ‘*Damunhwa*’ students, being referred to by the term *Damunhwa gajeong janyeo* (multicultural family child[ren]) or *Damunhwa hakaeng* (multicultural students).⁷⁸ Thus the term, ‘*Damunhwa*’, is used to differentiate minority ethnic children or pupils, regardless of their ethnic background, be they born to international marriage parents (with Korean national and foreign national parents) or foreign parents (with both parents of non-Korean nationality). Such categorisation may aid the government in more efficiently planning and implementing policy by identifying a distinct policy target group. However, the flipside is that the classifying children as such clearly serves to divide pupils with a migrant background from non-migrant pupils. Indeed, the word ‘*Damunhwa*’ has become a specific term for minority ethnic groups in everyday usage. For example, there have been reports of some teachers calling migrant pupils ‘*Damunhwa*’ rather than their given names, which serves as a warning that ‘*Damunhwa*’ has developed into a stigmatising term for minority ethnic students (Kim, 2009; Kim, 2017). Cho and Song (2011) claim that such institutional classification makes those minority ethnic pupils often feel uneasy about being differentiated and called ‘*Damunhwa*’ in school or in public offices (Cho and Song, 2011: 64-5). As the non-migrant Korean residents' comments in this chapter demonstrate, the word ‘*Damunhwa*’ is often used in everyday life to distinguish minority ethnic students from non-migrant Korean students.

Supporting migrant students is of course a normative practice that guarantees their education rights. However, public spending on the ‘*Damunhwa*’ group is ultimately part of the national population project controlling a diverse population and promoting labour mobility,

⁷⁸ Here, the term ‘*Damunhwa gajeong* (multicultural family)’ has a slightly different meaning in this context than it does in the Multicultural Families Support Act, the legal measure for the social integration of international marriage migrants and their family members which was discussed in Chapter 4. While the latter recognises the family based on an international marriage (between Korean national and either non-Korean national or naturalised Korean) which excludes non-Korean national couples and their child(ren), the former includes child(ren) of those non-Korean national parents. Thus, in this chapter, the term ‘*Damunhwa*’ students refers to minority ethnic students regardless of their nationality, which is why they are often called foreign students in everyday practice, and to avoid the confusion, I use the term ‘*Damunhwa*’ in single quotation marks to distinguish its usage in referring to minority ethnic groups from *Damunhwa* to mean multicultural or multiculture as in the DSZ.

particularly labour migrants in low-skilled jobs in the construction, farming, manufacturing, and hospitality industries. Yet, public discourse about them often effectively disguises such instrumental ends. For example, the representation of '*Damunhwa*' children or pupils as 'national talent' or 'global talent' emerged in the public discourse in Korea to justify the national orientation of multiculturalism in the context of improving national competitiveness. As Cho and Seo (2013) argue, media discourse on '*Damunhwa*' children incorporating them into the 'global Korea' idea and describing them as culturally hybrid and multilingual 'global talent', treats national support for '*Damunhwa*' children as a means of enabling sustainable economic growth (Cho and Seo, 2013: 120-123). The multicultural education establishes itself as contributing 'to realise the national vision *injedaeguk* (a strong state with talents), [by] nurturing *Damunhwa* family students as a global talent with multilingual ability' (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008: 1).⁷⁹ The actual policy programmes carried out in public schools targeting '*Damunhwa*' pupils demonstrate such national desire. Kim (2017) claims that the budget planned by the Ministry of Education has been largely focused on '*Damunhwa*' students, with the purpose of developing their learning ability, bilingual ability (Korean and presumably their ethnic background language), as well as other talent.

Yet, '*Damunhwa*' students are also perceived as a potential problem in public discourse, in a way that is seemingly at odds with the 'talent' narrative. For example, they are often considered to be behind the average education level of Korean students: in education policy documents, migrant youth and foreign national students are viewed as lacking Korean language skills, as well as skills in other subjects, such as science, and as falling below the standard academic level (e.g., Ministry of Education, 2013). In some media representations, '*Damunhwa*' children or pupils are referred to negatively as having 'complexes [sense of inferiority presumably as a minority ethnic in Korea] (...) hanging out with each other [and] getting violent ... [which] can

⁷⁹ '*Injaedaeguk*' is one of the national visions of the then Lee government (2008-2013) aiming at developing human capital for national competitiveness, placing emphasis on education, science, and technology.

be a huge social problem' (Jeong, 2009, quoted in Cho and Seo, 2013: 124), or [having] 'language development disorder [which means slow or behind in language acquisition] with a lack of speaking skills compared to their peer group ... [and] with difficulty in keeping up with their schoolwork' (Noh, 2010, quoted in Cho and Seo, 2013: 124). Such representations are problematic as the second-generation children of migrants are likely to be stigmatised in Korean society, implying that they are less capable of language acquisition as if they are inherently inferior – which contradicts the multicultural education policy mentioned above encouraging their bilingual abilities – while the multicultural education policy attempts to redress their potential 'deficit' to efficiently integrate them.

Whether they are represented as potential 'talent' or as a 'problem', the process of creating this '*Damunhwa*' category by separating this group as a policy target is of concern. This action creates a new type of vulnerable group in Korea, described as those who need governmental support based only on their migrant background, not because of their economic status or other criteria. In both public and everyday spheres, the label '*Damunhwa*' becomes a marker of their migrant background, in which the sole focus is on their migrant, multicultural characteristics. The following section demonstrates how this is apparent among the non-migrant Korean residents in Wongok-dong, as I explore their comments on the education policy for minority ethnic students.

Resentment against the support for '*Damunhwa*' students

Cho Soo-jeong: In the case of Wongok middle school, they provide *Damunhwa* pupils with many benefits. From computers ... they receive the budget [for the multicultural students] from the Ministry of Education.

Park Hyeon-ju: They don't provide [such support] for Koreans?

Cho Soo-jeong: None for us.

Park Hyeon-ju: Even though they go to the same school? It doesn't make sense.

Cho Soo-jeong: That's what I mean. (...) In most cases, the Ministry of Education gives some money every year for spending on foreign students. Then the schools have to spend it, don't they? So, they take their foreign students to a place like China, where our kids cannot even afford to go, under the name of a field-study, or financially support them in other ways. It's not only children who experience reverse discrimination though...

(Group-discussion, March 26, 2019)

More than ten non-migrant Korean residents attended this group discussion, talking about their neighbourhood in terms of history, street food, economy, cultural events, and other topics. The subject of multicultural education came up during a discussion on the educational environment in Wongok-dong, with Cho expressing anger at the differential treatment of '*Damunhwa* students' and 'our kids' by the national government. Emotional expressions are often '*about* something' (Nussbaum, 2001: 27, emphasis in original). Nussbaum (2001), noting this cognitive feature of emotions, views emotions as having an object involving a dialogue between the subject and the object of a particular emotion and the subject's perceptions and beliefs about the object and the object's meaning, value, or worth to the subject (Nussbaum, 2001: 27-31). In this sense, the anger that Cho showed is *about* the 'benefits' that '*Damunhwa* students' in the public school receive in her neighbourhood. Her resentment was motivated by her assessment of the preferential treatment accorded to '*Damunhwa* students', which she perceived as a form of 'reverse discrimination' against 'our kids'.

Yet, emotions are not only cognitive, but also social. Noting the way emotions function to align an imagined individual subject with an imagined collective body against imagined others, Ahmed (2004; 2014) argues that emotions circulate through being attached to their object, represented as a threat, danger, disgust, or something similar, and to their subject represented as threatened. Through this attachment to bodies, emotions act to make others, often endowing them with certain meaning, value, or quality (Ahmed, 2014: 4). Therefore, the anger that Cho expressed at the group meeting did not remain a personal emotion as it seemed to gain the

sympathy of other residents in attendance, reflected in responses such as ‘It doesn’t make sense!’. It was the moment that, to borrow words from Wells and Watson (2005), ‘a kind of local “common-sense” attitude’ was created (Wells and Watson, 2005: 264).

I used to participate in the parents’ meetings at the Wongok middle school. Once the subsidies are granted [from the government], they [the school] have to spend it. There are many poor Korean students who live with grandparents. (...) The school took foreign students to a place for cultural education, buying them a Korean traditional costume and teaching Korean manners. (...) That [the money] is not available for other purposes but [only] supposed to be spent on foreign students. But the thing is this area is impoverished.

There are a lot of single parent families. (Cho Soo-jeong, group-discussion, April 30, 2019)

Talking about a particular experience in a public school in Wongok-dong, Cho viewed the subsidy for ‘foreign’ students as unfair because they, rather than ‘poor Korean students’, enjoy national welfare benefits. The emotion of resentment here plays a role in making the Korean residents bind together as Korean ‘us’, juxtaposing the poor ‘our kids’ and ‘*Damunhwa*’ or ‘foreign’ students. Furthermore, in this complaint about the public policy allegedly giving privileges to minority ethnic students over non-migrant Korean students in low-income families and/or those with a vulnerable living status, such as single parent families or living with their grandparents, the minority ethnic students become the Other who deprive *our* ‘poor Korean students’ of welfare. Therefore, the resentful emotion serves as catalyst for victimhood – through the circulation of anger among the residents, migrants become an object by being associated with the emotion, even if they are not the direct cause of the attached emotion. As a result of this circulation of indignation, the imagined Korean ‘us’ is reconstructed and reinforced against the Other, ‘*Damunhwa*’.

Interestingly, this reminds me of the way the sense of Korean nation has been (re-)formed through constructing the Other – the coloniser Japan(ese) and the communist North Korea(ns) in the 1900s – with Korean nationalism developing in response to imperialism, or as an ‘anti-

imperialist ideology', particularly against Japanese assimilation, and as an 'anti-communism' movement against North Korea (Shin et al., 1999: 470; see also Shin, 2006) (see Chapter 4). Through the history of the deprived, restored, and divided territory of the Korean peninsula, the notion of the homogeneous Korean nation has been repeatedly (re-)formed by constructing a notion of Others. That is, the imagined nation self was (re-)formed and consolidated against the presence of the Others. Although the national government and media are now calling for the notion of ethnic homogeneity to be discarded, advocating multicultural Korea in the post-colonial, post-Cold War era, it is arguably selective as they attempt to reform the Korean nation by including marriage migrants and their child(ren) as the members of the Korean society and excluding foreign migrants by creating a new Other, '*Damunhwa*'. In this way, the imagined Korean nation is reaffirmed through the Other within Korean society.

Moreover, in the residents' responses above, there is an intersection of ethnicity/'race' with class. As mentioned earlier, the residents' anger indicates that they perceive the preferential treatment of migrant students as unfair. Their appraisal of the national policy on '*Damunhwa*' students leads them to claim 'reverse discrimination' is in play, implying that '*Damunhwa*' students are an illegitimate subject, taking benefits from Koreans who are supposed to have those benefits. Such an argument is then supported by the presence of the impoverished in Wongok-dong - 'poor Korean students' or 'single parent families'. Of particular interest here is how the subject of class is brought up through talking about '*Damunhwa*' students. The residents acknowledge that class inequality is relevant to themselves, but they do not recognise the same for migrants, as seen from Cho's comment on welfare entitlement, claiming that it should flow to underprivileged Korean students, which overlooks the fact that migrant groups are also part of the underprivileged. What we need to see is how the migration factor plays out here - that is, by perceiving '*Damunhwa*' students as non-Korean Others based on their migrant background, the non-migrant Koreans fail to recognise another social division, class.

This eventually leads to the misrecognition of migrants in a sense that they are not recognised as fellow citizens that can enjoy equal rights. As Fraser (2018) suggests, misrecognition entails ‘social subordination in the sense of being prevented from participating as a peer in social life’ (Fraser, 2018: 89). In this sense, the inclusion of minority ethnic students in the public education system is a form of recognition. Distinguishing the group as ‘*Damunhwa*’ students and providing them with separate support acts to recognise them as an ethnic or cultural minority group, who can therefore be easily marginalised from, or discriminated against within, the public system based on their ethnic or national background. However, Fraser’s (2018) notion of (mis-)recognition can be applied to an everyday level that involves people’s evaluations and emotions about others. In the everyday discourse in Wongok-dong, minority ethnic students are not recognised as being equal to Korean students, who can be under the welfare system. As Sayer (2011b) puts it, ‘[i]n everyday practice it is evident that not all are given equal unconditional recognition: some lives (and deaths) are regarded as more important than others’ (Sayer, 2011b: 89). Therefore, what the residents’ responses highlight is the gap between the institutional recognition of minority ethnic students to make them able to participate in public education and the residents’ rejection of migrants as fellow citizens. The emotion of resentment contributed to the residents failing to view ‘*Damunhwa*’ students as a socially and economically vulnerable group who are entitled to public welfare benefits as legitimate members of Korean society.

