

Articles

The Cultural Politics of Place  
Names in Korea: Contestation of  
Place Names' Territories and  
Construction of Territorial Identity

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## Introduction

Place names mark the territorial claims of social groups by distinguishing their own places from other places, and pointing to both of them. The indicating and distinguishing functions of place names could also be extended to the level which represents and constitutes the identity and ideology of the diverse social subjects. This aspect is related to cultural politics as it is concerned with conflicts and contestation among different social subjects over the meaning and designating function of place names. The cultural politics of place names constitutes the process through which power relations concerned with the meaning of place names are forced on, accepted, contested or subverted by certain social subjects in daily practices.<sup>1</sup>

In particular, the Korean peninsula has a long history and a geopolitical location as a borderland and a buffer zone. As a result, it has provided many conditions for cultural diversity and power relations which have caused social subjects to contest their social power across space and time.

Moreover, the separation of the written (Chinese) language from the spoken (Korean) language in daily life has produced numerous overlapping place names that identify the same site concurrently. During the Joseon Period (1392-1910), the dominant social group called the *sajok* 士族 (gentry families) of the *yangban* class, the descendants of scholar-officials, mostly used Chinese characters and writing, while the people of the lower classes were illiterate or wrote the Korean alphabet called Hangeul 諺文 (Korean alphabet, *amkeul*).<sup>2</sup>

Under such circumstances, the dichotomy of daily linguistic life caused by discrimination among social classes has produced variant-plural place names, what can be referred to as contesting place names or dual place names. These place names have been contending or coexisting with each other over the same sites.

The discipline of cultural politics best suits an analysis of the process

1. Cultural politics constitutes, as Schiller (1997:2) has asserted, "...the processes through which relations of power are asserted, accepted, contested or subverted by means of ideas, values, symbols, and daily practices."

2. Particularly, according to the social class, such as the dominant class (K. *sajok* 士族), middle people (K. *jungin* 中人) or petty official (K. *byangni* 鄉吏), and subjugated class (commoner 平民, low-born people 賤民), they usually each used a different written language, i.e. Chinese (classic) 漢文, Idu transcription 吏讀, and Hangeul (*amkeul*) (Nam 1996:30-31).

of changing place names in Korea. It interests itself in the culture wars over the meaning of culture among different social subjects. Culture wars, as Mitchell (2000:4-5) has asserted, are rooted in ideology, religion, class difference, and the social construction of racial, ethnic and gender differences. Culture wars are, indeed, about defining what is legitimate in a society; who is an “insider,” and who is an “outsider.”

Particularly, cultural politics in the new cultural geography defines culture as a realm, path, and medium where diverse social power relations have contested, dominated, and resisted. Now it is necessary to evaluate the legitimacy of cultural politics for the study of place names in Korea. However, most preceding studies on place names have been mainly morphological research interested in tracing ethnic migration and its geographical distribution through analyzing the morphemes of place names rather than taking into consideration social power relations related to the formation and transformation of place names.

Based on such an understanding, the purpose of this paper is to research the representing and constituting processes of identity and ideology belonging to social subjects through the formation and transformation of place names in Korea. Essentially, it is to investigate the diverse aspects of cultural politics in which the interactions between “space,” “human subject,” and “power” are generated within the places and territories or between them. Ultimately, I intend to define not only the cultural-political features implied in place names, but also the transformation of place names’ territories in Korea.<sup>3</sup>

Cultural politics over place names in Korea has developed diverse paths and aspects which are forming, contesting, and differentiating the territories of place names. The *sajok*, the dominant social class, not only named their own places throughout their ideology, but also produced special place names which came to represent their territorial identity. On the other hand, they got rid of existing native place names commonly used by the lower classes for a long time, and then assigned new Confucian place names which were aligned with their ideology.

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3. All places have an exclusive boundary and territory for social order and control. In this sense, place names also have their popularly used spatial area, territory. By the way, place names would strengthen territoriality for certain social groups. Territoriality is just the social context and order that the dominant social subjects control and enlarge their place-bound identity such as territorial identity (Sack 1986:212; Kim 2009:58-60).

Consequently, the dominant social class not only constructed and strengthened their territoriality and territorial identity, but also generated diverse aspects of territorialization through which the territories of place names could grow, shrink, or fight against the other territories through power relations.

In order to analyze the formation and transformation of, and contestation between, place names' territories, I empirically examined both the formation and contestation of place names' territories and the construction of territoriality through field work, aided by written documents and interviews. Finally, I identified the functions of place names representing the social subjects' territorial identity and ideology in Korea.

As a concrete part of this paper, I made progress with two themes. First, in examining the formation and contestation of place names' territories, I investigated three ways in which many social subjects were contending for place names against each other to expand their own territory: creation of the place name written in Chinese characters and exclusion of the native place name (Galgeori / Nojang-ri); forcible alteration of place names by power relations (Sangsojeon / Hasojeon); and resistance and transgression of the weakened native place name (Mikkuji / Miho / Yangindong).

Secondly, I examined the place names representing collective identity, and the construction of territoriality that had been carried out by the dominant social subjects during the Joseon period: construction of territoriality by ideological naming (Hyogyodong and Inyang-ri) and construction of territoriality by producing place names representing place identity (conferral of place names by the Yuns of Papyeong and the Hongs of Namyang).

## **Formation and Contestation of Place Names' Territories**

### *Creation of the Place Name Written in Chinese Characters and Exclusion of the Native Place Name*

There are abundant examples related to the contestation and conflicts between the place names written in Chinese characters and the native place names spoken in Hangeul, vernacular Korean. One of these cases corresponds to the instance of Nojang-ri (蘆長里) and Galgeori [Korean

(hereafter, K.) *갈거리* 葛巨里) in Yeongi county, South Chungcheong province. While producing the place name written in Chinese characters (K. *Nojang* 蘆長) reflecting the territorial identity of the dominant social subject, i.e., the Kwons of Andong 安東 權氏, they have driven the existing native place name (K. *Galgeori* 葛巨里) out of their own territory.