7.3. Segregation in Wongok-dong

‘Reversed’ power relations

The population in the Ansan city is decreasing. It was up to 800,000 and fell to 700,000, and now it’s about 690,000. It seems people leave [the city] as the number of foreigners increases. Of course, there are other issues like housing but... Koreans living in Wongok-dong are only 20% [of the total residents in Wongok-dong]. I don’t know when it started to become like this, but the more foreigners there are and the more [their residential]

areas expand. (...) Then Koreans, not only Koreans but any people would leave their hometown (when foreigners occupy the town). I'm just worried about it. (Seong Ju-il, interview)

This section explores how the non-migrant Korean residents respond to the increased number of foreigners in Wongok-dong. With a population consisting of more than 80% foreign (non-Korean national) residents, Wongok-dong is one of the most migrant concentrated neighbourhoods in Ansan (see Chapter 4). As a result, non-migrant Korean residents have expressed their concerns, as shown in Seong's comment.⁸⁰

Following Ansan's urbanisation in 1986, the number of Korean national residents peaked at 762,915 in 2013, and gradually declining to 716,840 by January 2019. Against this trend, the number of foreign residents has continuously grown, reaching 56,877 in January 2019, and about 36.4% of the foreign residents of Ansan are registered in Wongok-dong. As Seong from the Ansan Migrant's Counselling Support Centre mentioned, the number of residents in Ansan has been decreasing for many reasons but mainly due to people moving out following fewer employment opportunities in the industrial complex, the construction of new residential areas in nearby cities, and the relatively expensive housing in the main residential neighbourhoods in the city compared to nearby cities (Won et al., 2018: 4). However, though acknowledging other such factors, Seong viewed the growing foreign population and migrant-concentrated neighbourhoods in the city as significant drivers of non-migrant Koreans leaving the city.

Ahn Jeong-won: There is the childcare subsidy provided [by the Ansan city government] for foreign children [of the city introduced] for the first time in the country.⁸¹ (...) It

⁸⁰ The number of Korean national residents in the neighbourhood is 7,074, which results in the foreigner-to-Korean ratio being about 82:18 around the time I began to participate in the group-discussion in Wongok-dong (as of January 2019). However, some residents told me that the number of Korean nationals who actually reside in Wongok-dong is less than those registered as some of them, as landlords, have only an address in the area while living in other towns.

⁸¹ Childcare subsidy or day-care subsidy is one of the childcare benefit programmes that the Korean government pays back to day-care centres (nursery schools) the money paid by a 'child happiness card' by parents/guardians.

started last year for children from the age of 5 to 7, and this year it supports them from birth, with free education for them [foreign children]. (...) [The Ansan government] started [the policy programme] to attract more population [to the city] but because of that the citizens suffer more. At places like day care centres, foreign mothers are on a serious power trip. They think they can report anything in Korea under the protection of human rights, they notify [the police] too much, while we cannot be protected. So, when they contact the police [to report something], we are rendered speechless.

Jeon Chan-min: I will add here. There is one day-care centre [in Wongok-dong] run by the Korea Worker's Compensation and Welfare Service. The leader of the centre [told me] that Chinese kids [at the centre] report some touching [by other children], even though it wasn't hitting, which makes the teachers stressed [to deal with such events]. That shows how serious it is. There are about 140 children [at the centre] but 90% of them are foreigners, though the centre was actually established for workers' children in the beginning.

Ahn Jeong-won: The ratio is so reversed that we cannot even send our Korean kids [to the day-care centre]. Only one in ten is Korean. There is no place [for Korean children] in other public pre-schools either. Even those Korean parents whose kids were chosen to enter the public pre-school [in the area] gave up their chance [due to the dominant number of foreign children in the place]. A while ago, I saw one Korean kid from the day care centre who was about to cry. I asked him why [he is sad] and [he said] the other [Chinese] children made fun of him for not being Chinese. Such reverse discrimination happens [in Wongok-dong]. (Group-discussion, February 19, 2019)

Talking about one day-care centre in Wongok-dong, some residents at a group-discussion day complained about the dominant presence of 'foreign' children at the centre, expressing their anger at them and their 'foreign' mothers. Perceiving the large number of migrant children in the day-care centre as a 'reversed' ratio, Ahn and Jeon showed their frustration over the large

presence of migrants in the day-care centre, blaming the local government for introducing the day-care subsidy for migrants.

The day-care subsidy under the Child Care Act is the national governmental support enabling all infants and young children under the age of five to be included in the pre-school system. The subsidy aims to assist children's guardians in participating in economic and social activities. Nationally, this public subsidy only covers children of Korean nationality or those with refugee status. However, the Ansan government began subsidising foreign children – both foreign born and born in South Korea – under the age of five enrolled in local day-care centres in July 2018, offering ₩220,000 (equivalent to approximately £147) per month for the first time in South Korea (Ansan City Hall, 2018b).⁸² Such action can only be found in a few cities in the country – those with high levels of labour migrant residents: Ansan, Bucheon, and Siheung.

The Ansan city authority has made a big step forward in guaranteeing migrant children human rights, even though undocumented migrant children remain excluded from the category of eligible benefit recipients.⁸³ However, more importantly for the city government, integrating foreign children into the local child-care system reflects the increasing importance of foreign residents in the local economy as it facilitates those migrants' economic activities. Moreover, as migrants have emerged as a new voting power, this action is also related to local politics. Foreigners over 19 years old who have lived in South Korea for over three years after obtaining permanent residency in South Korea are granted voting rights in local elections, with Wongok-dong having 2560 migrant voters eligible to vote in local elections in 2018 (Lee, 2018). However, actual turnout may be low due to a lack of suitably informed migrants (Park, 2018) or a lack of interest among those eligible to vote.

⁸² According to the press release of the Ansan City Hall (2018), there are approximately 600 foreign children enrolled in the 550 day-care centres within the city (as of 2018).

⁸³ Therefore, when 'foreign' children are mentioned in policy documents, programmes or press releases regarding this day-care subsidy, 'undocumented' children are excluded even from the category of 'foreigner', and from the guaranteed rights for 'foreigners' such as health and education. Here, 'undocumented' migrant children are those whose parent(s)' residence status in South Korea is undocumented by violating the Immigration Act.

The city authority proudly announced that such action is ‘appropriate given the city’s multicultural reputation’ (Ansan City Hall, 2018b). Nonetheless, given the contribution to the local economy and politics, the Ansan government’s financial assistance to foreigners to help them send their child(ren) to a local day-care centre is ultimately a political economic measure. It results in an increase in the number of migrant children enrolled in day-care centres throughout the city, including those in Wongok-dong. In this context, the experience of the large presence of migrants that Ahn and Jeon talked about reflects some changes following the multicultural policy on migrant groups, as well as the non-migrant Koreans’ emotional response to it. In complaining and expressing their anger towards the ‘90%’ of migrants in the day-care centre, the residents cast ‘foreigners’, particularly the ‘Chinese’ as abusing power while the residents (‘we’) are regarded as victims of ‘reversed’ power relations. Furthermore, in saying ‘the centre was actually established for workers’ children in the beginning’, Jeon overlooks the fact that migrants are also workers and hence should be entitled to get day-care support while they are at work.

While resentfulness reappears in this narrative on multicultural policy and migrants, with the emotion reproducing the distinction between migrants/foreigners and non-migrant Koreans in the same way as the division between ‘*Damunhwa*’ and Korean students in the earlier section, it is also worth noting how migrants were also blamed for non-migrant Koreans’ leaving Wongok-dong. There are many factors which contribute to the segregation of Wongok-dong from the rest of the city. First, many companies in the nearby industrial zone closed in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis (1997) (Oh and Jung, 2006: 75; see also Chapter 4). Furthermore, in the 1990s, Wongok-dong ‘transformed into slums’ as a result of a combination of local government neglect and exposure to the environmental pollution caused by the nearby industrial zone (Yun, 2011: 54). Also, the movement of Korean residents to other parts of the city following the building of new towns, coupled with a lack of working places for Korean people in and near Wongok-dong, further served to hollow out the area (Myung, 2014: 70). The cultural

environment in Wongok-dong developed by many young, male migrants has also been viewed as having ‘a lack of cultural and educational infrastructure’ (Yun, 2011: 54) and as ‘a cultural backwater full of gambling places and adult establishments’ (Oh and Jung, 2006: 84). The public discourse regarding foreigner crime (see Chapter 4) and the stereotyping of Asian labour migrants as poor (see Chapter 8) may also contribute to non-migrant Koreans’ aversion to visiting the area, perhaps even bypassing it, perceiving the area as ‘unsafe’ and ‘unclean’ (Jeon and Choi, 2012: 133, 140). While these factors may combine to suggest Wongok-dong is unattractive to the majority of Koreans, the Wongok-dong residents’ evaluation of their neighbourhood shows their sense of belonging. Kim, a public officer of the Ansan City Hall who participated in planning the DSZ project about ten years ago, recognised the Wongok-dong residents’ discontent with the local government’s effort to include migrants into the local policy:

There is the issue of reverse discrimination. There was. I don’t know what it’s like now though. People used to say things like ‘you [the local government] always plan something for foreigners. What do you do for us?’ (...) [We told them things like] ‘you are entitled to social security [anyway] even if you don’t receive them [benefits provided for foreigners]. Moreover, providing services [for foreigners] in the area [Wongok-dong] is helpful for you as well. It’s win-win’. But for our [Korean] residents, they did not see something clear that we [the local government] do for them as much as we do for foreigners. Actually, there are not really many important things we did for foreigners either. It’s all the same [services for both native Koreans and foreigners] but [they felt like] they [Koreans] had disadvantages [compared to foreigners]. [They complained that] they are uncomfortable [with living with foreigners in the neighbourhood] but [the government] kept saying [to them] things like ‘be patient and interact [with foreigners] so that they [foreigners] can live in the neighbourhood well’. The office for foreigners [in Wongok-dong] was bigger than the Wongok-dong Community centre at that time [when the office for foreigners was built]. It was a new building [which made the residents] say things like ‘[the

government is] even building such a big building for foreigners but look at our [small] community centre!' This way, they started to talk about reverse discrimination. (Kim Chan-ho, interview)

In this interview with Kim, the two separate public office buildings, the office for foreigners (presently the building of the AMCSC) and the Wongok-dong Community Centre, embody the divided administration for migrants and non-migrants. Furthermore, the size of the public office buildings represents how non-migrants felt about the presence of migrants and themselves. Although the Wongok-dong Community Centre was recently constructed and is now comparable in size to the AMCSC building, Kim (and other residents) said that the old building was much smaller, making the residents feel frustrated with seeing the new, big building for migrants. Like the residents' narratives of the day-care centre, their complaint about the public places built for, or occupied by, migrants, suggest that they felt they were losing power in their neighbourhood, which may have influenced their sense of belonging to the area.

Segregation of the Asian school

Kim Ma-jun: What is the ratio like between foreigners and Koreans in Wongok elementary school?⁸⁴

Jeon Chan-min: 98 to two.

Kim Ma-jun: 98 to two?

Ahn Jeong-won: Yes, it's like that.

Park Hyeon-ju: Korean students are only 50 in 580. So, I heard that there is some discussion [in the city authority] to make the school an international school.

Kim Ma-jun: Then students can learn 20 languages all together, right?

Park Hyeon-ju: Those 50 or so Korean students are waiting for that [international school] looking forward it [learning foreign languages], but they are actually being bullied [at

⁸⁴ Here I used 'elementary school' considering its similarity to the education system in the United States, generally divided into 1) elementary school, 2) middle or junior high school, and 3) high school.

school] ... Besides, the level of our Korean students' education is higher [than foreign students]. People say that [Wongok elementary school] needs to provide a separate class for Korean students to make them competitive with other Korean students in Joongang-dong (a richer neighbourhood in Ansan), otherwise there would be no point going to this school. This is why [Korean students] leave Wongok-dong. To transfer their child [to other schools in other neighbourhoods], parents need to move out. I heard this is one of the reasons young couples leave [Wongok-dong].

Kim Ma-jun: Though, on the bright side they can learn three, four languages, make friends [from different countries or culture], and strengthen their bond with '*Damunhwa*' students.

Jeon Chan-min: They cannot get along well because of different culture.

Ahn Jeong-won: The thing is the school would be so popular if there were many American students. But parents don't want [to send their children] because [the students in Wongok elementary school] are [largely] Chinese. If there were many students from European or other [Western] countries [in the school], parents would definitely want to send their children there. (Group-discussion, March 26, 2019)

In 2018, Ansan and the neighbour city Siheung were designated as Education Internationalisation Special Zones. Unlike the special zone explored in Chapter 5, this education special zone, designated and monitored by the Ministry of Education, aims to nurture 'international professional human resources' and enhance 'international competitiveness at the national level and promote balanced development of regions', with particular emphasis on the 'internationalisation of education'.⁸⁵ With more than 90% percent of pupils being minority ethnic – mostly Asian – and more than half being foreign born migrant pupils, Wongok elementary school has, since 2019, been designated as an International Innovation School.

⁸⁵ Special Act on Designation, Operation, and Fostering of Special Zones for International of Education, Article 1 (Purpose).

Schools authorised as International Innovation Schools, including Wongok elementary school, are permitted to operate their own education programmes, choose books and other management systems aimed at cultivating ‘world citizens for multicultural societies’, and promote education rights for multicultural family students (Ministry of Education, 2018: 12). This demonstrates how diversity is incorporated into the national and local education system by turning diversity into ‘global’ or ‘cosmopolitan’ competence under the neoliberal value of competitiveness.

Yet, the residents’ comments regarding Wongok elementary school demonstrate how diversity of the school is (dis-)qualified by the residents depending on what kind of diversity it is. To borrow Lentin and Titley’s (2011) terminology, ‘Americans’ or ‘Europeans’ mean ‘good’ diversity while ‘Asians’ or ‘Chinese’ are ‘bad’ diversity. This preference for Anglo-European diversity may partly lie in what Park (2009) calls ‘English fever’ in education: the English (language) boom in South Korea over the last two to three decades involving learning English as a second language in public education, the expansion of the ‘English education industry’, the growth of ‘early English education’ and ‘studying abroad’, and the emphasis on oral English language competence in the context of globalisation. Furthermore, the deep-rooted different perceptions of Western and Asian countries based on the national economic level (discussed further in Chapter 8) may also play a part. On the one hand, learning foreign languages besides English is popular among students in Korea, particularly (Mandarin) Chinese due to the Chinese economic growth in the global market. On the other hand, Asians and Chinese students in a school in Wongok-dong are viewed as undesirable given the social perception of Asian migrants as contributing to the residential segregation between Wongok-dong and other parts of the city.

7.4. Fear of economic downturn

We have many lamb skewer places in Wongok-dong. I’ve been thinking about how we can promote Wongok-dong (...) [and I think people may associate] Wongok-dong [with] Chinese [or] foreign food. I’ve learned that the skewer culture has been quite developed

in the Orient, so I had the idea of having a skewer festival in Wongok-dong to promote and improve the area. (Gwak Hee-moon, interview)

Chinese and Uzbek migrants, the majority ethnic groups in Wongok-dong, have introduced the culture of barbequing meat with metal skewers to the neighbourhood, opening lamb skewers restaurants or running skewers street food stalls. Recognising this feature of migrant culture, Gwak, as a member of a resident organisation, suggested a skewer festival to the Wongok-dong Community Centre, with the local government accepting his idea and holding the festival in 2018 and 2019. Chinese lamb skewers and other ethnic foods, such as Russian shashlik, Vietnamese rice noodle, (Thai) Phat Thai, and Nepal lassi were featured during the event, along with ethnic dance performances and other cultural experiences.

This section explores the residents' interest in making Wongok-dong a visitor attraction through cultural diversity. Although many residents told me that they do not like experiencing changes in the area due to the increasing number of migrants, having difficulties living with people from different cultures, and showing their discontent with the national and local government supporting migrants, they also perceive cultural diversity as the representative image of their neighbourhood.

Gwak Hee-Moon: Culture [in Wongok-dong] is *Damunhwa*, foreigners' culture.

Joo Jang-seong: I think [Wongok-dong] is the birthplace of *Damunhwa* in our country.

Gwak Hee-Moon: No, there is Itaewon.

Joo Jang-seong: Itaewon is from the American army. Here [Wongok-dong] is where 'Damunhwa' people live. So Ansan, Wongok-dong is first place for *Damunhwa*.

Jeon Chan-min: Diverse culture is the trademark of Wongok-dong. (Group-discussion, February 19, 2019)

Joo, a senior and long-term resident of Wongok-dong, viewed *Damunhwa* as a phenomenon associated with cultural and ethnic variety, and one that started in Wongok-dong. However, in distinguishing Wongok-dong from Itaewon, a multicultural area in Seoul that was once occupied

by US Army soldiers, it appears as though he was associating the name *Damunhwa* with the Asian ethnic minority in the country, saying Wongok-dong is ‘where “*Damunhwa*” people live’.

Like the Chinatown in Incheon, something like the red gate at the entrance makes us see that we are in the Chinatown (...) I thought we need such facilities [representing multiculture] in Wongok-dong first of all [when the area was designated as a DSZ]. (...) Such artwork is good for catching the eye, isn’t it? We need those facilities urgently. (Ahn Jeong-won, group-discussion, February 19, 2019)

Continuing on the topic of *Damunhwa* and complaints about the local government and the DSZ, Ahn claimed that the government failed to deliver on its promises to make Wongok-dong a more tourist-friendly destination, such as by establishing a structure with various national flags. Ahn argued that Wongok-dong needs a symbolic and visual attraction to mark ‘diversity’ and to ‘represent’ multiculture, saying that Wongok-dong is not unique or exotic enough to attract visitors.

The residents’ perception of *Damunhwa* and the DSZ in Wongok-dong suggests that they view cultural diversity as a tourism resource for attracting visitors and vitalising the local economy. Their interest in tourism through cultural diversity seems to be at odds with their discontent and resentful emotions (explored earlier) regarding the large presence of migrants in public places and the multicultural policy supporting migrant groups. Yet, the appeal of tourism to the residents was largely based on the local economic condition:

Koreans make money thanks to them [migrants]. There is nothing to complain about. Landlords and we estate agents, how can we make a living if there are no [migrant] tenants paying monthly rents. (...) A lot of [Korean] people will get worried if foreigners leave. (...) [There are many] one-rooms (a studio type room) built [in Wongok-dong] but [if foreigners leave] who’s going to live in such one-room [property]? (Gwak Hee-moon, interview)

This comment shows how non-migrant Korean residents, including shopkeepers and property agents like Gwak, recognise that migrants are critical for the Wongok-dong economy. For example, over the last two decades, the housing market in Wongok-dong has grown as an investment: multi-family housing has been particularly popular for investors, leading the build-to-rent market in the area. According to Gu, another property agent, property agencies in Wongok-dong have played a role in recruiting investors, mostly Koreans from Seoul, interested in purchasing a house to refurbish or rebuild for rental profit (Gu Hyeok-jae, interview).⁸⁶ With the expectation of a stable return on investment from rent, the demand for buying commercial buildings and renting shops has also increased over the last two decades. This property market vitality in Wongok-dong suggests that the area is popular for migrant tenants and consumers.

However, during my fieldwork in 2018 and 2019, a shared awareness of the economic depression in the area was evident. A number of companies in the Banwol-Sihwa industrial complex faced closure or restructuring following a decline in major industries, such as the shipping and car industries, with many of the local firms being small and medium-sized companies supplying those industries. Some other firms were moving their factories to cheaper regions in the country or abroad, such as to Vietnam, in pursuit of cheaper labour (Choi, 2019; Seo et al., 2018). Furthermore, the introduction of the maximum 52 hour working week (reduced from 68 hours) in July 2018, coupled with the increase in the minimum wage, presented extra costs to operating factories. Accordingly, business owners began to seek ways to deal with such challenges, for example, by reducing the number of employees, sometimes by dismissing them. Many residents in Wongok-dong were well aware of this economic situation. Ki, a Korean who owns an Indonesian restaurant, experienced decreased food delivery orders from migrant workers who used to order food from his restaurant during their night shifts, but who have now lost their night work because of a new weekly working hours regulation (Ki Beom-seon, interview).

⁸⁶ However, I also heard from some research participants that Chinese migrants have begun to buy buildings in Wongok-dong.

Min, a Vietnamese Korean who runs a Vietnamese restaurant in Wongok-dong, was also concerned with the economic downturn in the area, having experienced falling sales in their restaurant from late 2018 (Min Yi-hyeon, interview).

These residents' concerns involved fear of economic loss. However, fear is more evident regarding cultural fragmentation and crime. This accords with other studies of negative public attitudes towards immigrants, multiculturalism, and of the politics of fear, particularly right-wing populist discourse (e.g., Foner and Simon, 2015; Wodak, 2015). However, it is perhaps surprising that the fear of economic downturn has not been considered much in studying public responses to migrants and multiculturalism, even though it can be seen as a threat to people in their everyday life. Many residents I met during my fieldwork had an economic relationship with migrants, be it as a landlord, shopkeeper, property agent, or recipient of other income streams. Therefore, as they made their living from migrants, this explains the residents' relatively positive attitude towards cultural diversity, as long as it brings economic benefits. The residents' seemingly contradictory responses to migrants and diversity show that migrants are welcomed, or at least accepted, as a source of economic benefits, but their social presence is not.

7.5. Conclusions: everyday conditional recognition of diversity and migrants

This chapter has explored the non-migrant Korean residents' responses to the social and economic presence of migrants and cultural diversity in Wongok-dong in the context of the neoliberal and multicultural processes in national and local education policies, as well as the economic and industrial restructuring affecting the area. Their responses seem ambivalent, depending on what their concerns are about. While they expressed resentful emotions regarding the large presence of migrants in the neighbourhood and public migrant support policies, claiming 'reverse discrimination', they also showed their acceptance of diversity when it benefits the local economy.

Emotions play an important role in reconstructing the imagined, victimised Korean nation against foreigners and '*Damunhwa*' students. Through the analysis of the residents'

everyday discourse on multicultural and economic processes in their neighbourhood, I argue that their ambivalent attitude reflects their conditional recognition of diversity and migrants in Wongok-dong: cultural diversity and migrant others are valued predominantly in economic terms. Although it could be argued that this acknowledges migrants' economic contribution to the local area, their social value as a minority group (who are easily vulnerable or disadvantaged in Korean society) is not much recognised by the non-migrant Koreans. Non-migrant Korean residents acknowledge class inequality and ethnic relations viewing class and redistribution as only relevant to Korean 'us', not non-Korean 'Others'. They tend to interpret their experiences of forms of inequality deriving from political economic processes, including neoliberal policies and urban (re-)development, as being about migrants. Such responses highlight the tensions between recognition and redistribution, as well as the intersection between class and ethnicity/'race'.

Chapter 8. Everyday Racialisation in Wongok-dong

This chapter is about the process of racialising migrants in Wongok-dong through everyday discourse on migrants. Racialisation in this thesis is an othering process of ascribing certain characteristics or meanings to ethnically or culturally different groups. This chapter explores how non-migrant Koreans distinguish themselves from migrants in their everyday talk and associate migrant others with certain qualities. The focus of this chapter is on examining the role of everyday normative evaluations in racialising migrants and the process of (re-)identifying self and others through the ‘racial’ relations entrenched in Korean society based on the dualist idea of the world as divided into *seonjinguk* (developed, advanced, or rich countries) and *hujinguk* (underdeveloped, backward or poor countries). To do this, I firstly discuss the concept of everyday racialisation by outlining everyday racism and racialisation as process, suggesting that everyday normative evaluations need to be emphasised in studying everyday racialisation. I then move to outlining the public perception of hierarchical national economies among Koreans, followed by my analysis on the residents’ narratives gained from the interviews, group discussions and informal talks in the rest of the chapter. By probing the racialisation of migrants through non-migrant Koreans’ everyday discourse, I argue that people’s normative evaluations play an important role in racialising migrants in everyday lives.

8.1. Everyday racialisation and lay normativity

‘Everyday’ racism

In her eminent work on black women’s daily experiences of racial relations in the United States and Netherlands, Essed (1991) argues that everyday racism is a process of creating, reproducing, and reinforcing racism through routinised, repetitive and mundane practices in people’s ordinary life (Essed, 1991: 2) The trivial actions like calling blacks names or avoiding contact with them can be ‘micro-injustices’ when such experiences are persistent (Velayutham, 2017: 461). When racism becomes a part of everyday life of a society, it comes to be conceived as natural,

unquestioned, and normal, particularly by society's dominant groups (Hällgren, 2005: 322). In other words, dominant groups' daily practices of racism activate underlying ethnic and 'race' relations of the society.

For Essed, the everyday world is located between macro structural and discursive forces and micro everyday situations (Essed, 1991: 50). I explore racialisation by drawing on her emphasis on the 'everyday' in terms of its mundane, routine and familiar dimensions, which are also related to structural and discursive power by examining Wongok-dong residents' experiences of racial, ethnic, nation or migrant others. I will also probe the close relationship between the everyday, local racialising narratives and wider processes such as the national discourse on migrants and the global/regional labour migration (see Chapter 4) and the intersection between ethnic/'racial' relations and other social differences, such as nation, class, and gender.