Table 1. Changes of the place names, Galgeori, Sojeonri, and Mikkuji

Place names	<i>Yeoji</i> 輿地 <sup>4</sup> (1757-1765)	<i>Hogu</i> 戶口 (1789)	<i>Dongyeo.</i> <i>Daedo.</i> <i>Daeji</i> 東輿大圖 大志 (Mid-19th)	<i>Guhan</i> 舊韓 (1912)	<i>Singu</i> 新舊 (1917)	Present records	Remarks
Galgeori (Nojang) 上芦長里 Sangno jangri	蘆長里 Nojangri	上蘆長里 Sangnojangri 中蘆長里 Jungnojangri 下蘆長里 Hanojangri 葛巨里 Galgeori	蘆長里 Nojangri	上所田里 Sangso jeonri 下所田里 Hasojeonri	上所里 Sangsori 下所里 Hasori	Galgeori (葛巨里), 上蘆長, 中蘆長, (葛巨里: loan transcription by a similar phoneme about 갈거리 Yeongi-gun]	(芦>蘆) (長>長, 汀) *Galgiri>Galgeori [Geondong- myeon, Yeongi-gun]
Sojeonri 所田里 Sojeonri	所田 所田里	上所田里 Sangso jeonri 下所田里 Hasojeonri	上所里 Sangsori 下所里 Hasori	Sansojeon, 上所洞 [Dong-gu, Daejeon-si] Hasojeon, 下所洞 [Dong-gu]	(elimination of letter 田)		
Mikkuji (Miho)	弥串 Migot	美湖, 美湖川, 美湖平野 [Yeyang-ri, Dong-myeon, Yeongi-gun]	*美串津, 尾串 (1872) <i>nyeon jibang jido</i> 1872年 地方地圖 *美九里 [Guhanmal <i>hanbando</i> <i>jihyeongdo</i> 舊韓末韓半島地形圖 (1895)]				
Yanggol (Yangin dong) 養仁洞里 Yangindongri *養仁洞 [Haedong jido 海東地圖 (Mid- eighteenth c.)]	養仁洞 養仁洞	養仁里 仁洞里 Indongri	禮養里 Yeyangri	Yanggol, 養仁, (養仁>禮養) 禮養 [Yeyang-ri]	*良仁洞 [Guhanmal <i>hanbando</i> <i>jihyeongdo</i> (1895)]		

4. The ancient writings in first line of Table indicate the following: *Yeoji doseo* 輿地圖書 (1757-1765), *Hogu Chongsu* 戶口總數 (1789), *Dongyeo do* 東輿圖 (1850-1863), *Daedongyeoji do* 大東輿地圖 (1861), *Daedong jiji* 大東地志 (1864), *Gubanguk jibang haengjeong guyeok myeongching ilram* 舊韓國地方行政區域名稱一覽 (1912), *Singu daejo Joseon jeondo bugunmyeonridong myeongching ilram* 新舊對照朝鮮全道府郡面里洞名稱一覽 (1917).

Reflecting this contesting aspect, Table 1 shows the change of the names, Galgeori and Nojang-ri in several records from the past up to the present. In the present day, the old name Galgeori of rich tradition has become a small and shabby place name belonging to Nojang-ri as the official place name. On the other hand, the name, Nojang-ri, of shorter history than Galgeori has grown bigger, and was finally divided into three villages; Sang-Nojang (上蘆長), Jung-Nojang (中蘆長), and Ha-Nojang (下蘆長). Behind the growth of the place name written in Chinese characters (K. *banja jimyeong* 漢字地名) and the decline of the native place name (K. *goyu jimyeong* 固有地名), the diverse power relations between each different group of social subjects are veiled.

In the late Joseon Period, the *sajok* had formed numerous hereditary “lineage villages.” In most cases, they named their villages using place names—such as Confucian place names—written in Chinese characters. Their method of naming was generally to transcribe a Korean native place name into a Chinese place name through a loan transcription with the same meaning (K. *buncha pyogi* 訓借表記) of a certain letter. On the other side, the subjugated classes had formed ordinary villages and hamlets called Gakseongbaji (各姓마지). Gakseongbaji literally means “the village where all sorts of people live together.” They named their places with a native place name or a place name which was written through the loan transcription by a similar phoneme (K. *eumcha pyogi* 音借表記) of a certain letter.

Galgeori is a place name representing the physical, mountainous features in the area,<sup>5</sup> and was written through a loan transcription with a similar phoneme. Also, it is the hamlet of Gakseongbaji where six households now live. Galgeori had been formed by the lower classes. In contrast, Nojang is a place name which was formed later and was named by a lineage group, the Kwons of Andong. About fifty households now live in Nojang, and half of them are the Kwons of Andong.

The people who lived in Nojang possessed higher social status and stronger social power than those who lived in Galgeori; the Galgeori residents were a comparatively marginalized social group. For that reason, Galgeori’s social-linguistic status of representing that area had gradually become more circumscribed. In addition, the Kwons of Andong had

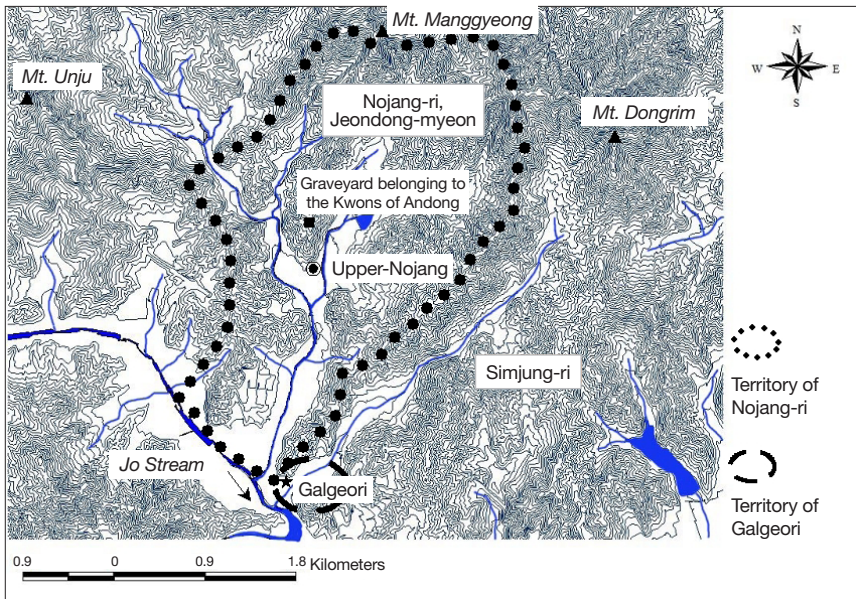
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5. For detailed explanations, see Kim (2009:176-177).