Racialisation as an evaluation process

Racialisation is an othering process of ascribing certain external (e.g., phenotypic or behavioural) and/or internal (e.g., genetic or psychological) qualities or meanings to ethnically or culturally different groups. It is 'the processes by which ideas about race are constructed, come to be regarded as meaningful, and are acted upon' (Murji and Solomos, 2005: 1). That is, by associating meanings or values to a group, the group often comes to be differentiated and categorised in ways that naturalise ethnic and/or cultural difference. Racialisation is a social, relational process of racial, ethnic or cultural signification in encountering others, involving differentiating others within the ethnic or cultural power relationship and (re-) constructing identities of self and others. For example, the processes of making racial categories have been discussed in terms of ascribing characteristics to colonised others in European colonial history through a 'representational process whereby social significance is attached to certain biological (usually phenotypical) human features' in capitalist political economic and ideological conditions (Miles, 1989: 74; see also Banton, 1977; 1997). More generally, as Omi and Winant describe, racialisation is 'the extension

of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group' (Omi and Winant, 2015: 111).⁸⁷

Racialisation serves to identify self as superior or inferior, relative to others. For example, the history of imperialism and Eurocentric perspectives involved the imagination and representation of non-white and/or colonised others as uncivilised, pristine, primitive, and so on (cf. Said, 1978). Yet, racialising is performed not only by colonisers and/or whites. In his ground-breaking work on *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (1986) analyses the colonised others' psychological engagement in the embodiment of European white racial ideas – the superiority of whiteness and inferiority of blackness. Fanon reveals racialisation through the colonised Martinicans' lived, mental and somatic experience of the relation between their desire to be like their coloniser, the white French, and their internalised sense of inferiority about their black body. In exploring everyday racialising processes such as speaking the coloniser's language and encounters with whites, he illuminates the Martinican blacks' self-hatred and self-alienation as 'the outcome of double process' of colonisation, involving an internalised sense of economic and cultural inferiority in the context of domination by white Europeans (Fanon, 1986: 13).

While Fanon examined racialisation through desire and self-hatred in colonial times from his psychoanalytic approach to the colonised complex about superiority and inferiority, what can be inferred is that racialisation involves evaluations – what people desire or hate regarding self and others shows what they value or not. That is, racialisation is a process of valuing and devaluing of self and others. It does so based on either biological or cultural arguments, insofar as a sense that both are operative in making 'racial' hierarchies (Barker, 1981), implying certain bodies or cultures are superior or inferior. Particularly, in so-called 'cultural racism' today, culture becomes a category or modality through which ethnic minorities or migrants are racialised, and through which differences are naturalised. Cultural racism does not always work

⁸⁷ For the history of theoretical development of the concept, racialisation, see Barot and Bird (2001).

in the same way as scientific racism in terms of biological superiority and inferiority, but it operates on the idea of absolute difference, which can be the subject of evaluative judgments. For example, in the debates around multiculturalism as ‘a failure’, minority groups are required to adjust to allegedly shared or common values among the majority or the dominant (see Chapter 2). As Fortier (2008) argues, such ‘politics of values inflects “cultural racism” with a moral undertone: a kind of moral racism ... [with an] emphasis on values and their impact on degrees of differences attributed to different groups’ (Fortier, 2008: 5). Cultural differences are marked and become othered not only because they are different from similarities but also assessed through beliefs, morals, norms or values (Fortier, 2008: 6).

Acknowledging that racism can be reframed in both cultural and moral terms, I suggest that normative judgements need to be more explicitly considered in studying racialisation. I argue that evaluative judgements about cultural and/or ethnic others can be powerful in making a racial category in everyday life. People not only observe others, but they often talk about how they think or feel about others, that is, they evaluate others in their daily life. Sayer (2011a), proposing ‘lay normativity’ as a concept that expresses the idea that people ‘regularly engage in reasoning about how to value things’, stresses the evaluative aspect in which people express concern about things going on, themselves and others (Sayer, 2011a: 23; see also Sayer, 2004; 2005a; 2005b). Recognising the importance of the normative character of our everyday life, I examine how the Wongok-dong residents’ evaluations, including moral judgements of others’ behaviour and way of life, play a role in differentiating, disqualifying and othering migrants. I also investigate how their value judgements in racialising migrants are interwoven with the feeling of superiority and inferiority by tracing their relations to the *seonjunguk* discourse in the context of contemporary post-colonial, global era. In this chapter, I study everyday racialisation in the contemporary South Korea through the dualist developmentalist idea that divides the world into the developed and the under- or less developed, in the context the hegemony of the United States in the aftermath of the second World War (Kim, 2018: 7-8). To do this, I outline

the *seonjinguk* (developed, advanced country) discourse in South Korea in the following section 8.2.

8.2. The world between *seonjinguk* and *hujinguk*

‘Racial’ relations in South Korea are closely related to the developmentalist view of the world as the *seonjinguk* (developed or advanced countries) and the *hujinguk* (underdeveloped or backward countries).⁸⁸ The developmentalist discourse is particularly important in contextualising ‘race’ relations in South Korea, as discussed in a few studies in the country (e.g., Eom, 2008; Kim, 2012a; Yoo and Lee, 2006), whereby Asian migrants, labour migrants in particular, are stereotyped as those who come from the underdeveloped world. The discourse of *seonjinguk* has been dominant in contemporary Korea, developed from the discourse of modernisation in the 1960s and 1970s and globalisation (*segyehwa*) in 1990s, through the periods of capitalist industrialisation, developmentalism and neoliberalism since the establishment of Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 1948 (Kim, 2014). Kim (2011; 2014) argues that while the idea of ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ are far from accurate representations of actual reality, but are rather the product of the discursive system, *seonjinguk* is the idealised image of the Western state, representing the advanced societies in terms of their economic, social, and political characteristics. According to Kim (2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2014; 2018), under the *seonjinguk* discourse, South Korea has constantly aspired to be like the Western developed countries, viewing the world order through economic indicators such as economic growth rate and national income. Furthermore, the *seonjinguk* discourse has also led the national identity to be re-formed, idealising the Western societies as ‘culturally mature’, emphasising ‘mature civility and etiquettes’

⁸⁸ The literal translations of *seonjinguk* and *hujinguk* into English are advanced country and a backward country (Yuk, 2014: 49). However, the words ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ (or ‘developing’) from the news articles abroad were also translated into *seonjinguk* and *hujinguk* respectively (Kim, 2012a: 168). In this study, I use the terms, *seonjinguk* and *hujinguk* to refer to both developed/underdeveloped states in terms of their economic status and advanced/backward states regarding their social, political, cultural aspects.

- and depreciating Korea as ‘not there yet’ (Kim, 2018: 16-17).⁸⁹ Compared to *seonjunguk*, *hujinguk* has been often associated with negative terms such as ‘poverty, retrograde, stagnant, weak’ (Kim, 2014: 176). These have often been employed in representing the ‘third-world’ countries, such as Southeast Asian, African, and South American nations (Kim, 2012b: 323). Whereas *seonjunguk* has been the object of respect and envy, *hujinguk* has been despised and associated with negative characteristics like poverty.⁹⁰

The multiculturalism discourse in the 21st century’s Korea is also related to the *seonjunguk* value. As explored in Chapter 4, multiculturalism in South Korea has served as ‘a means, indicator, and object of development’ (Kim, 2015) in positioning the country in the global hierarchy. For example, in a speech of one former president, Lee Myung-bak, countries built on immigrants such as Australia, Canada and the United States are represented as prospering multicultural societies, and embracing migrants and cultural diversity is advocated otherwise ‘it is impossible for us to consider Korea as an advanced nation in a genuine sense, no matter how much the national income soars’ (Radio address by former President Lee Myung-bak in July 26, 2010, cited in Jeong, 2010).⁹¹ Furthermore, neoliberal terms, such as ‘global Korea’, ‘national competitiveness’ and ‘national interest’, along with ‘*seonjunguk*’ and ‘*gangdaeguk*’ (world powers) are intertwined with the imperative for accepting multiculturalism and reshaping Korea (Cho and Seo, 2013: 128; see Chapter 4). These combinations of discourses of *seonjunguk*, multiculturalism, neoliberal competitiveness and globalisation in South Korea suggest that

⁸⁹ However, there was also a resistance to accepting cultural and spiritual superiority of *seonjunguk*. For example, there was still advocates for ‘spiritual pride’ of Korea, emphasising the Korean traditional culture and cultural heritages (Kim, 2011: 327-8).

⁹⁰ Under the developmentalist discourse, ‘poverty’ was problematised justifying the underdeveloped to pursue its economic growth (Escobar, 1995).

⁹¹ To quote from the speech, ‘In the 21st century, not only goods but also people from different countries travel long distances freely. As many as seven million Koreans live overseas. Likewise, more and more people will immigrate to Korea from other countries. This is unparalleled in the history of Korea. The Republic is truly becoming a multicultural society. If we look at the countries that prospered in the past, all of them digested foreign cultures well and achieved national integration. They thrived as the result of mixing traditional culture with other outside cultures. Let us all make sure that we broaden our hearts and wholeheartedly welcome the people and culture coming from the outside. Government policies will also have to pursue openness as they interact with the world’ (Radio address by former President Lee Myung-bak, July 26, 2010).

receiving migrants from foreign countries and being open to cultural differences offers an opportunity for repositioning the country in the world. As Jun (2011) argues, in changing from a migrant-sending country to a migrant-receiving one, and in achieving a ‘miraculous’ rate of economic growth, ‘a collective sense of confidence and pride’ has been generated (Jun, 2011: 4; see also Jun, 2015: 246; Eom, 2008: 118).

This chapter addresses the prevalent perception of ‘racial’ relations in Korea – mainly between Korean and other Asians. Understanding the self-positioning of the nation between *seonjunguk* and *hujinguk* is helpful for explaining the ambivalent attitudes towards migrants – favourable to those coming from *seonjunguk* and antagonistic and discriminative towards *hujinguk* nationals⁹² (cf. Kim, 2012a) – by which foreign migrants are divided into ‘desirable and undesirable’ (Kim, 2016: 171). This dualist framework can be linked to the collective Korean psyche influencing their perception of the ‘racial’ relations, particularly the negative attitudes towards Asian labour migrants *hujinguk*, the non-Western underdeveloped world. In the rest of the chapter, I explore the non-migrant Korean residents’ discourse in relation to this in Wongok-dong, showing how Asian migrants are evaluated as destitute and backward, how the perception of *hujinguk* is prevalent, and how it intersects with class, nationality, and the political economy of labour migration in Asia. However, it should be noted that there are of course some exceptions of Asian migrants who are identified as *seonjunguk*, such as Japanese.

⁹² I do not intend to reduce ethnic, cultural differences to the national level, but I do want to note that nationality plays an important role in shaping Koreans’ perceptions of or attitudes towards migrants. For example, it is reported that Nigerian blacks experienced more favourable attitudes towards them by Koreans when they introduced themselves as American (Han, 2003: 175).

8.3. Asian Migrants as poor and backward from *hujinguk*⁹³

Around 90,000 migrants, mostly Asians, dwell in Ansan city.⁹⁴ As seen in the statistics provided in Chapter 4, about half of the migrants in the city are ethnic Korean Chinese, *Joseonjok*, and the rest are mostly other Asian migrants from China, Uzbekistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, and so on. The Asian migrants are often associated with the image of *hujinguk* in Korea and Wongok-dong. One of the interviewees, talking about his perception of Asian migrants, commented.

Bangladesh is poorer than Somalia. [People there] born and die in the street. (...) The illiteracy rate is high as well. (Ki Beom-seon, interview)

Many of my research participants showed their perception of Asian migrants as those who come from poor countries to South Korea to make money. Asian migrants are described as 'people come [to Korea] for an economic purpose' (Jang Mi-ran, group-discussion, March 26, 2019), foreigners who come to 'rich' Korea 'to make money' (Gu Hyeok-jae, interview).

The feeling of superiority over other Asians, based on the strong national economy among the non-migrants Koreans in Wongok-dong seemed to be pervasive. Some *Joseonjok* interviewees who have lived in Korea over twenty years since they came from China told me how they felt about such attitudes in non-migrant Koreans.

It looks like Koreans see Chinese and Southeast Asians as all workers who come to Korea to make money. (...) Southeast Asians coming to Korea, they are people who had a nice job, who has a university level education [in their home country] but they are not seen as like that in Korea. [Koreans] all look down on them. (Hwang Eui-ryeong, interview)

Non-migrant Koreans' view [on *Joseonjok*] is not good. (...) They see [us] as those who come from a poor country to make money, like a beggar. (Shin Joon-gi, interview)

⁹³ I should note here that I do not mean to suggest only Asians, particularly the Chinese and Southeast Asian migrants who are regarded as poor workers in South Korea. There might be also a stereotype of African black migrants for example. However, as both Chinese and Southeast Asian are the most mentioned among the Korean participants in my study, they are the main focus in this chapter.

⁹⁴ The number of registered foreign residents in Ansan is 87,359 which excludes naturalised and un-registered foreigners (Ansan city, 2019, foreign resident population as of September 2019).

Hwang, a *Joseonjok* migrant who came to South Korea from China in 1996 getting married to a Korean man. She worked as a nurse in a hospital in China but began working in a restaurant in Korea after moving there because her degree from China was not recognised in the country. Shin, another *Joseonjok* interviewee, was a doctor in China but worked in Korea as a security guard in a residential apartment. He said it was difficult for him to be a doctor in Korea as he had to take an exam and learn English, as many medical terms are used in English among health professionals in Korea. Like Hwang and Shin, some of the migrants I met during my fieldwork were educated, middle-class in the previous country they lived, though they had to experience the downgrading of their class. Although many migrants like Hwang have been successful in business in Korea, making good money and buying a house or a building in the country, many Asian migrants, including *Joseonjok*, an ethnic Korean Chinese group, and Southeast Asians, are easily devalued as labourers who come to Korea to make money regardless of their level of education and class status (Han, 2003: 167-170). Depending on where they come from, migrants are easily generalised as poor or rich. This is closely related to the prevalent public dualist view noted above. Within this perception of the international hierarchy, migrants from China and the Southeast Asia come to be easily placed in the category of poor workers in Korea due to their national background. In this sense, they are not only racialised but also 'migrantised' as the quality of migration comes to be associated with them (Tudor, 2017; 2018).

These guys [Chinese] are spending all their money instead of saving when they have it.

It's like the old times of us. (Park Hyeon-ju, fieldnote, February 26, 2019)

Playing cards on the streets may not be seen as good for Korean people. (Park Hyeon-ju, fieldnote, March 19, 2019)

In addition to the national economic hierarchy, the *hujinguk* perception of Asian migrants is also related to the image of 'backwardness'. Park, a non-migrant Korean public officer from the Wongok-dong resident community centre, often encountered Chinese men playing cards or

*mahjong*⁹⁵ near the building of the Ansan Migrant Community Centre in Wongok-dong. She saw this gambling in a public space as bad, as backward and as of the past. Spending money on gambling may be private behaviour but as it was being done in public, it attracted criticism. Moreover, by linking the scene of migrants' playing cards in a public place to the 'old times of us (Koreans)', she recalled images of the Korean past in the middle of developing and modernising in the mid-twentieth century. In this way, the public space used by the Chinese comes to merge with the temporal.

8.4. Migrants as fly-tippers

In 2009, Ansan city conducted a survey of five hundred Ansan citizens visiting the DSZ in Wongok-dong in order to assess their perceptions of the local government's project of developing a multicultural city. The respondents recognised the multicultural character of Wongok-dong, being attracted by its unique atmosphere and commercial places, but 61.3% of them said that the neighbourhood was dangerous, dirty and messy when they actually visited it (Kim, 2009). My impression on Wongok-dong during my fieldwork was not particularly different from those visitors. The rubbish plastic bags were piled high and there were a lot of cigarette butts on the streets.

⁹⁵ *Mahjong* is a game developed in China using small rectangular shaped tiles. Although the game is popular in many other countries such as Eastern and South-eastern areas (Wikipedia from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahjong), it is rarely played among the native Koreans, who perceive it as a Chinese game.



Figure 14. Waste, unsorted and piled at the corner of the main Square in Wongok-dong⁹⁶

Ten years after the survey was undertaken, rubbish on the streets is still the major headache for the Wongok-dong residents. The non-migrant Korean residents have been complaining over ten years about foreigners dumping rubbish. They have filed civil complaints to the governmental and civil groups to solve the problem. As a result, the warnings and penalty notices in different languages, such as Korean, Chinese and Russian, have been posted around the neighbourhood. For example, in the figure 15., the notice posted by the *Danwon-gucheong*, one of the district offices in Ansan city, says 'Daily rubbish should be put out between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. in a *jongryangje* bag (pay-as-you-throw), in front of your house or your shop. You can purchase a *jongryangje* bag at a supermarket or a convenient store. We offer a reward for reporting fly-tipping'. Here ' *jongryangje*' is the national pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) system, implemented in South Korea on January 1, 1995, for household waste and small waste, which charges residents for the amount of which they throw out.

⁹⁶ Photo by the author, 2 July 2018.



Figure 15. Banning notices in Korean and Chinese⁹⁷

During my fieldwork, I often heard from the residents in Wongok-dong talking about the rubbish issue. What interested me from their complaints is how migrants, often called ‘foreigners’, are easily blamed for dumping and claimed to be different in this respect from the non-migrant Koreans.

There will be of course rubbish wherever people live but they [foreigners] are not like us [Koreans] (...) they don’t know about using *jongryangje* bags. They just use a black plastic bag and throw it away. (Gwak Hee-moon, interview)

Household or business waste (except recycling) needs to be dumped in a purchased *jongryangje* bag in Korea. However, Gwak claimed that migrants often use an ordinary plain black plastic bag that they can get from a retail shop when they buy something, instead of using *jongryangje*

⁹⁷ Photo by the author, 6 August 2016.

bags to throw out rubbish. This causes trouble for local residents because the district office does not collect such waste (except recycling waste). Then the uncollected rubbish would remain in the same place for days and weeks which would lead someone in the neighbourhood eventually to get a *jangryangje* bag, put it in and wait for it to be collected. Therefore, illegal dumping is seen as a burden and uncomfortable for the locals.

The old lady said to me that she told her Russian and Chinese *Han*⁹⁸ neighbours, seeing them dumped rubbish without using a *jangryangje* bag, not to do it. Adding the story of one of her Korean neighbours who took them to the supermarket [near in the neighbourhood] and bought ₩5,000 worth of the *jangryangje* bags, she said to me that 'they [the Russian and Chinese] do not use the bags [and] do not listen to us'. (Fieldnote, June 21, 2018)

To be sure, some residents have experienced problems in living with migrant neighbours who might take some time to learn local ways of doing things. Yet, when this dumping issue is recurrent and shared among residents, the perceptions crystallise and turn *all* migrants into fly-tippers.

I am a landlord and [one day] when they came to collect the waste, the district office, it's their job isn't it, told me that they will fine ₩1 million for the rubbish they saw in non-*jangryangje* bags in front of my house. But we [my family and my tenants] don't throw rubbish like that. I talked to my neighbour from next door, and they said they don't either. So not the landlord [myself], not next door but someone who passes by [my house]. He dumps and go, [and he dumps] a small plastic bag. This is a problem. There are some houses [near in the neighbourhood] that landlords do not live in, and the property agents might be in charge of managing those houses. Then, about 80% of the tenants [in the

⁹⁸ Han (Chinese Han) is the name of the ethnic group in the mainland China and Taiwan who are the majority (over 90%) of the Chinese and Taiwanese population.

houses] are foreigners. They use small plastic bags, put [rubbish] in a small plastic bag and throw it away. (Kim Ma-jun, group-discussion, March 26, 2019)

Through the daily conversations between the Korean residents, foreigners were assumed to be the ones who not only dump on the streets without following the waste system but also who make the neighbourhood dirty. In a similar way, migrants are also blamed for throwing cigarette ends on the streets.

I often found that cigarette ends are piled like white snow when I come out of the building in the morning to open my shop. We Koreans at least grind our cigarette butts under our heel but these people [foreigners] don't even do that. They just throw [cigarettes] away. My car almost got burnt [one day] because someone threw [a cigarette] in the bin in front of my studio and [later] the fire [from the bin] spread to my car. (Joo Jang-seong, interview)

Joo, who has lived and run a small business in Wongok-dong since 1989, told me about this experience in anger right after complaining about foreigners' dumping on the streets. What interests me in his narrative is that he did not see who actually left the cigarette butt in the bin – it could have been a Korean. However, he seemed sure that it was a foreigner. Moreover, in a very specific way, he identified foreigners as the ones who do not even make sure whether the cigarette is stubbed out, unlike 'we Koreans'.

Someone told me yesterday that there are some *Hanjok*⁹⁹ from rural areas [in China] and they are habituated [to dump on the streets] because they throw rubbish just about everywhere [without following any rules] in their towns [in China]. (Gwak Hee-moon, interview)

*Dongnamah*¹⁰⁰ [Southeast Asians] do not have any ideas about [throwing away] rubbish. They don't know about waste sorting. (Park Hyeon-ju, interview)

⁹⁹ *Hanjok* refers to Han Chinese, the majority ethnic group in China, mentioned earlier.

¹⁰⁰ *Dongnamah* is short for *Dongnam Asia* (Southeast Asia) in colloquial Korean language.

In Gwak's description of Chinese who came from rural areas in China, they are perceived as those who behave in a less modernised way as they used to do. Park's comment is even more generalised, for all Southeast Asians are assumed not to have any kind of waste system in their country regardless of their national background.

8.5. Migrants to be educated and disciplined

[Foreigners] make [the neighbourhood] dirty even [though] we teach them so many times. And Chinese walk around shirtless and lie on the streets in Summer. That's why [Koreans] all left. (Park Hyeon-ju, interview)

Park complained about some behaviours of Chinese migrants which can be seen as an offense to public morals. By blaming them for Koreans leaving Wongok-dong, their behaviour was deemed as unacceptable for Koreans. Under the racism emphasising cultural (as opposed to biological) differences, minority culture is seen as incompatible with majority culture and hence as providing the rationale for segregation and stricter immigration policies (Lentin, 2008: 105). For the Korean residents, it is the national government that needs to educate migrants on the ways how 'we' live in Korea so that they obey our rules.

When foreigners enter to work, every country needs to teach them the basic systems [of the societies] at the immigration office. [Otherwise, foreigners] live [in other country] as they used to live in their own country. (...) I thought foreigners, [foreign] workers have to be able to speak Korean and pass a [kind of] test [to see they are familiar with the Korean] basic systems and manners but [the Korean government] just receive them [without testing them]. The immigration procedure is wrong. (...) You should suggest an immigration policy in your thesis that a visa is only given [to immigrants] after they take a [sort of a Korean society's] basic system course. (Joo Jang-seong, interview)

Blaming the national system for receiving migrants generously and suggesting I should make an immigration policy suggestion, Joo expressed his knowledge and views of the national

immigration system. In the following group-discussion, this kind of evaluation of the national system of integrating migrants into the Korean society is clear.

Cho Soo-jeong: Foreigners coming to our country should be educated first of all. I also lived in a foreign country and had to pay a fee of \$500, [up to] \$1000 for the [basic system] education. It's hard to live [in the country] if I don't take the course about the basic social order [of the country].

Ahn Jeong-won: That's what I'm saying. There are some of things, like law-abiding, that [migrants] need to learn at least from taking a course several times until they settle in here after they come to Korea. We [the Korean government] need such place [to educate migrants] seriously, before giving [welfare] benefits to them too much.

Cho Soo-jeong: That's right. In other countries, you are fined \$100, \$200 even for throwing down one cigarette end. Then who would do that?

Kim Na-young: That is, they [migrants] do not abide law here [in this country] because it is too weak.

People in the group: That's right! (Group-discussion, March 26, 2019)

Here, migrants are required to learn and follow the public rules not only to live in the Korean society but also to enjoy social benefits. What the Korean locals showed is a conditional acceptance of migrants as legitimate members of 'our' country, 'our' society, and 'our' neighbourhood. It then becomes the responsibility of the national government to enforce the immigration and integration programmes to make sure that Korean social orders are obeyed by migrants. To support their opinions on stricter national law, members of the resident group used the cases of other countries imposing fees or fines for learning and offending basic rules. Cho, based on her personal living experience in New Zealand, claimed that migrants needed to pay for taking social integration education. Park took an example of Hong Kong where foreigners are expelled only for throwing out a cigarette butt (Park Hyeon-ju, interview). Joo also told me that Koreans, as a foreigner, do not even buy gums when they visit Singapore, suggesting Korea

should be like that (Singapore) (Joo Jang-seong, interview). What they agreed on was that Korean law is 'weak' and 'wrong' with regard to receiving and integrating migrants into Korea. This kind of lay knowledge is fallible but powerful when accumulated through daily conversations, providing their rationale behind the racialising and patronising attitudes towards migrants, and fixing the figure of 'foreigners' (Asian others) as disrupting the social order.

In addition to this demand for rigorous national law, migrants are thought to be punished in a more extreme sense.

It is said that it's about the issue of human rights. When it's Summer, those [Chinese] guys drink and walk around naked. It is still like that. And if we honk at those who j-walk? They are drunk and break the cars. [One day] policemen came but they couldn't stop them because of the human rights [they said]. They only gave a verbal warning [to the Chinese and left]. I mean they [Chinese] are cudgelled (beaten with a stick) in their Sui dynasty (Sui China), then what human rights we are talking about? (...) We have a lot of [foreigners'] disorder, basic system issues. They need to be fixed by police forces, but the human rights issue has come to be very important in Korea at some point. (Gwak Hee-moon, interview)

Thus, in talking about some behaviours offending public rules and morals, Gwak showed his disagreement with the idea of the protection of migrants under human rights. When he described Chinese as people from the *Sui* Dynasty, I was surprised because the dynasty existed in part of China between 581-619. It then reminded me of the word, *Josenjing*, a racist term referring to overseas Koreans in Japan. The word has been used by the Japanese presumably since the *Joseon* dynasty (1392-1910) and the Japanese rule (1910-1945) to refer to ethnic Koreans in a disdainful manner. Although it is rare to hear the name of an old Chinese dynasty from Koreans when they talk about Chinese people, I came to wonder whether this is another kind of racism by linking the Chinese to the past, pre-modern. For example, the punishment he talked about, '[being] cudgelled in their Sui dynasty (Sui China)', could be seen as something that used to take

place in the past in many countries including South Korea. It also implied a racist perception of Chinese migrants that they are those who need physical punishment rather than verbal warning that respects their human rights.