positively and intensively identified with the legend of the reed (K. *no* 蘆) related to their ancestor. Therefore, they had preferred to write and speak of Nojang (蘆長) when representing their own territory and territorial identity rather than using Galgeori, a purely native place name which seemed to be vulgar and inferior.<sup>6</sup>

Consequently, the Kwons of Andong as well as the *sajok* had included the name Nojang within their place name's territory, while excluding use of the name Galgeori for their territory (See Figure 1). This was mostly because of the preference for and identification with the name Nojang.

Figure 1. Geographical features and place names' territory around Nojang-ri and Galgeori at the present day



6. See *Andong Kwonssi Chumilgongpa Daebo (Cheon)* 安東權氏樞密公派大譜 (天) (1961) (Genealogy of the Kwons of Andong). Interviewees: Kwon Soon-Baek (Male, 67 years old), Mok Soon-Kyeong (Female, 74 years old), Kwon Cheo-Sang (Male, 75 years old) and others. (Interview date: 2008.8.19; interview sites: Nojang-ri and Cheongsong-ri in Jeondong-myeon, South Chungcheong province's Yeongi-gun).

## *Forcible Alteration of Place Names by Power*

Place names can be forcibly changed as a result of the social power relations between the residents in a village. Such a case can be found in Sojeonri (所田里), Daejeon city. That is, the dominant social subject (the Songs of Eunjin 恩津宋氏) had forcibly altered the place name of Hasojeon (Lower-Sojeon 下所田) where they had originally lived, into the name Sangsojeon (Upper-Sojeon 上所田), where the people of the lower classes had lived since early times.

Sojeonri (所田里) had been composed of two villages of Sangsojeon (Haso-dong as the present administrative district) and Hasojeon (currently Sangso-dong) that were named to refer to the “altitude” of villages (Figure 2).<sup>7</sup> At that time, the Songs of Eunjin formed a lineage village downriver at Hasojeon, and the lower classes lived in Sangsojeon which is located upriver of Daejeon Stream (K. *Daejeoncheon* 大田川).<sup>8</sup>

Later, the place name of Hasojeon began to be experienced as disgusting and caused disidentification by the Songs of Eunjin because they perceived that the letter Ha 下 (under or lower) was not suitable to their high social status. Therefore, they compelled the lower classes that lived in Sangsojeon to accept the new naming criterion of “Seoul” (the capital of Korea) instead of the “altitude” of the village. Incidentally, Seoul is located to the north of Sojeonri, so Sangsojeon accidentally became a lower site than Hasojeon by the new criterion, i.e., the location of Seoul.<sup>9</sup>

By that means, the Songs of Eunjin forcibly stole the place name

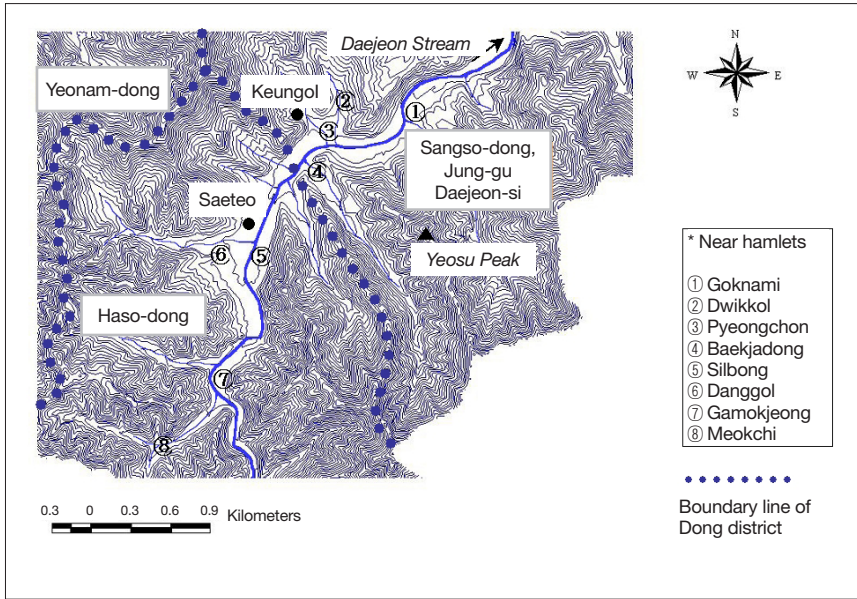
7. The records related to divisions of the village. Sojeonri is identified in *Gubanguk jibang haengjeong guyeok myeongching ilram* 舊韓國地方行政區域名稱一覽 (1912). That is to say, Sojeonri was consistently registered in *Yeoji doseo* 輿地圖書 (1757-1765) to *Daedongyeoji do* 大東輿地圖 (1861). Dividing Sojeonri into Sangsojeon and Hasojeon seemed to occur after the mid-nineteenth century. Then, the effect of the division of the villages finally came to be registered at *Gubanguk jibang haengjeong guyeok myeongching ilram* issued in the early twentieth century (Table 1).

8. The case of division of village in Sojeonri, as Jeong (1999:486) asserted, reflects certain power relations or conflict between village members rather than resulting from enlargement of the size of the village. This corresponds to a type of division into *sajok*-village (班村) and commoner-village (民村).