8.6. Migrants as sentimental others

In this section, I examine how moral sentiment plays in drawing a boundary between Korean us and migrant others. Moral judgements are often engaged in the way which differentiates or distinguishes people from others by drawing boundaries between social class or ‘racial’ groups (Lamont, 2000; Sayer, 2005a; 2005b). Certain values, often negative, are attributed to class, ‘race’ and/or gender others, representing them as immoral or valueless, and creating a distance from the devalued others (cf. Skeggs 2004; Skeggs and Loveday, 2012). In this section, ‘respect’ is particularly investigated through social manners and etiquettes by which the Korean residents distinguish themselves from migrants by claiming they seem to lack the quality of respect. Respect is not only about others but us. It is about how we assess others as well as how we are assessed. It is about value judgement: as Skeggs and Loveday (2012) put it, ‘to *show* respect is to publicly evaluate and authorize another person’s value, simultaneously locating oneself within a circuit of value by which self and others are assessed’ (Skeggs and Loveday, 2012: 480, emphasis in original). Therefore, we often experience emotions such as anger or sadness when we do not receive respect from others in our interaction with them.

During my fieldwork, I noticed that some of my research participants were unpunctual. For example, I had an interview with Lee on November 25, 2018, at 3 p.m. When I came to her Vietnamese restaurant around 2:50 p.m., she was having her own late lunch after a busy lunch time. She looked at me, said hi and let me sit at another table. I expected her to come and sit on the same table right after her lunch. Instead, she started to talk to one of her restaurant staff for a while. It was already 20 minutes past 3 p.m. I firstly felt angry thinking I was being treated in a disrespectful way. Then, what occurred to me was that she is different from Koreans, even if she has lived in South Korea over twenty years. If she had been a non-migrant Korean, I probably

would have just considered her as a rude person, but the Vietnamese interviewee came to be put into the collective category of 'different migrant other' in my mind.

In January 2019, I started to come to the *Damunhwa* (multicultural) Church in Wongok-dong every Sunday, in order to meet more migrants and see how they spent time in the church. The church was in the basement of the building of the Ansan Migrant Centre. One day, when I visited the centre on the way to meet a migrant whom I met from the church, Pyo who worked for the centre complained about the migrant family for whom she had been waiting for several hours on that day. She added:

Maybe because they have different sense about time from us, they are not really on time.

We take time and wait for them, but they did not make it today. This happens quite often. (Pyo Su-jin, fieldnote, January 23, 2019)

She was annoyed and irritated because her time and effort to do something for migrants had been wasted, and not for the first time. What is not said but implied from her feeling is her judgement that it is not right. Moreover, in listening to her referring to 'them' who are different from 'us', I was easily able to relate to her because what she talked about was mundane cultural and social virtues that are believed to be shared among 'us'. In naturalising the different ideas about keeping an appointment, and respecting an everyday social custom, one helps to construct the national bounded community.

We have foreigners in our resident community groups. I've been [in the group] for about one year and half and [found that] we [Koreans and foreigners] have differences. The difference in ideas, cultural difference. (...) Hwang lived [in Korea] for twenty years now [but she has her] own [cultural] difference [from us]. Thus, it is sometimes absurd. Our [group] meetings should be led by the group leader, but she often cuts him off. For us, these people [foreigners like her] are ill-mannered. Well, so many [of such things happen]. (Cho Soo-jeong, group-discussion, April 30, 2019).

The ways of interrupting other's talk that Hwang has shown in the resident group is seen among the Korean residents as against the conventional norms of how 'we' show our respect to others and the etiquette in having conversations. The normative evaluation on migrants' social manner is attached to this narrative, drawing a boundary between Korean 'we' and migrant others by placing Hwang, the Chinese member of the group, into 'these people'.

Foreigners don't participate [in the group] unless they have a stake [in the group]. They don't really have *joeng*. They only see things in terms of interests. They are incompatible with us. (Jeon Chan-min, group-discussion, February 26, 2019).

During the three months from February to May 2019, the group meeting was held at least twice per month, but migrant residents attended the group meetings only two or three times in total. I asked the Korean residents why migrant resident members do not come to the meetings. In Jeon's response cited above, 'foreigners' are described as people who do not possess the quality of '*jeong*'. *Jeong*, a cultural and social notion in Korea, refers to a kind of intimacy or attachment between people. People who care about others and try to bond between each other can be seen as those who have *jeong*. In what he said to me, foreigners are 'incompatible' with Koreans who tend to care for others even if there are no advantages in paying attention to others. This is a social and cultural values for him about how people should treat each other.

Chinese people disrespect us. They think Koreans can live well thanks to them. They think because they come [to Korea] and work, Koreans can live well. Then I said like, 'You, Chinese people, why did you come here [Korea]. You came to earn money! The purpose of coming to Korea is to make money, not to help Korea. Only money!' They can make [money in Korea] ten times more [than in China]. If they work for a month [in Korea], they can earn as much as they make by working [in China] for one year. I mean they don't have such [high pay] in their country. But they are not thankful [to Korea]. Other foreigners, such as Filipinos and Indonesians, like Korean people. They regard

Korea as a *seonjunguk* and try to follow our rules. Chinese, however, think in an opposite way. (Gu Hyeok-jae, interview)

Complaining about Chinese, Gu showed his flattering self-perception of Koreans that the national position of Korea is relatively superior in Asia as a rich country, where migrants from poor countries can make more money. He judges migrant others according to whether or how they respect Korea(ns). Showing respect is related to how one publicly evaluates and authorises the worth of another (Skeggs and Loveday, 2012: 480). Therefore, 'disrespect' can be seen as the failure of receiving authorisation of one's value. In his comment, Gu portrayed Asian migrants as good because they allegedly treat Korea as *seonjunguk*, in contrast to Chinese migrants who do not show gratitude and underestimate Korea. Hence, in this case, 'disrespect' can also mean the failure to obtain authorisation of the value of *seonjunguk*, which would make him feel superior to other Asian migrants.

What I note from the residents' comments and my fieldnote here is the moment that 'disrespectful' becomes a quality attributed to migrants. Through judging migrants' alleged disrespectful behaviours, migrants become the moral Other. However, what the Korean participants including myself showed is the tendency to forget that showing respect may come in different ways in non-Korean culture. Moreover, within any culture, some individuals may indeed be disrespectful. Instead, we assumed that the migrants' alleged failure to conform to our own way of showing respect means that they disrespect 'us'.

In the contemporary multicultural milieu, it is imperative to recognise cultural differences between different groups. Yet, what seemed to matter to 'us' at the described encounters with migrant others is not only the differences between us and them, but the failure of being respected with regard to what 'we' valorise, 'our' way of living. However, I also want to note how the Korean residents viewed migrants as disrespectful other and justified their treatment based on migrants' economic background. Class intersects here, as many migrant workers are not only positioned in the working class in Korea in being engaged in low-income

occupations but are classified as a kind of social class through moral boundary drawing (cf. Reay, 2005; Sayer 2005a; 2005b; Skeggs, 1997; 2004). Further, this moral othering is ‘sticky’, being likely to remain as a way of identifying migrants for some time, even if they are upwardly mobile and leave the economic working class.

It is also important to be sensitive to the kind of situations or points at which a certain quality comes to be ascribed to different others. What is evident here are the moments that Korean individuals feel they are being disrespected or where they are irritated by different culture. Through recurrent encounters and everyday discourse, these moments accumulate, leading them to blame migrants as ‘the “source” of [their] feelings’ (Ahmed, 2004: 1).

8.7. Wongok park, the racialised space



Figure 16. *Hyeonchungtop* (the war memorial tower) in Wongok park¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Photo by the author, 14 May 2019.

In Chapter 7, I mentioned that I spent some time with the migrant and non-migrant residents from the Wongok-dong Community Centre in Wongok park, a small public space that people use for physical exercise. Most of the people in the park were Chinese walking along the trail that circles the park, dancing in groups, performing Chinese exercises like *qigong*¹⁰² and so on. I and the residents watched the Chinese people taking pictures and videos of each other. The place is an everyday space in the neighbourhood, not a tourist attraction. However, the Chinese dancing and exercising – ‘the culture distant from ours’ (Kim Nae-hyeok, group-discussion, May 14, 2019) – became an object of sightseeing for me and non-migrant Koreans. After looking around the park, we gathered and sat on the stairs of the tower and started to talk. On this day, we had two Korean-Chinese (*Joseonjok*) residents in attendance, and one of them, Geum Nan, spoke to the rest of the group about the dancing, *sagyomu*, which is similar to ballroom dancing. While she was telling that *sagyomu* benefits her physical and mental health, the reaction that the non-migrant Korean residents’ response was somewhat negative. For example, Park, a public officer from the Wongok-dong Community Centre said, ‘We are unfamiliar with *sagyomu*’ (Park Hyeyon-ju, group-discussion, May 14, 2019), which seemed to mean that ‘we’ Koreans do not enjoy it. I understood what she said in this way based on the popular image of *sagyochum*, a Korean name of *sagyomu*, in Korea. Although there are many Koreans who enjoy such kinds of dancing and join a dancing club and practise in a private space, as far as I know, the popular image of the dance in Korea is negative – presumably because it is between a man and woman, who may be strangers, touching each other’s bodies. This negative perception of the dance partly derives from the history of the dance, called *sagyochum*, which was banned under the Japanese rule and the authoritarian regimes in the twentieth century. It has been associated in the public media with the image of ‘affairs’, or other inappropriate relationships between a man and a

¹⁰² *Qigong* is a Chinese daily exercise that involves carefully moving the body, managing the breath and meditating.

woman, conflicting with the traditional Confucianist values regarding gender relations (Moon, 1999).¹⁰³

It's *hyeonchungtop*. People should be respectful of it but foreigners come here, dance and hang out every day like crazy! (Gu Hyeok-jae, interview)

Before my visit of Wongok-park with the residents from the Wongok-dong Community Centre, I heard from some non-migrant Koreans complaining about migrants using the park. For example, Gu mentioned in an interview that he is not happy about 'foreigners' dancing in the park. For him, the act of dancing in the place of the memorial tower is morally unacceptable. The Korean residents those who visited the Wongok-park with me also spoke about how they think about the way of people use the park.

We residents should regard this tower as an object of reverence and not [as a place] to drink [here] or something like that (...) It is okay that Chinese come here and hangout, but I think [we] need to educate or let them know that they should not drink around the tower (...) so that they do not use this place as one [for drinking]. (Gye Hae-jin, group-discussion, May 14, 2019)

On June 6 every year, there is a Memorial Day ceremony in the park. Hundreds of people including city councillors, the mayor, public officers, national dignitaries and Ansan citizens gather to honour people who sacrificed their lives for the country (in the Korean War for example). Given the meaning of the place as an object of reverence for the non-migrant Korean residents, some behaviours of migrants, such as dancing and drinking, are seen as disrespectful.

¹⁰³ This does not mean that *sagyomu* or *sagyochum* is legally or culturally banned in Korea. It is enjoyed by many people in the name of 'sports dance', with a number of dance societies across the country.



Figure 17. Memorial Day ceremony on June 6, 2019¹⁰⁴

The thing is [Chinese] come here and dance here. [I understand] they have no place to hang out, they have no choice [but come here and dance here]. I'm sure some bad things are likely to happen here a lot if [they] drink here. [Drinking here] seems out of place for the spirit of this place. (...) I came here and saw that *taegeukgi* (the name of the national flag of Republic of Korea) is torn out. This place is really important that we should express our appreciation for foreign veterans [who sacrificed their life], but it's turned out weird [wrong]. We need to put a fence up around here [the tower]. (Yoon Eun-soo, group-discussion, May 14, 2019)

¹⁰⁴ Source: Ansan City Hall. Available at: council.ansan.go.kr/02_sub/body05.jsp?menuId=&id=603&mode=S¤tPage=10&articleId=1173507# [accessed 29 September 2019]. (in Korean)



Figure 18. Chinese dancing in the park in the evening¹⁰⁵

According to Park, a public officer working at the Wongok-dong Community Centre, there was actual discussion at the level of the city on putting a fence up around the tower (Park Hyeon-ju, group-discussion, May 14, 2019). Listening to her, I was on the one hand able to understand the purpose of keeping the tower area clean and safe. On the other hand, however, 'the fence' came to my mind as representing a boundary between migrants and the tower, with the migrants seen as those who spoil the landscape and the sacred meaning of the tower for Koreans with their alleged undesirable behaviours, like dancing and drinking. Here, the Koreans' moral judgement on such behaviours may work in a way of rationalising the distancing and distinction from migrants and asserting their dominant (as a Korean national) position in the society. As Skeggs and Loveday (2012) note, moral evaluations can be facilitated in political tactics of distancing and distinction to justify the interests and position of those who want to draw such boundary

¹⁰⁵ Photo by the author, 14 May 2019.

(Skeggs and Loveday, 2012: 473). In everyday discourse in Wongok-dong, they may also work in a similar way.