9. Kim Jong-Bae (Male, 79 years old), Han Ok-Rye (Female, 91 years old), and others participated in interviews carried out at Keungol, Pyeongchon, Baekjadong in Sangso-dong. Also, Lee Byeong-Woo (Male, 68 years old), Lim Chun-Dong (Male, 66 years old) and others were interviewed near Saeter and Silbong in Haso-dong, Daejeon-si.

called Sangsojeon from the lower classes between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. They have currently identified with and preferred Sangsojeon (Upper Sojeon) as a medium representing their own territory, territorial identity, and social status until now.

Figure 2. Geographical features and place names around Sangso-dong and Haso-dong at the present time



### *Resistance to and Transgression of the Weakened Native Place Name*

Mikkuji (K. 미꾸지), Miho (美湖), and Yangindong (養仁洞) are appropriate examples of a weakened native place name (Mikkuji) being subjugated in the process of competing against the dominant Confucian place name, Yangindong 養仁洞 or Yeyang-ri 禮養里 as the official place name derived from Yangindong. It subsequently resisted Yangindong by transforming itself into Miho (美湖). In the end, Miho has transgressed the other place name's territory so that it is currently used as the contesting place name of the name Tapyeon-ri in Cheongwon County.

Mikkuji (미꾸지) in Yeongi County, South Chungcheong province is now a small hamlet belonging to Yeyang-ri, the official administrative

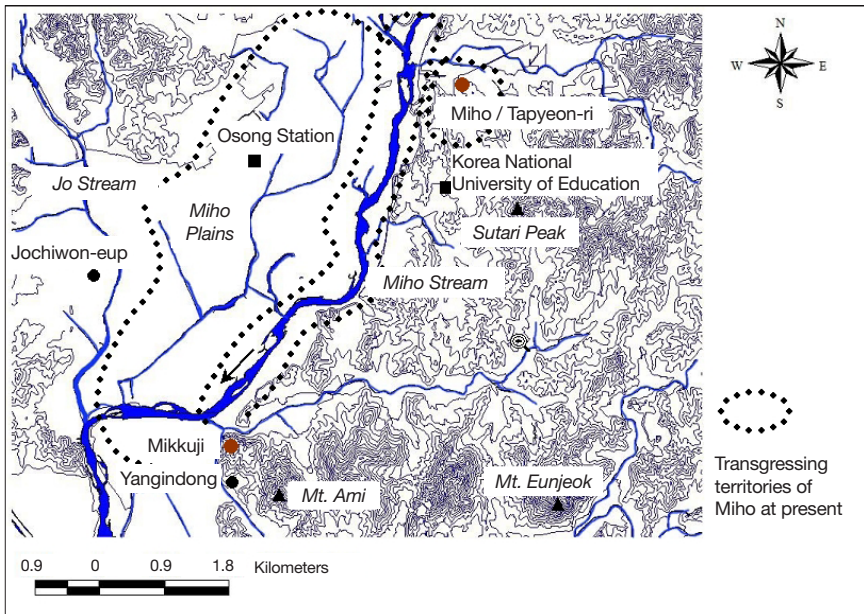


transcribed from the Korean Mikkuji (미꾸지) into Chinese characters. As the transformed place name of Mikkuji, Miho began to be frequently recorded beginning in the early twentieth century during the Japanese Colonial Period, as seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Records of Mihojin and Mihocheon (left), and Landscape around Mikkuji (right)



Figure 5. Place names' territories of Mikkuji and Miho (美湖)



Moreover, the names of Miho Plains (美湖平野) and Miho Stream (美湖川)

using “Miho” as the forepart morpheme of the place name (K. *jeonbu jimyeongso* 前部 地名素) appeared after the early twentieth century. Then, the place name Miho’s territory was largely expanded from the original small territory of Mikkuji. Furthermore, its territory eventually transgressed the other place name’s territory, i.e., nearby Tapyeon-ri in Cheongwon County near, so that Miho has been actively used as the contesting place name of Tapyeon-ri by some residents in Cheongwon County (Figure 5).<sup>11</sup>

## Place Names Representing Identity and the Construction of Territoriality

In this section, I intend to examine the place names representing territorial identity as well as constructing their territoriality by social subjects. The dominant social subjects, especially *sajok* in the late Joseon Period, have possessed powerful territoriality, that is, the capacity to control and enlarge their territory and identity. By producing place names which represent their territorial identity and ideology, and replacing existing place names with Confucian place names, they have been consolidating their territoriality.

First of all, the case study which I researched is concerned with the fact that territoriality was constructed by conferring ideological place names. These sorts of place names have clearly strengthened the Confucian ideology related to the dominant social subjects inside and outside their territory since the late Joseon Period. Through conferring these ideological place names, they have planned to externally represent their territorial identity and distinguished territoriality in perpetuity.

### *Construction of Territoriality by Ideological Naming*

There were a few occasions on which a king bestowed an ideological

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11. The residents currently living in Tapyeon-ri, North Chungcheong province’s Cheongwon County, have been familiarly calling their dwelling place “Miho 美湖” with “Tapyeon-ri” in their daily lives, for example “Miho middle school,” “Miho Samgeori,” “Miho Bangakkan,” “Miho Gagujeom,” “Miho Garden,” and so on. Ironically, “Miho” is a place name derived from Mikkuji which is situated 6km away from Tapyeon-ri.

place name on a village where the residents were instilled with a sense of loyalty and filial piety, namely the special grant of place names from the king (K. *jimyeong teuksa* 地名特賜) in the late Joseon period. Through the process of specially granting certain place names, the kings and governing classes could diffuse their ruling ideology known as Confucianism. Simultaneously, the dominant social subject who was granted this special place name could display their own Confucian ideology and noble territorial identity in and out of their territory. As a consequence of this process, the territoriality of the dominant social subject such as *sajok* has been consolidated and expanded around this neighborhood. Regarding this point, I need to introduce two cases related to the special grant of place names from the king: Hyogyodong (孝橋洞) and Inyang-ri (仁良里).

Table 2. Changes in place names: Hyogyodong, Maryong, and Inyang

Place names	<i>Yeoji</i> 輿地 (1757-1765)	<i>Hogu</i> 戶口 (1789)	<i>Guhan</i> 舊韓 (1912)	<i>Singu</i> 新舊 (1917)	Present records	Remarks
Hyogyo dong (Manggol)		孝橋 Hyogyo	孝橋里 Hyogyori		孝橋, Manggol, Makeungol [Giryong-ri, Seo- myeon, Yeongi-gun]	
Maryong	馬龍里 Maryongri 下馬龍里 Hamaryongri	馬龍里			Manggol [Giryong-ri]	*馬龍洞>孝橋 (1773)
Inyang (Badateo)		仁良里 Inyangri	仁良里	仁良里	仁良, Badater, Barateo, Haedae (海岱), 仁良里 [Cheongnam- myeon, Cheongyang-gun]	*Badateo>仁良里 Badateo (1787)

Hyogyodong (孝橋洞), a case related to ideological naming, is located in Yeongi County, South Chungcheong province. The place name, Hyogyo (孝橋) was the ideological place name specially granted in honor of the filial piety for five generations of the Hongs of Namyang in 1773, in the reign of King Yeongjo. Hyogyo is a typical Confucian place name which literally means “the bridge of filial piety.” Through this Confucian place name, the dominant classes attempted to spread their zeitgeist and ruling ideology known as Confucianism. To commemorate this fact, the Hongs of Namyang as *sajok* erected the stone monument of Hyogyo (K.

*Hyogyobi* 孝橋碑) near their lineage village (Figure 6).<sup>12</sup>

Figure 6. Landscape around the stone monument of Hyogyo (left) and the front of monument (right)



Meanwhile, Hyogyodong has a contesting place name, namely Manggol, which may be related to Maryongdong (馬龍洞). See Table 2 for identifying the sequence of changes of the place name. Maryongdong was the original place name which existed prior to the granting of Hyogyodong to this neighborhood.

Since the name Hyogyodong was bestowed, it has been actively used and identified under the care of the Hongs of Namyang.<sup>13</sup> According to these historical facts, such as the filial piety for several generations, the special grant of the place name, Hyogyo, and the erection of the stone monument, the Hongs of Namyang could both display their own Confucian ideology outside their territory and consolidate their territoriality and territorial identity.

12. On the monument is carved the fact that King Yeongjo (r. 1724-1776) specially granted the place name, Hyogyo 孝橋, in order to commemorate the filial piety of the Hongs of Namyang in the stone monument of Hyogyo 孝橋碑 (“南陽洪氏世以孝傳故 英廟四十九年壬辰特賜改洞名”). The existence of the Hyogyo monument exemplifies a particular way to transform an existing native place name (Manggol or Maryongdong) into a Confucian place name (Hyogyo) in order to propagate Confucianism, i.e. the dominant ideology, and to civilize people through this means in the late Joseon period.

13. Interviewees: Hong Cheon-Sik (Male, 45), Hong Seong-Uk (Male, 50) and others. (Interview date: 2008.8.12-14; interview sites: Giryong-ri and Sindae-ri in Seo-myeon, South Chungcheong province's Yeongi-gun).

Inyang-ri (仁良里) is another case of the territoriality of a specific *sajok* being constructed by ideological naming in the late Joseon period. Inyang-ri is located in Cheongyang County, South Chungcheong province. Officially commemorating the filial piety for two generations of the Hans of Cheongju, the place name Inyang (仁良) was specially granted in 1787, during the reign of King Jeongjo (Table 2).<sup>14</sup> Inyang is a typical Confucian place name which literally means “humaneness.” By choosing this Confucian place name, the governing classes attempted to externally spread their ruling ideology, Confucianism.

Nowadays, Inyang-ri has a contesting place name, i.e. Badateo (K. *Haedae* 海岱) which literally means “the site of the sea.” It represents the low floodplain near the river. However, Inyang-ri rather than Badateo has not only been used as the official administrative place name, but also been currently identified and preferred by members of the local community, especially the Hans of Cheongju.

Since Inyang-ri was named, this place name has been actively used and identified under the care of the Hans of Cheongju.<sup>15</sup> Perceiving that Inyang-ri corresponds to their Confucian ideal and this “noble” place name was granted by a king, makes the strong identification with the name Inyang-ri by the Hans of Cheongju possible. Inyang-ri has internally regulated the act of the members of the lineage group, the Hans of Cheongju, while at the same time externally displaying their “noble” social status and authority as both a container of, and medium for spreading, Confucian ideology. Consequently, this Confucian place name, Inyang-ri, has represented and consolidated the *sajok*'s territoriality and territorial identity into the present era.

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14. The facts related to the filial piety of the Hans of Cheongju were reported at the Royal Court 朝廷 by the Secret Royal Inspector (K. *ambaeng eosa* 暗行御史), Sim Hwan-Ji (1730-1802). As a result, King Jeongjo (r. 1776-1800) allowed them to change the place name of their village, from Badateo to Inyang-ri (仁良里) in 1787 [*Joseon wangjo sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄 (Annals of the Joseon Dynasty) 4/8/1787; *Seungjeongwon ilgi* 承政院日記 (Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat) 4/8/1787]. Also, the fact of their filial piety was registered at *Cheonpo hyoja jo* 薦褒孝子條 (the article related to recommendation and commemoration for a pious son) in *Joseon bwanyeo seungram* 朝鮮褒興勝覽 (1929) (“韓箕宗...賜改其村名曰仁良”).

15. “Inyang-ri” has been frequently used as the official place name in all sorts of old documents, such as Documents for the sale of the property (K. *toji maemae munseo* 土地賣買文書), Documents related to pawning (K. *jeondang mungi* 典當文記), and Household lists (K. *hogu danja* 戶口單子) ever since it was named in 1787.

## *Construction of Territoriality by the Production of Place Names Representing Territorial Identity*

There are some cases related to the fact that territoriality has been constructed by producing special place names representing the territorial identity of the dominant social subjects. Additionally, these cases are based on the fact that the place names have been effective in dividing the territory of the dominant social groups from that of others, and strengthen the territoriality of place occupied by them. Relating to these facts, I examined two *sajoks*' cases which relate to production of specific place names representing their territorial identity around their dwelling place: the Yuns of Papyeong, and the Hong of Namyang.

During the late Joseon period, the Yuns of Papyeong (坡平尹氏 魯宗五房派) in Noseong-hyeon and the Hong of Namyang (南陽洪氏 燕岐派) in Yeongi-hyeon held powerful social status and power in this county. They conferred numerous place names which represented their territorial identity and ideology, as well as those relating to the special events and legends of their lineage group.

For example, the Yuns of Papyeong in Noseong-hyeon have conferred special place names on locations around their settlements,<sup>16</sup> such as Deukyunri (得尹里), Eundong (尹洞), Sanjikmal (山直말), Nogang (魯岡), Byeongsa-ri (丙舍里), Jonghaktang (宗學堂), Hamabi (下馬碑), Yubong (酉峰), Nogye (魯溪), Daesan (大山), and Noseonpyeon (魯城岾) (Table 3).

Each place name closely relates to the important facts and legends of the Yuns of Papyeong: Deukyunri (得尹里) signifies the place where Yun Don 尹墩 (1519-1577), the ancestor of the Yuns of Papyeong, first immigrated to in Noseong-hyeon 魯城縣; Eundong (尹洞) where the large lineage village of the Yuns of Papyeong is located; Sanjikmal (山直말), Daesan (大山), and Byeongsa-ri (丙舍里) where the boundaries of their ancestors' graves and pavilions for purification (or ancestral shrines) are situated; Nogang (魯岡), Jonghaktang (宗學堂), and Noseonpyeon (魯城岾) where the private Confucian academy holding the memorial service for

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16. See *Nojong pabo* 魯宗派譜 (1829) (Genealogy of the Nojong clan in the Yuns of Papyeong). Lee (2000:335-343) suggested that Yun Don, the ancestor of the Yuns of Papyeong had immigrated to Deukyunri, Noseong-hyeon (then Nisan-hyeon 尼山縣) from Gyeonggi province's Paju 坡州 around 1564. However, concrete data confirming the date of immigration has yet to be identified.

their famous ancestors or family schoolhouse (K. *munjung seodang*, 門中書堂) were established.

Table 3. Changes in place names closely associated with the Yuns of Papyeong

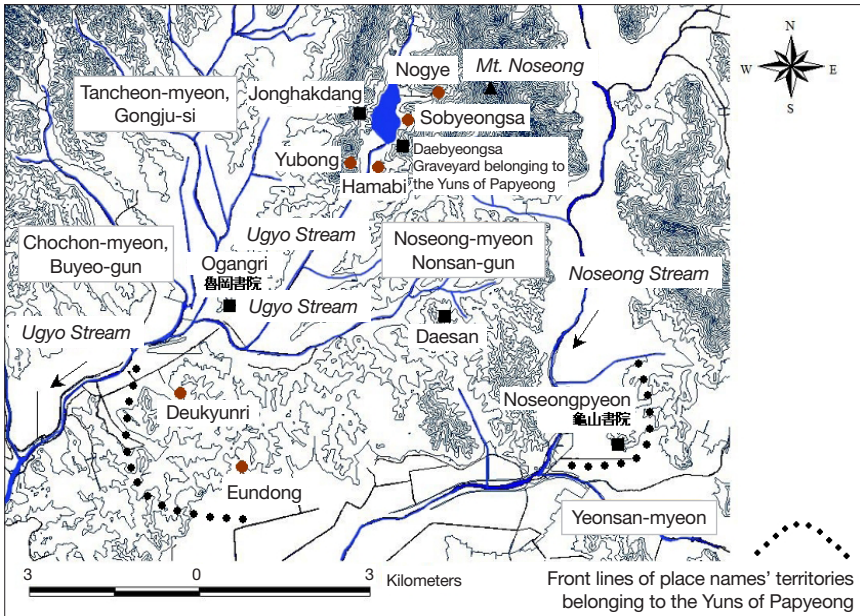
Place names	Yeoji 興地 (1757-1765)	Hogu 戶口 (1789)	Dongyeo. Daedo.		Singu 新舊 (1917)	Present records	Remarks
			Daeji 東興, 大圖, 大志 (Mid-19th)	Guhan 舊韓 (1912)			
Deukyun	得尹面 Deukyun myeon 得尹里 Deukyunri	得尹面 得尹里	得尹面	得尹面 尹里 Yunri	得尹里	得尹, 得尹里, Deungsuso (登水所) [Gwangseok- myeon, Nonsan-si]	(得尹>尹>得尹)
Ogang	五岡里 Ogangri	五江里 Ogangri		五江里	五岡里	五岡, 五岡里 [Gwangseok- myeon]	(五岡>五江>五岡) *Place where 魯岡書院 (Nogang private Confucian academy) is located (五岡>魯岡)
Yubong	西峯里 Yubongri	酒峯里		西峯里		西峯 [Byeongsa-ri, Noseong-Myeon, (西>酒>西) Nonsan-si]	
Byeongsa	丙舍里 Byeong sari	丙舍里		大丙里 Daebyeongri 小丙里 Sobyeongri	丙舍里	丙舍, 丙舍里 [Noseong-Myeon]	
Nogye		魯溪里 Nogyeri		魯溪里		Jeunggol, 魯溪里 [Gagok-ri, Noseong-myeon]	
Ogumi (Noori)	五丘山里 Ogusanri	五岳山里 Ogusanri		魯五里 Noori		Ogumi, Ogusan (鰲龜山), 梧山 (Osan), 龜山 (Gusan) [Osan-ri, Yeonsan-myeon]	(五丘>五岳>魯五> 鰲龜, 梧) *Place where 龜山書院 (Gusan private Confucian academy[’s]) ruin was located]

As a result, as observed in Figure 7, place names named by the Yuns of Papyeong are diffused around Daebyeongsa (大丙舍) as the center, forming the front lines of their place names' territories against other territories. These place names, which the members of the Yuns of Papyeong have named, enabled their own territoriality controlling their living areas to effectively construct and to strengthen their territorial identity.

Similarly to the Yuns of Papyeong in Noseong-hyeon, the members of the Honggs of Namyang have also produced their own place names.

The Honggs of Namyang (南陽洪氏 燕岐派) have been producing a significant number of place names connected with their lives, historical facts, or legends around their dwelling places, namely Hwadong (禾洞), Hyogyodong (孝橋洞), Heondaе (憲垞), Simyodong (侍墓洞), Bonggang (鳳崗), Udeok (友德), Sindae (新垞), Haengjeong (杏亭), Jeondanggol (錢塘哥), Seongjae (性齋), Seodanggol (書堂哥) and so forth (Table 4).<sup>17</sup>

Figure 7. Distribution and territory of the place names related to the Yuns of Papyeong at present



All these place names also relate to the significant facts about and legends of the Honggs of Namyang, for example: Hwadong (禾洞) where Hong Sun-Son 洪順孫, the grandson of Yu Seon 俞善 (1423-1501) who had first immigrated to Yeongi-hyeon as the Yus of Gigye, first dwelled at Yeongi-hyeon; Hyogyodong (孝橋洞) related to the filial piety of the Honggs of Namyang; Simyodong (侍墓洞) where three brothers in the Honggs of Namyang mourned at the graves of their parents once upon a time;

17. See *Gongjudae bangmulgwan* (1998:119-126) and *Jochiwon munbuwawon* (2007:105-128) for more detailed explanations.

and Seodanggol (書堂골) where the family schoolhouse belonging to the Hong of Namyang is located.

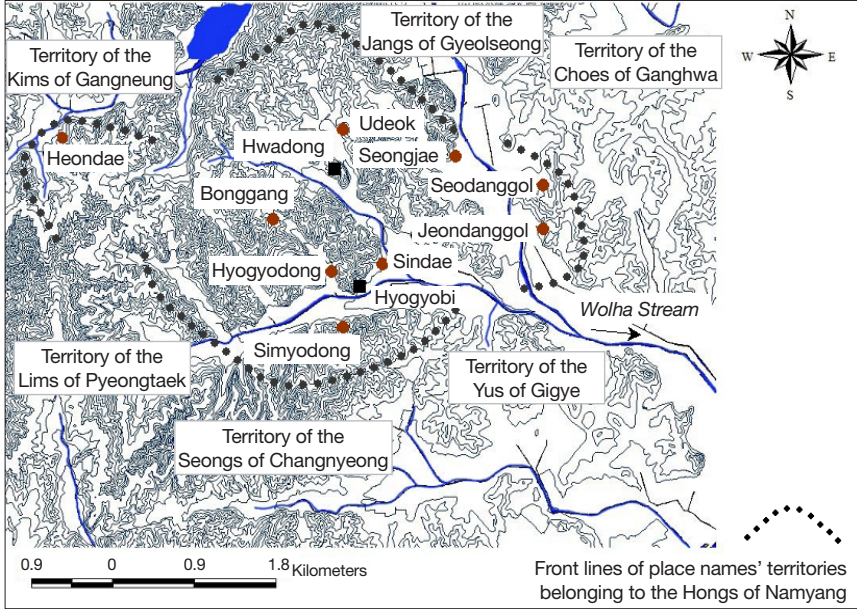
Table 4. Changes of the place names closely associated with the Hong of Namyang

Place names	Yeoji 輿地 (1757-1765)	Hogu 戶口 (1789)	Guhan 舊韓 (1912)	Singu 新舊 (1917)	Present records	Remarks
Hyogyo dong (Manggol)		孝橋 Hyogyo	孝橋里 Hyogyori		孝橋, Manggol, Makeungol [Giryong-ri, Seo-myeon, Yeongi-gun]	
Heonteo (Mangbuk)	憲垚里 Heondaeri		望北里 Mangbukri		Heonteo, 獻垚, Mangbuk, Eumjinteo [Cheongra-ri, Seo-myeon]	(憲垚>望北) (憲>獻)
Udeok		友德里 Udeokri	友德里		友德, Buldanggol [Sindae-ri, Seo- myeon]	
Sukgol	和同里 Hwadongri	和同里	禾洞里 Hwadongri		Sukgol, 禾洞 [Sindae-ri]	(和)禾)
Saeteomal			新垚里 Sindaeri	新垚里	Saeteomal, 新垚里 [Seo-myeon]	
Salgu jeongi	杏亭里 Haengjeonri		杏花里 Haehwari		Salgujeongi, 杏亭 [Sindae-ri]	(亭>花>亭)
Jeondang gol		錢塘里 Jeon dangri	錢塘里		Jeondanggol, 錢塘 [Ssangjeon-ri Seo-myeon]	*Place name origi- nated from Jeondang (錢塘), the old nickname of Hangzhou (杭州), Zhejiang in China
Seongjae (Seong jakgol)	性齋洞里 Seongjae dongri	性齋里 Seong jaeri		性齋里	Seongjee, Seongjakgol, Domaek, 性齋里 [Seo-myeon]	(齋>齊)

The place names chosen by the Hong of Namyang are distributed around Hwadong (禾洞) where the graves of their important ancestors are located, as a stronghold or key position of their existence (Figure 8). Forming the front lines or boundaries of their place names' territories against the other *sajoks'* territories, such as the territories of the Kims of Gangreung, the Jangs of Gyeolseong, the Choes of Ganghwa, the Lims of Pyeongtaek, and the Yus of Gigyae, these place names have functioned as the paths through which their own territoriality and territorial identity

have been constantly strengthened until now.

Figure 8. Distribution and territory of the place names related to the Honggs of Namyang at present



Consequently, the territoriality and territorial identity of the dominant social subjects has been constructed and reinforced through the process of producing the place names in standard ways, such as the Confucian, reflecting the contemporary dominant ideology and identity. Particularly, these place names have not only been dividing the territory of the self, i.e., the dominant social subject (*sajok*) from the other, such as the lower classes or the other contesting *sajok*, but also consolidating territoriality and the territorial identity of the places occupied by them.

## Conclusion

If human beings hope to prove their territorial claims over an easily identifiable and distinguishable area, their immediate task is to name it, in their own fashion. This empirical thought is possible with “naming” which represents the concrete shape of space. In this context, place names inscribe shape and contour on the existence around the space.

Furthermore, place names can distinguish the self from the other and indicate that.

The indicating and distinguishing function of place names could be further extended to the level which represents and constitutes the identity and ideology of the social subjects and groups. This aspect is related to the cultural politics which is concerned with the conflict and contestation among different social subjects over the meaning and meaning production of place names.

The territory of place names is contested and transformed by power relations (territorial contestation). Power relations involved in inclusion and exclusion are necessarily concerned with the process of constructing a place identity or territorial identity by means of a place name, which represents the identity and ideology of a social subject. Specific social subjects make use of place names as the medium and means of practicing power, so that the place names can form a definite territory and contest against the other's territory.

The contestation among different territories of place names strengthens the territoriality that the dominant social subjects use to control and enlarge their identity. Then the territoriality of social subjects can proceed to the stage of territorialization, wherein identity within territory is expanded into the exterior territory (Sack 1986:216). In these processes it is necessary to take the theory of Bakhtin's centripetal (attempting to unify and standardize the spellings and letters used in place names) and centrifugal force (offering resistance and diversifying the place names) on language or place names into consideration.

This paper aims to examine the cultural politics of place names in Korea, focusing on the agency of identity, ideology, power and territory. For this examination, I have detailed the process of cultural politics over place names. A social group identity forcibly includes the other social group's identity within its own territory, while excluding the other from its own territory.

The field work, aided by the written documents and interviews, unveiled an historical-geographical process by which contestation among the territories of place names resulted in both the growth of territoriality for dominant social groups and the consolidation of their own territorial identities. Particularly, during the Joseon period, the dominant group known as *sajok* of the *yangban* class possessed a capacity to control their own territory by means of practicing identity, ideology, and power in the

process of conferring specific place names.

As a substantial part of this paper, I made progress with two themes. The first section of this paper analyzed the formation and contestation of the territory of place names. As a result, I have identified the diverse paths in which place names' territories were formed and differentiated, or deviated and transgressed. The first case is that of Galgeori and Nojang-ri. Conferring a place name written in Chinese characters, Nojang, which reflects the territorial identity of social subjects (the Kwons of Andong), they have driven the existing native place name (Galgeori) out of their territory. Another case is the example in which the names Hasojeon (Lower-Sojeon) and Sansojeon (Upper-Sojeon) were reversed with each other. The dominant social subject (the Songs of Eunjin) had forcibly altered the place name from Hasojeon (Lower-Sojeon) to Sangsojeon (Upper-Sojeon). The place names in the last case are Mikkuji, Miho, and Yangindong, in which the weakened native place name (Mikkuji) was defeated in the contestation against the dominant Confucian place name (Yangindong), and then, having resisted Yangindong, transformed itself into Miho (美湖), and finally transgressed other's territory. As a result, the territory of Miho is greatly expanded.

The second section analyzed the place names' representation of identity as well as the construction of territoriality. By both producing the place names representing their territorial identity and ideology, and replacing the existing place names with their preferred place names, the dominant social subjects have strengthened their territoriality and territorial identity. First of all, I have investigated the cases in which territoriality was constructed by conferring ideological place names. These place names evinced the Confucian ideology of the specific social subject outside their territory, and strengthened their distinguishable territoriality and territorial identity. For example, the special grant of place names from the king, i.e., Hyogyodong and Inyang-ri exemplify this case.

Next, I have examined the cases in which territoriality has been constructed by producing the place names representing territorial identity. For example, the Yuns of Papyeong and the Honges of Namyang have been promulgating many place names connected with their lives, historical facts, or legends surrounding their dwelling places. Consequently, the territoriality and territorial identity of the dominant social subjects have been constructed and reinforced through the process of producing the lineage-related place names under the standard Confucian ways.

Through performing a cultural-political study of Korean place names, I have identified that the differences of cognition of place names by common people have had a strong influence on the transformation of Korean place names. In this sense, it is important to consider, “Who is the subject producing and using place names?”, “How does one recognize a sequence of place names, especially as to their intention?” In this viewpoint, I largely divide the “who” and “subject” into “educated person” and “uneducated person.”

In contrast to uneducated persons—i.e. the producers of material, such as farmers, fishermen, manual workers—educated persons such as *sajok*, bureaucrats, politicians, monks, and feng shui experts, are usually the producers of ideas, under Korean circumstances. They are enculturating certain place names and giving the place name a special meaning. In addition, they have produced the records and documents of place names written in Chinese characters or Hangeul. Throughout these processes, they have enforced specific social power relations and cultural politics, and have produced standardized “centripetal place names” similar to their own tendency of knowledge.

With the hybridity contained in the geo-political location of the Korean peninsula as a borderland or a buffer zone, the centripetal or centrifugal place names that many social subjects have differently conferred have formed the plurality, diversity, and, especially, contesting cultural-political features in Korean place names.

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## **Abstract**

The geopolitical location of the Korean peninsula is often considered to be a borderland or a buffer zone, providing conditions for the dynamics of cultural diversity and power struggles throughout its long history. In addition, the historical separation of the written (Chinese) language from the spoken (Korean) language in daily life has produced numerous examples of overlapping place names that identify the same site concurrently. Study of this unique situation within which Korean place names lie is thought to be better suited to the perspective of cultural politics. In this context, this paper aims to examine diverse cases connected with cultural-political transformation behind Korean place names, focusing on the elements of ideology, identity, power, and territory. This examination details the process of cultural politics, wherein a social group would only include the self-identity within its own territory while excluding the other from its own territory. In particular, the field work, aided by written documents, unveils the history that the contestation or contention among the territories of place names ended with the growth of territoriality by a dominant social group in order to consolidate its own territorial identity.

**Keywords:** cultural politics, cultural geography, place names, contesting place names, territories of place names, territoriality, territorial identity