Participating in the group discussion, I sensed the attitude the Korean residents showed was a defensive one towards the ‘Chinese-occupied’ park (Ahn Jeong-won, group-discussion, May 14, 2019). They felt displaced from the place and their neighbourhood, given that the park is mostly used by migrants, except for the one day of memorial event. However, I could not find out whether the park was often used by non-migrant Koreans before Chinese migrants began to visit it, or if they took any other actions to reclaim the park. Still, I want to note that through the residents’ narratives of migrants and the park, the park is becoming a racialised place where migrants drink and dance near the memorial tower. By judging migrants as vulgar and disrespectful, a moral boundary, which is also a ‘racial’ boundary, was established between migrants and non-migrant Koreans.

8.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the everyday racialisation of migrants in Wongok-dong through the non-migrant Korean residents’ discourse on migrants’ behaviours in public places and regarding public rules, etiquettes and different mindsets. I examined the importance of the residents’ normative evaluations, particularly moral judgements about migrants, in constructing their perception of migrants, often involving moral and ‘racial’ boundaries. Furthermore, I demonstrated that the residents identified and evaluated self and migrant others through their dualist view of the world, *seonjinguk* and *hujinguk*, often attributing certain qualities to migrants such as disorderly behaviour, bad-manners, and lack of respect, and associating these with their imagined origins in poor or rural areas in *hujinguk* in the context of labour migration in Asia. I argue that Asian migrants are racialised in everyday life in Wongok-dong by Koreans’ developmentalist feeling of superiority over *hujinguk*. The importance of this chapter is twofold: first, it highlights the role of evaluative judgements in racialisation, which has not received as much attention as it could have in the studies

of multiculturalism; second, it contributes to scholarship on racialisation – dominated by studies of Western societies – by adding a case study of the Asian context.

9. Conclusion: towards a cultural and political economy of urban multiculture

This thesis began by problematising the ethnic or migrant lens in studying an urban multicultural place. While acknowledging the importance of everyday encounters and interactions between people of different cultures or ethnicity in making a multicultural place and society, this study attempted to draw our attention to other aspects, particularly (political) economic processes that play an important part in local multiculture. Through an ethnographic case study of Wongok-dong focusing on the DSZ project in the area, the main question addressed in the thesis was:

- What are cultural and political elements or forces underpinning the process of the project?

and more specific questions,

- How is the multicultural imagined?
- How is it institutionally and spatially materialised?
- How is it experienced and evaluated?

To answer these questions, the thesis adopted a dual cultural and political economic approach that stresses their analytical distinctiveness but practical interdependence. In so doing, it enabled me to identify elements or forces that are interwoven in shaping multiculture in Wongok-dong.

This overarching conclusion to the thesis is divided into three sections. First, I reflect on the theoretical contribution this study offers and the methodological approach taken. Following that, I reflect on the empirical significance of the case, Wongok-dong in South Korea. I then propose a possible research agenda for the multicultural scholarships, which can be studied from different or inter-disciplinary perspectives including Sociology, Urban Studies and Cultural Studies. The thesis concludes with a few final comments.

9.1. Theoretical and methodological reflections

Reconceptualising urban, everyday multiculture

In this thesis, multiculture is seen as (re-)shaped by the contingently intersecting cultural and (political) economic processes, social relations and everyday experiences. Thus, I argued that in studying multiculture, while we obviously need to consider ethnicity and migration, these should not be seen as the only things that are important. With this conceptualisation, the thesis explored the local government's discursive and institutional practices of imaging a multicultural city and making Wongok-dong a multicultural special place, and the residents' experiences and evaluations of the relevant processes. Chapters 5 and 6 probed the Ansan government's urban governance practices of (re-)imagining and making the city and Wongok-dong into a centre for embracing migrants and consuming migrants' culture through the DSZ project. The chapters examined how the practices involve several neoliberal features, such as the differentiated management of space and population for marketing Wongok-dong, the public-private partnership for providing services, and the valuation of cultural differences and diversity for local economic revitalisation. Through these discursive and material practices, I argued, Wongok-dong has been transformed into a migrant-welcoming but segregated place (Chapter 5) and an 'ethnic' place to consume 'ethnic food' culture (Chapter 6). Chapters 7 and 8 explored the Wongok-dong non-migrant residents' responses to some changes following the increased number of migrants and multicultural policies, and their daily encounters with migrants. These two chapters examined how the residents' emotional and moral evaluations play an important part in making migrants the non-Korean Other and racialising them by attributing certain qualities such as poor, dirty, and immoral.

The chief contention of the thesis is that, within multicultural scholarship, political economic processes are rarely studied in terms of their role in (re-)developing and (re-)shaping multiculture in an urban environment. By exploring the practices of meaning-making about migrants and cultural diversity and the relevant institutional and spatial changes associated with

the DSZ project, as well as the ordinary people's everyday experiences and evaluations of these, the thesis demonstrated how multiculture in Wongok-dong is being re-constructed through the various processes, particularly urban neoliberal (re-)vitalisation. It examined how neoliberal policies have *instrumentalised* multiculturalism to achieve their ends, while partly disguising the economic goals by emphasising benefits of multiculturalism which go beyond the economic. This is the main contribution of the work to the study on urban, everyday multiculture. Furthermore, I examined how economic concerns and interests played out in othering migrants as non-Korean, how they involved and intersection of ethnic /'racial' relations with class. Through these discussions, the study attempted to overcome the narrowly ethnic or migrant focus that the previous literature has tended to have.

The attempt to look beyond ethnic or migrant lens is reflected in the methodological approach of the study. Multicultural neighbourhoods are often studied focusing on ethnic or migrant communities in terms of their socio-economic or cultural activities. This study, on the other hand, is based on an ethnographic study conducted in Wongok-dong to ascertain the social relations between local actors including governmental and non-governmental groups and residents and their discursive and material practices that contribute to the neighbourhood's changes and environment. In doing so, I tried to identify various conditions and processes involved and understand everyday experiences of them. Furthermore, by viewing Wongok-dong as a concrete place where various elements, relations and practices are interwoven and many of them are largely linked to processes at wider scales, I attempted to note the relationship of local-regional-national governmental bodies and policies and the industries, and between local small-medium sized companies and large, national or global business in contextualising the research. In this way, while taking local actors' and residents' own perception of their activities and environments seriously, I tried to place an emphasis on the structural conditions and processes that affect their practices and lives and the intended or unintended consequences of their ideas or actions.

Everyday politics of recognition and (re-)distribution

If we interpret recognition broadly as being about recognizing someone's moral worth as a person, rather than as a person of a particular identity ... then we can identify certain relations between recognition and distribution. (Sayer, 2005a: 956)

In exploring the non-migrant Korean residents' concerns about welfare policies supporting migrants and economic inequality and local economy of Wongok-dong, Chapter 7 examined how the relationship between recognition and (re-)distribution plays out. Expressing resentful emotions, the residents saw the apparent privileging of migrant children and students over Koreans as an injustice. However, they also failed to see migrants as fellow citizens who are vulnerable in economic and social terms and who are entitled to welfare benefits. Facing the fear of economic downturn of Wongok-dong, however, they recognized their interest in making Wongok-dong a tourist attraction, by facilitating cultural diversity as a tourism asset. While the residents' experiences are in the background of the neoliberal process such as the education policy including migrants describing them as 'global talent' with multi-lingual ability and the competition between the governmental bodies and local municipals for national funding, the residents' views of migrants were much more complex and ambivalent. They granted migrants recognition in so far as they benefitted the economy and fitted in with the DSZ policy, they did not see them as of equal worth to non-migrant Koreans and as deserving of welfare benefits. This kind of politics of (mis-)recognition that involves a tension between moral worth and economic value of migrants and cultural diversity is rarely discussed in studying everyday multiculture, though much attention has been paid to cultural or ethnic identity (re-)formations through daily and mundane encounters and interactions.

Everyday evaluations and racialisation

Chapter 8 examined how migrants become associated with certain qualities and how ethnic or 'racial' relations are reimagined and reproduced through everyday evaluations. In the study, racialisation is seen as an othering process of ascribing certain qualities or meanings to

culturally or ethnically different groups including class, nation, ethnic or migrant others. It is a process of (re-)constructing self as well as others by differentiating us and/or others as superior or inferior, and this is where (post-)colonial relations are relevant. The chapter focused on the role of value and moral judgements in making migrants 'racial' others; this needs to be more explicitly studied in the literature on racialisation. Particularly, in exploring the complicating interrelations between nation, ethnicity/'race' and class, the chapter examined how Asian labour migrants who are largely perceived as poor and from low-income countries were seen as inferior and unworthy of respect compared to the educated and disciplined Korean, the affluent 'us' who are superior and worthy of respect. In this way, migrants are positioned in a low-income and low status class in Korea not only through migration and the local labour market, but also through moral racialisation.

9.2. Empirical reflections

One day during my fieldwork in Korea, one researcher asked me why I was conducting research with a Korean case while studying in the United Kingdom. This made me think what would be useful for readers, particularly in the United Kingdom, from reading this research. What can we learn from exploring an urban neighbourhood in South Korea?

First, this thesis investigated how a local city deals with migrants and local economy in the background of labour migration in Asia. Asia has hosted international migrants the most (around 84 million) followed by Europe (around 82 million) and North America (around 59 million) as of 2019 (IOM UN Migration, 2019: 24). Asian labour migration is a prominent feature composed of temporary or seasonal migrant workers (cf. UN ESCAP, 2020), with the demand for labour in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, service, and domestic sectors. Given the size and weight of the Asian regional labour migration, more studies on local or urban changes with the increase of migrants need to be conducted. Furthermore, what the pattern of Asian labour migration suggests is the presence of many rural areas and industrial cities where migrants are integrated into primary and secondary industries. However, in the case of Ansan,

the city also has seen the growth of economic activity in services and tourism. The thesis provides an empirical study showing how an industrial city in Asia responds to labour migrants for maintaining or revitalising local economy, in secondary and tertiary sectors, and how migrants are included into the local policy programmes.

The study also provides insights into the ways in which labour migrants are incorporated into the current process of uneven regional development of capitalism in the context of Asia. As explored in Chapter 4, the economic growth of South Korea and the increased demand for cheap labour among small-medium sized companies since the late 1980s has led to the recruitment of young workers from low-income countries in Asia into low-skilled jobs in Korea, through the guest worker system contracted between low-income countries and South Korea. Furthermore, relating to capitalism, this study highlights the context-specific development of neoliberalisation that has affected the multicultural process in both national and local levels. Specifically, understanding multiculturalism in South Korea necessitates the understanding of the combination of the developmentalist emphasis on national growth and the neoliberal logic of competition in Korea, and how multiculturalism and migrants are mobilised as a way of improving national competitiveness (Chapter 4).

Lastly, the study sheds light on the different (post-)colonial historical experience which has shaped the sense of national identity and the ideas about ethnicity/‘race’. (Post-) colonialism and imperialism are critical forces and contexts of (re-) forming ethnic / ‘racial’ categorisation, in its intersection with class, through the power relations between majority and minority groups, or the association with ‘superior’ and ‘inferior’ between different groups. Yet, our knowledge of ethnic/‘racial’ relations is still largely based on the Western empires and their former colonised. Ethnic or ‘racial’ processes are found everywhere and have been experienced in a greater varieties of ways than those found in the relations between white peoples and their counterparts.

Studying non-Western or non-white majority societies helps us to decolonise our academic knowledge and popular perceptions of class, ethnic, ‘racial’ and gender relations –

perceptions which have been dominated by Anglo European histories of (post-) colonialism, imperialism, racism and capitalism that treat Western or white experience as universal. While multiculturalism or other ways of pursuing social integration of diverse populations may be applied in theory as a normative and political idea(l) to cases anywhere in this global migration era, the ways it develops and gets challenged are uneven, entailing different social and spatial processes and contexts. Therefore, exploring non-Western cases is worthwhile because it not only helps identify conditions or forces that (re-)shape the context-specific development of multiculturalism, but it also may challenge the theoretical works that have been largely based on the western cases.

9.3. Future research agendas

On the relationship between urban political economy and urban multiculture

In the current globalised era with intensified mobility, the transformation of cities through immigration is widespread. Yet, the ways in which cities respond to the increasing numbers of migrants and diversity, and everyday experiences vary. One of the implications of this thesis for studying this relationship between cities and migration in the contemporary world is that it is worth investigating the often conflicting relationship between urban multiculture and neoliberal urban political economy in other contexts. This study offers a way of doing this, showing how this results in a discrepancy between the idea(l) of embracing ethnic, cultural diversity and the actuality of policy implementations and people's perceptions and experiences. This can be considered in studying many other cities.

On 'ethnic food'

Let's stop using 'ethnic' to mean 'non-white-people's' food. (See also: music, dress, traditions ...)

Tara O'Brady, a Canadian food writer tweeted this in 2016. 'Ethnic food' in the white majority societies including Britain often refers to non-white or non-European-origin food. This reveals

the power relations between majority and minority groups in perceiving ‘ethnic food’ in a society, implying the geographical othering through perceiving ‘ethnic food’ as outside Europe and maintaining an imperialist view on non-white culture. As such, ‘ethnic food’ itself is worth exploring in terms of how ‘ethnic food’ is constituted in a society. This thesis discussed what ‘ethnic food’ can be in South Korea in Chapter 6, and I noted the temporal dimension in which non-traditional Korean food has become familiar over the history of cultural contacts and political interventions in preserving, encouraging, or suppressing certain food cultures, and the food/restaurant industry in introducing novel foods into people’s daily life. I also noted the current time in which Asian regional migration has increased, the tourism industry has grown that many Koreans travel abroad, and the term ‘ethnic food’ has been introduced and used to refer to relatively new, unfamiliar foods from a variety of regions from which many migrants in Korean originate, such as India, Thailand, and Vietnam. This contingency also partly explains why now diverse migrant foods have become commodified in South Korea. Considering these conditions and practices that affect the emergence of ‘ethnic food’ in Korea, I suggest studying how ‘ethnic food’ is made in one society may offer a window for looking at the building of nation and national identity, the (re-)formation of ethnic relations, the history of migration, and the current multicultural development in a society, etc. What kinds of cultural and political economic elements are engaged in making certain food positioned as ‘ethnic food’? How is the process of making ‘ethnic food’ related to the process of making ‘ethnic’ groups? While the consumption of ‘ethnic food’ has been studied from different perspective including Human Geography and Cultural Studies (Chapter 6), further examination of what ‘ethnic food’ is and what the term ‘ethnic’ means when used in conjunction with ‘ethnic food’ is also possible.

On becoming an ‘ethnic’ group through return migration

Chapter 8 discussed how migrants are racialised through the non-migrant Koreans’ moral boundary drawing and particularly with respect to overseas Koreans from China, *Joseonjok*, who migrated to Manchuria, China between the late 19th century and late 1940s from the Korean

peninsula, particularly during the Japanese Rule. This work can be extended to discuss how migrants experience being ethnically positioned and racialised when settling in South Korea. Here my interest is particularly in how the ethnicity of a migrant group is experienced and reconstructed through return migration: for example, how do Chaoxianzu (the ethnic Koreans in China) migrants, an ethnic minority group in China, experience becoming a Joseonjok group in South Korea? The Korean government has accepted overseas Koreans under the name of *dongpo* (overseas Koreans) based on the ethnic blood-ties, with separate law and visas in the context of globalisation initiative since the 1990s (Chapter 4). Yet, many of them from China and the CIS regions have come to Korea through the visa scheme for low-skilled workers. Therefore, through the popular discourse and representations of overseas Koreans, particularly the ethnic Korean Chinese group, they have become a particular ethnic group in South Korea marked with some negative qualities over recent decades. These associate them with criminal behaviour, making money and coming to Korea to get medical treatment. Indeed, the evaluations that the non-migrant Korean residents made in Chapter 8 showed how they despised *Joseonjok* in everyday life. This return migration and co-ethnic boundary making may challenge the idea of ethnic kinship between the ethnic Koreans. Therefore, ethnic positioning can be further studied, focusing on how return migrants experience and evaluate the ethnic process in their settling society.

9.4. Concluding remarks

‘What is multicultural in Wongok-dong?’ ‘How can I understand this multicultural neighbourhood?’ Throughout the thesis, I attempted to answer these questions I asked in the opening of the thesis, which I had at the start of my fieldwork. I endeavoured to grasp this area as part of Ansan City’s strategy for securing national funding and other institutional assistance, as well as attracting visitors to Wongok-dong to consume cultural diversity. However, as Nash (2003) rightly stresses, ‘when multiculturalism means the consumerist commodification of “exotic” ethnic cultures, ... the geographies of segregation and racial privilege remain unchanged’

(Nash, 2003: 641). Indeed, in exploring the process of the local economic revitalisation through the DSZ and multicultural food street promotion, this study showed that while migrants are included in the public services on the basis of their contribution to the local economy and migrants' culture as a tourism asset, the boundary between migrants and non-migrants is fixed through othering migrants as 'foreign', non-Korean 'us', or '*Damunhwa*'. The responses of the non-migrant Korean residents also revealed that while they value migrants and cultural diversity for economic reasons, they failed to consider migrants as fellow citizens. Considering this partial, conditional recognition of migrants and cultural difference, I believe that future political, policy and theoretical discussions regarding multiculturalism should aim to redress this injustice. To achieve it requires expanding our understanding of multiculture and multiculturalism beyond the presence of ethnic diversity, cultural differences and their encounters and interactions.

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Appendix 1. List of the research participants

1. Residents and proprietors

Group/site	No.	Name	Gender	Nationality	Ethnicity
Wongok-dong Community Centre	1	Ahn Jeong-won	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	2	Cho Soo-jeong	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	3	Geum Nan	F	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	4	Gwak Hee-moon	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	5	Gye Hae-jin	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	6	Hong Seong-jin	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	7	Jang Mi-ran	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	8	Jeon Chan-min	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	9	Joo Jang-seong	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	10	Kang Jun-ha	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	11	Kim Ma-jun	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	12	Kim Nae-hyeok	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	13	Kim Na-young	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	14	Nam Han-seok	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	15	Oh Chan-hyeok	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	16	Park Jeong-ah	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	17	Seo Myeong-jin	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	18	Shim Myeong-ja	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	19	Yoo In-jin	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	20	Yoon Eun-soo	F	Korean (South)	Korean
Senior Centres	21	Go Shi-young	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	22	Kim Tae-ahn	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	23	Shin Joon-gi	M	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	24	Soo jang-hyeok	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	25	Won Jang-min	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	26	Wu Young-cheon	M	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
Proprietor	27	Gu Hyeok-jae	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	28	Hwang Eui-ju	F	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	29	Hwang Eui-ryeong	F	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	30	Kang Chae-lin	M	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	31	Ki Beom-seon	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	32	Min Yi-hyeon	F	Korean (South)	Vietnamese

Mannam Public Square	33	N/A	F	Korean (South)	Korean Chinese
	34	N/A	F	Chinese	Korean Chinese
	35	N/A	F	Chinese	Korean Chinese
	36	N/A	F	Chinese	Korean Chinese

2. Participants from the local government and non-government groups

Group/site	No.	Name	Gender	Nationality	Ethnicity
Ansan City Hall	1	Kim Chan-ho	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	2	Na Yoon	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	3	Park Hyeon-ju	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	4	Seon Eung-lim	M	Korean (South)	Korean
Ansan Migrant Centre	5	Kim Guk-heung	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	6	Moon Min-jeong	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	7	Pyo Su-jin	F	Korean (South)	Korean
Ansan Migrants' Counselling Support Centre	8	Park Min-seon	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	9	Seong Ju-il	M	Korean (South)	Korean
Gyeonggi Institute of Research and policy Development for Migrants' Human Rights	10	Kim Gyeong-ho	M	Korean (South)	Korean
	11	Kim Min-ho	M	Korean (South)	Korean
Hanyang University	12	Kang Eui-jeong	F	Korean (South)	Korean
	13	Kim Ji-young	F	Korean (South)	Korean
Onnuri M Centre	14	Park Seong-hee	F	Korean (South)	Korean

Appendix 2. PIS and consent form (in English and Korean)

Participant Information Sheet

My name is Jihyun Choi, and I am a PhD student based in the Sociology department at Lancaster University in the U.K. I am currently conducting a study, which will explore the urban renewal project and the integration of migrants in Wongok-dong multicultural special zone. I am particularly looking at how the project and the related developments are experienced and evaluated by local residents. I would like to invite you to participate in my research as an informant. This sheet provides information about the study and what participation will involve.

I hope it answers any questions that you may have, but if you do have any further queries, please feel free to contact to j.choi1@lancaster.ac.uk

Project Title:

The Social, Spatial Developments of Urban Renewal Project and Migrant Integration Policy in Wongok-dong, Ansan, South Korea

Aims of the research:

The aim of this fieldwork project is to explore how local residents, retailers, and workers experience and evaluate the changes following making Wongok-dong as a multicultural town and integrating migrants into the local area.

Study procedure and the participant's role:

This fieldwork involves observation of daily practices and culture.

Interviews could last up to an hour and will be conveniently located at a place of your choice. Please note that interviews will be informal. You will not be asked for in-depth personal information and you are welcome to not answer any question you wish. You have the right to withdraw from the study, during the interview or up to one month following your interview, without giving a reason. And if you so wish, I will not use any of the preceding discussion in my research.

The interviews will be recorded and will later be anonymised. All non-anonymised data will be destroyed as soon as anonymised copies have been made.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please feel free to ask for clarification, or further information via the email address at the start of this document. Before the study commences, you will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm that you have received and read this information sheet, and that you are willing to take part in the research.

Confidentiality and anonymity:

Any information collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. This means that only I will have access to any raw information that can be specifically associated with you, and any information that is shared (such as in reports or publications) will be made anonymous. This means that details such as your name or any identifiers will be removed. This will apply to any publications, presentations, or any discussion with other colleagues in the University.

How will the data be used and protected:

I will treat data that is collected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that any personal information stored in physical format (paper, readily playable recordings) will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office on Lancaster University premises. Any personal information stored electronically will be stored on a secure, password-protected server. Any personal information that is transported electronically on a mobile device (a laptop or memory stick) will be encrypted and/or password protected. Only I will have access to this information and data.

The information collected will be used to inform the development of further research and may be included in publications and presentations. Anonymised data may be kept securely (as described above) for a period of up to ten years, to be used by me only in future publications or in developments of this research project.

Risks of participation:

The risks related to this study are minimal. Your participation in this study and any information you share will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Benefits:

There may be no personal benefit to you from participating in this project and there is no financial incentive to do so. However, you may find that this study offers an opportunity for reflection on your experiences living/working in the area, which may in turn help you to identify any support you may need in the future.

Concerns:

If you are not satisfied with the way this study is being conducted or if you have any concerns regarding your participation, you may contact (anonymously if you so choose):

Jihyun Choi

j.choi1@lancaster.ac.uk

Consent Form

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following (Add or delete as appropriate)

I have read, or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the Participant Information Sheet. Yes No

I have been given sufficient time to consider whether or not to participate in this study. Yes No

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time before and during their participation and up to one week following the date of my participation without giving a reason. Yes No

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study. Yes No

I know whom to contact if I have any questions about the study in general. Yes No

I understand my responsibilities as a study participant. Yes No

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's name:

Signature:

Date:

Declaration by member of research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name:

Signature:

Date:

연구 참여자 안내서

이 안내문은 본 연구에 자발적으로 참여하시는 분께 드리는 연구참여 초청문으로, 본 연구에 대한 정보와 함께 연구 참여자가 연구참여과정에서 숙지해야 할 사항을 알려드립니다.

이 안내문에 적힌 사항들 외에 문의사항이 있으시면 연구자에게 연락을 주시기 바랍니다. (연구자의 연락처는 안내서 마지막 장의 하단에 있습니다)

연구 제목: 안산시 원곡동의 특구 사업과 이주민 사회통합정책의 결합에 따른 사회공간적 발달과정과 그에 대한 현지인의 경험과 평가

연구 목적: 본 연구는 안산시의 원곡동 다문화특구 사업이 추진된 구조적 배경과 그 과정에 따른 원곡동 환경변화 및 그에 대한 현지인의 경험 및 평가를 이해하고, 특구사업과 이주민사회통합프로그램의 결합이 이러한 과정에 미치는 사회·공간적 영향을 설명하기 위한 프로젝트입니다.

연구 절차 및 연구 참여자 역할:

본 연구의 현지조사는 참여관찰과 인터뷰의 2 가지 방식으로 진행됩니다. 참여관찰은 연구자가 연구 참여자들의 일상이나 특정활동을 직접 보고 들으면서 이들의 일상적 실천을 살펴보는 연구방법입니다. 반면, 인터뷰는 연구자가 연구 참여자들에게 서면이나 면담을 통해 질문을 하고 연구참여자로부터 답변을 얻음으로써 참여자의 경험과 평가를 직접 들어보는 연구방법입니다.

이 안내문을 받는 분은 위의 2 가지 연구 과정 중 본인의 의사에 따라 일부 또는 모두에 참여할 수 있습니다. 또한 연구참여자는 참여관찰이나 인터뷰 과정에 참여하는 도중에 연구자에게 참여 거부 의사를 밝힐 수 있으며 이 경우 연구참여자가 제공한 자료는 제 연구에 쓰이지 않을 것입니다.

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연구자 최지현

이메일 j.choi1@lancaster.ac.uk

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그 내용을 이해하였습니다.

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언제든 이유를 불문하고 참여 거부할 수 있음을
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개인 신상 정보가 이 연구에서 사용되지 않음을
숙지하였습니다.

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사람에 대한 정보를 제공받았습니다.

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네 아니오

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연구참여자 성명:

연구참여자 서명:

날짜:

연구자

본인은 연구참여자에게 본 연구 프로젝트에 대한 구술설명을 하였으며 연구참여자의
해당연구 관련 질문에 답하였습니다.

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연구자 성명:

연구자 서명:

날짜: