Korean Commercialism and Sense of Place:
A Case Study of Shin-chon Commercial District through Two Concepts of Walter Benjamin's Flâneur and Mimesis

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Abstract
This study explores the sense of place in contemporary commercial spaces in South Korean cities by analyzing Shin-chon, one of the major commercial districts located in Seoul. While studies of "place" have grown alongside critiques of modernism and have played a significant role in fostering better understandings of built environments in the last few decades, the discourses of sense of place within dynamically changing metropolis remain relatively unexamined. Despite many criticisms of the distracting and placeless aspects of contemporary Korean cities, these aspects also reveal localized commercialisms, privatized public spaces, and material representations in everyday life. Advertisements are here perceived as the mode of communication and medium through which one can construct sense of place according to what one experiences. Signboards are the vehicles that reflect this psychological process. Through the application of Walter Benjamin's two concepts – flâneur and mimesis – this paper will discuss how the theory of signboards in everyday life is formulated, and how Shin-chon can be interpreted as a place where people find sense of place without being alienated from the built environment.

Keywords: Korean Commercialism; sense of place; Shin-chon; Walter Benjamin; flâneur; mimesis

1. Introduction
"Sense of place" means "identity of place," or the physical and spiritual qualities of place in which one can find his/her identity without being disoriented from the environment to which they belong. The studies of place emerged after the failure of modernism around the mid-20th century, and have continued to combat the homogenized and alienated built environment by creating alternative theoretical discourses and practices. Those studies seek to go beyond the formal, empirical, and quantitative studies of built environment and architecture, instead focusing on identifying their qualitative aspects as well as articulating the relationship between the human being and natural environment. Deeply indebted to the discourses of "phenomenology," which concentrate on defining the relationship between the subject and the object through the notion of sensory experience, "place" studies sought to grasp "the mythic power and poetic dimension in society" and tended to develop into studies of regional identities, ethnic diversities, and home cultures in areas worldwide. Notable concepts that have emerged from place studies include "Genius Loci," "Sense of Place," and "Critical Regionalism."

What have, however, been left comparably untouched are the studies of sense of place in contemporary cities and "metropolis." Although the growth of cities fostered the alienation of urban life as the 20th-century modernism ended in a failure, it has also allowed people to familiarize themselves with a vividly changing built environment. What is also found is that people now tend to feel accustomed to the highly complicated urban environments. Identifying oneself is now inseparable from the everyday urban life, and this is the very porous realm that studies of place have not yet explored.

With this in mind, this analysis offers a case study: how Korean cities can be perceived as places where one can build his/her identity without being alienated in the commercialized everyday life-world. By doing so, this study formulates a theoretical perspective on sense of place in contemporary Korean and East-Asian cities where "signboards" are part of the dominant urban landscape. Utilizing two concepts of Walter Benjamin – flâneur and mimesis – the sense of place in Shin-chon is articulated. What is specifically analyzed is: how small-scale signboards in Shin-chon...
can help one feel a sense of place with the near built environment.

2. Korean Commercialism and the Idea of Place
2.1 Small-scale Korean Commercialism and East Asian Modernism

Small-scale Korean commercialism is defined as a peculiar urban phenomenon that is composed of a set of local commercial activities, which arose with the country's rapid modernization in the 1960s. Contrary to the state-oriented large-scale economic activities, the main participants of small-scale commercialism are individual local shopkeepers and the public who do business with them. This Korean commercialism is often represented by the hustle and bustle of streets where numerous small signs dominate the urban landscape. Throughout the chaotic and unorganized modernization of the country after the Korean War (1950 – 1953), commercial zones were loosely designated by planners and government; what followed were individual shopkeepers' unrestricted commercial activities, and governmental regulation had little or no effect on them.

Korean commercial districts are usually composed of pedestrian streets, small-scale commercial and residential buildings with small lots, and multiple signboards upon those buildings. Whereas American shopping malls tend to be made of a single large mass, shopping areas in Korea are usually made of congested low-level commercial buildings and fragmentary urban fabrics (ranging from 130 to 330 square meters). Critics of the Korean urban phenomenon often cite the disappearance of a sense of place, asserting that one can hardly find his/her relationship within everyday commercial spaces in Korea.

Although Korean commercialism is a specific urban phenomenon that needs to be understood primarily through the local, cultural and urban history, it has nevertheless a commonality among near regions: the culture and city in an East-Asian continent. A city like Seoul is often categorized as an emerging metropolis, with other cities such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore, Beijing, and Shanghai, all of which went through rapid modernizations in past decades. Historian Eric Hobsbawm finds the context of these urban phenomena in East-Asian countries through the notion of 'Third World' (1994).

What is secondly discussed is Benjamin's idea of mimesis, which will help us to understand the deeper implications of signboards through a dissection of text and image. In the essay 'Doctrine of the Similar' (1933), Benjamin explains that mimesis, or mimetic
faculty, has "the very highest capability to produce similarities." Mimesis is distinguished from imitation, in that the former has always existed as a form of language similarly corresponding to the textures of everyday life, whereas the latter is no more than a superficial copy of the precedents. Reinterpreting Benjamin's concept of mimesis, Neil Leach (2006) argues that mimesis is "a constructive reinterpretation of an original, which becomes a creative act in itself."

Korean commercial signboards reflect the idea of mimesis, in that it exhibits the public's desire for consumption and its emancipatory function in material and linguistic forms. Language is particularly crucial to Benjamin. It is the constellation of collective memories made of similarities, which he considers as the repository of mimetic faculty — the collective unconscious. Benjamin's conception of collective unconscious, initially advocated by psychoanalyst C. G. Jung, not only reverberates to the Jungian idea of archetype (the content of the collective unconscious) within the personal psychic level, but the realization of mythic power in the present society of material culture. In Dialectic of Seeing (1991), Susan Buck-Morss explains the implications of advertisements through a Benjaminian notion: "on an unconscious dream level, the new urban-industrial world had become fully re-enchanted." It is imperative to recognize that the concealed mythic power of advertisements can also be emergent in the present industrial society, and its mechanism is based on mimesis: the system of objects that reproduce similarities through the revitalized unconscious of the collective.

It might be argued that what Walter Benjamin sought with these two concepts — flâneur and mimesis — is to grasp the dialectical moment in the ever-changing urban phenomenon through which one can construct his/her identity within the present moment. The 19th-century arcades in Paris were therefore the field of everyday life where he could achieve his goals. Although Benjamin did not specifically discuss the sense of place of the arcades, it is evident that he did consider advertisements and signs as the significant medium through which one can construct a sense of attachment to what one experiences.

While Benjamin was the pioneer who conducted the psychoanalytic studies of urban life in the late 19th and early 20th century European context, it is imperative to examine how his ideas have developed and been applied to the studies of Korean and East-Asian urbanism. Kwang-Hyun Kim is one of a few scholars who have sought to find a sense of place in Korean cities. In the article "Thin History and the Place of City" (2007), he questions how we can conceive of the meaning of the urban experience in the contemporary city of Seoul. Although the formulation of his idea of place was initially indebted to scholars such as C. N. Shulz, Edward Relph, and Kenneth Frampton, all of whom have extensively written on the issue of place, he confesses that we really need a new perspective in order to examine the meaning of place in a highly complex metropolis like Seoul, where the residues of past memories keep disappearing and are substituted by indiscriminate developments; this definitely resonates with Benjamin's interpretation of arcades. He argues that Korean people now can find their identities through the experience of 24-hour open street shops (Pyuneuljum in Korean), which are rarely perceived as authentic places representing Korea but dominant everyday spaces.

3. A Case Study of Shin-chon Commercial District
3.1 The Physical Characters of Shin-chon
Shin-chon is one of the most populated commercial districts in Seoul and has been the most disputed place in Korean urban history since the 1990s, especially because of the way its commercial activities dominate the entire region. In the Korean Marketing Newspaper (2004), Shin-chon is best described as having a "... daily in-and-out population about 150,000 – 200,000, and more than half of the population is comprised of the twenties because there are many universities. The main services in Shin-chon are restaurants, pubs, karaoke-bars, pc-rooms, and others, and the place becomes full of people after six p.m., which is the time when university-students begin to leave schools. The time between six and eleven p.m. is the busiest period with people, and the ratio between men and women is found similar."

The spatial distribution of commercial shops in Shin-chon is overlapped with residential areas that surround them. Many buildings in Shin-chon are three to five stories tall, compactly abutting the pedestrian/automobile streets, which result in a bleak exterior space that looks like an interior at the same time. Although there is a functional distinction between pedestrian streets and automobile roads, it is often ignored by mixed use in everyday commercial practice. Bazaar-like pedestrian streets are the most dominant elements that characterize the mode of urban and architectural experience.
3.2 Two Perspectives on Shin-chon

Besides the physical characteristics of Shin-chon, what make this region quite interesting and controversial are the spatial formation and its cultural relation in everyday life: a mixture between 'University-town' (of three major universities that have 43,047 students) and 'entertainment place', which is a rare case even in the country. Critical analyses of Shin-chon accordingly highlight a conflict between two different perspectives, which interpret Shin-chon's consumption culture in both positive and negative ways.

What is most evident in evaluations of Shin-chon are the vigorous criticisms towards it. Shin-chon is often described as "placeless," "distracting," "entertaining," "polluted," "absent of culture," and "corrupted," all of which criticize the overwhelming numbers of signboards, decayed night culture, and the highly congested shops within small buildings.

A student reporter in The Yonsei Annals, an English-based monthly student magazine at Yonsei University (June 2006), criticizes the absence of bookstores and satirizes the only remaining bookstore - Hongik Mungo-as "The last fortress, Acre of Shin-chon." Hyung-Chul Kim, a professor in the philosophy department at Yonsei University, likewise sees distracting signboards in Shin-chon as a severely corrupting presence and suggests a strategy for regulating those signboards' modes of existence (color, size, number, and content) through his moralistic view (1996).

Considering them as "wicked" or "treacherous," he suggests five administrative levels for controlling signboards and constructing a better society in Korea: for example, the absolute prohibition on excessive street advertisements, and conditional acceptance, controlled by the ministries officers with a regular supervision.

On the other hand, positive interpretations of Shin-chon see it as a place of everyday life for Korean people. In "Our Everyday Space, Into the Shin-chon," (1994) Hye-Jung Cho argues that understanding the culture of Shin-chon is critical since it inevitably represents everyday life in Korea's post-colonial and post-industrial society. As an anthropologist, she points out that Shin-chon is the very "field" where anthropologists need to find significant and predominant cultural aspects that are often ignored via their professionals.

In this sense, residing in Yonsei University, Cho seeks to find the elements by which she can construct the identity of contemporary Korean society. In the introduction, Cho begins with the question; "How do we define culture in relation to the issue of identity?" Culture is, to her, the consequence of two interactive forces – one as the overriding deterministic assets, which transcend time, and the other as a more concurrent participation and sometimes rebellion of the individual mind, which negates some part of it and creates the new fragments of culture.

In line with Cho's interpretation of Shin-chon, Paek similarly finds the meaning of urban experience and sense of place in Shin-chon (2006, 2008). In a place like Shin-chon, he argues that architecture cannot be perceived without recognizing the very mundane experience of its commercial settings that is represented by multiple signboards in the street. Signboards are here understood as the "textures" that decorate façades and urban landscape on one hand, and as "texts" that let one communicate with shopkeepers on the other. Low-level buildings and continuous pedestrian-based streets thus provide a cozy, enclosed space where one feels as if he/she is in an interior, as in the case of Benjamin's arcades. Signboards in Shin-chon are the medium that provides sense of belonging to the visitors, who might be otherwise disoriented, surrounded by autonomous, architectonic, or monumental symbols.

By reviewing two perspectives on Shin-chon, this paper can now articulate the relationship among consumption culture, urban experience, and sense of place in this region. Once commercial activities are acknowledged as part of cultural praxis, one can reconstruct an idea of culture that overcomes the dualistic notion separating high from low culture. Culture in Shin-chon should therefore not only include artistic practices, but everyday commercial activities such as buying food in markets, having coffees at cafés, singing songs at karaoke–bars.

Commercial buildings are thus the places where such activities occur, and signboards are the milieu that represents the everyday life in Shin-chon.
4. Three Approaches for Narrating Sense of Place in Shin-chon

4.1 A "Cognitive Mapping" of Shin-chon

In Shin-chon, commercial settings not merely dominate the way visitors experience the place, but allow them to make a meaningful relationship with what they confront through active involvement, which is prominently detected in "mapping." A map is usually perceived as a tool for enhancing the understanding of space through a Cartesian and mathematical way of seeing, which is usually conducted by professionals in geography and near science disciplines. A map is the nucleus of the rationalization of human faculty, provides no opportunity for ordinary people's contributions, and is therefore merely functional and one-directional; it is a guide to the city that lacks any interaction between producers and users. In this regard, map is a "mechanical reproduction" that scarcely recognizes the human values and residues of past times: a sense of place is overlooked through the map-making process, which echoes again Benjamin's notion of "the disappearance of aura."

Commercial settings become the field in which one (the subject) can find his/her identity in the ever-changing complex urban areas (the object). Here Lacan's concept of "mirror stage" is helpful. Lacan argues that what is concealed in every object is the mode of representation of human desire and his/her identification (1981): an object is here perceived as the reflection of the subject's psychic dimension and its materialized form. Accordingly, it can be said that one unavoidably identifies himself/herself through recognizing the mirrored representation of those objects. Similarly, the urban landscape becomes the field in which such a mirror stage occurs. People construct their identity not only by passively reacting to the environment of Shin-chon, but by actively making their own voices throughout the "mapping."

*Cocofun*, a free commercial coupon book, is here considered the representation of people's desire for "mapping" Shin-chon (Fig.5.). It contains information regarding many shops located in Shin-chon and, by doing so, utilizes the existing map on which images and texts of popular shops are overtly projected. Images of "foods" or "interior scenes" of shops are enlarged, inducing people to visit those places. The latter case shows a more active mapping of Shin-chon through personalized map-recreating activity than the former (Fig.6.). Free from the rigorous mathematical measurement of the space, created by senior university students who marked some useful and favorite shops, this map promotes a better experience of Shin-chon to new incoming students.

Both cases of mappings resonate with the idea of the "cognitive map" discussed by Kevin Lynch. Whereas Lynch's strategy in his project *The Image of the City* (1960) was to theorize "legibility" in an existing urban structure, which is represented by five elements (paths, edges, districts, nodes, landmarks), mapping activities in Shin-chon do not echo the visual legibility Lynch discussed. Despite the lack of exact measurement, below examples help one to become familiar with the everyday space that might otherwise remain alien and merely functional. It is worthwhile to note that Lynch's cognitive mapping is further developed by Fredric Jameson, a critical theorist of postmodernism (1991): "the representation of the subject's imaginary relationship to his or her Real conditions of existence … to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to that vaster and properly unrepresentable totality." Imagination is, to Jameson, considered crucial for solving the dilemma of disorienting (or totalizing) everyday urban space. What is rather significant to him is the formation of the socio-political "subject" who is capable of making his/her own voice in the institutionalized and media-oriented everyday life, and this goes beyond Lynch's formalistic approach for interpreting the legibility of the city.

4.2 Signboards as the Mode of Communication in Shin-chon

Signboards, in plural, are not only part of the urban landscape but the mode of communication for the people who experience Shin-chon. Multiple signboards attached to the exteriors of buildings are
major elements of architectural design no matter what the initial design is. The everyday shopkeeper is the designer who fills up the autonomous architectural design so as to make it more communicable in everyday life. On the street-walls, one can see advertisements that tell the updated information of exhibitions, openings of shops, performances, and others. Images and texts of signboards reflect everyday life through the transformation of familiar objects and phenomena such as popular foods or hair-styles, traditional landscapes, and parodies of fashions. Despite the fact that all these images and texts are intended to allure people's eyes and make them spend their money, they also function as the media through which the commercialized urban space is converted as a more familiar place.

Due to the indiscriminately attached signboards upon the exteriors of buildings, architecture becomes a more dramatic field of communication than what architects designed their projects with a communicative intention. Robert Venturi, a pioneer of postmodern architectural discourses, already diagnosed this fact, and formulated the comparative notion of "duck" and "decorated shed": the former is the autonomous architectural symbolism of modernists and the latter is commercially driven architectural design intended for the easiest communication. Venturi emphasized the role of sign in architectural design, and Shin-chon is a Korean version of his idea of sign–architecture, advocated in his seminal work Learning from Las Vegas (1972). The relationship between sign and architecture, in Venturi's notion, is converted in the case of Las Vegas, a city of gambling: sign (decorated shed) is more powerful both in architectural design and the mode of communication than architecture (duck). Although it is difficult to directly apply his notion of sign to Korean architectural context, it is nevertheless useful as a communicative tool for evaluating the role of signboards in commercial buildings in Shin-chon.

Signboards function as communicative tools because they might be easily recognizable on one hand and can simultaneously remain camouflaged within the near environment on the other. Signboards mimic the mode of existence of nearby ones. Throughout such a process of "mimesis," one shop identifies itself with others, as the Lacanian concept "mirror stage" explains. The reproduction of signboards is not a mere mechanical process, but shopkeepers' strategy for survival by mimicking and communicating with others: Leach further explains "The action of mimesis, then constitutes an approximation to the other, a process of becoming ever closer, but never quite incorporating the other." 47

4.3 The Redemption of Collective Memories in Temporary Advertisements

Advertisements in Shin-chon resonate with the past memory of the place as well, through the residues of abandoned signs in the street. Every kind of outdoor vertical wall is a field where collective memories easily discarded are surreptitiously brought alive by the process of being derelict. Just as one can construct a richer identity by recalling childhood memories than merely focusing on the present, a close investigation of the disappearing urban phenomena allows a significantly better mode of identification with the built environment. In other words, the city is the place where collective memories are constantly being kept, and temporary advertisements play a crucial role in reviving such memories, which are constantly being forgotten in everyday life. Advertisements are, in Benjamin's notion, "fashion" that quickly responds to the ongoing collective's need, and reflect the collective unconscious which is concealed in each person; he defines the advertisements of arcades in Paris as "fashion" that reveals "the darkness of the lived moments" which belongs to the "collective unconsciousness" of the public. 38

To seize vanishing, but "ever-returning new," past moments in dispersed advertisements is different from pursuing nostalgia through architectural projects: while the latter is institutionalized and recreated from a selected and polished view of architects and designers, the former is a more direct response of everyday commercial activities of the public. In this regard Christine Boyer (1994) deconstructs the collective memories recreated by architects and seeks to discover the unrepresented history, following Benjamin's idea of history: "To regain oppositional awareness in the contemporary city – an awareness sustained by a critical sense of history – we need to study the generative forces influencing their representational forms." 39

In Shin-chon, temporary advertisements show the residues of past memories of places. The exteriors of buildings cannot be purely cleansed from commercial activities in earlier times (i.e. the indication of the slightly broken wall because of the nails penetrating the exterior: Fig.7.) unless existing buildings are entirely demolished. In addition, this kind of remnant is dramatically evidenced by the overlapped posters/stickers at street walls (Fig.8.). By identifying such remnants with one's personal memories, one can familiarize oneself with the place, and a commercial district can operate as more than a mere alienating space.

As Fredric Jameson defines the mass media as a collection of opportunities for recording/expressing minorities' voices in the public realm since the 1960s and 1970s ("the emergence of the new subject" in the "public sphere" which made possible the rise of "media populism"), advertisements in Shin-chon likewise reveal different voices in everyday urban places. Furthermore, the power of street advertisements in Shin-chon is arguably more effective and straightforward than mass media: whereas the latter is controlled by the large and global capital, the former
is primarily operated by the small and local capital which is more independent than the latter. Street adverts thus become the arena of ordinary people, where one can record his or her voice in the public realm relatively free from the effects of mass media.

5. Conclusion

This study has explored how commercial outdoor spaces in Korean cities like Seoul can be places where people actively construct a sense of attachment and belonging, and has evidenced this premise through the application of Walter Benjamin's concepts of flâneur and mimesis. The singular urban phenomenon represented as overpopulation and highly competitive local commercial activities reflects East-Asian modernisms that are hardly found elsewhere. Due to the superfluous numbers of signboards in streets, exterior commercial spaces are experienced as interiors where people meander around commercial streets like flâneurs. Signboards, which are the main target of this study, are the very means of this experience, not only functioning as a first-hand communicative tool between sellers and buyers, but allowing passers-by to construct a sense of place. The analysis of Shin-chon finally shows how signboards become part of everyday life and are positively utilized as a mode of identification in the built environment. Through the in-depth case study of a Shin-chon commercial space in South Korea, this study will contribute to the better understanding of the meanings of East-Asian urbanism and everyday life through which the alternative discourse of the contemporary urbanism is suggested.

Fig. 7. Exterior Walls of Commercial Buildings Showing the Traces of Signboards in Shin-chon (Left: 2005, Right: 2007)

Fig. 8. Temporary Advertisements on Walls (2007)

Notes

1. Edward Relph, Place and Placelessness, London: Pion, 1976, p.48: "... This is the attribute of identity that has been variously termed 'spirit of place', 'sense of place' or 'genius of place' (genius loci) – all terms which refer to character or personality.

2. The seminal text that deals with the fundamental question of place is "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" by Martin Heidegger: Heidegger, Martin. "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" in Poetry, Language, Thought, (pp.143-159) Translated by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper & Row, 1971

3. Johann G. Albrecht. "Architecture and the Disproportionate Development of Human Faculties", Journal of Architectural Education (pp.20-25), Spring, 1990: p.20.

4. Although it is hard to summarize the various strands on "place" studies in few ideas, the following concepts are examined: "Genius Locii" by C. Noberg Schulz; "Critical Regionalism" by Kenneth Frampton; "Place and Placelessness" by Edward Relph; and "Sense of Place" by Fritz Steele. See David Seamon. (2000).

5. Kwang-Soo Kim, Architecture of Huga-bang, http://home.ewha.ac.kr/~sookim/seoulresearch/2.html [http://home.ewha.ac.kr/~sookim/seoulresearch/2.html] retrieved at March 9th 2008: "Because the South Korean government did not have enough capital to develop larger scale public projects in Seoul, a 'Land Restructuring Plan' was introduced in 1966 that was designed to encourage the private development of large numbers of small scale, speculative residential and commercial buildings... The land divided up into these small lots were [sic] initially free from public interest considerations, allowing private developers maximum programmatic freedom with a minimum of restrictions regarding such issues as density, height, and so on."

6. See the daily newspaper Chosun-Ilbo (from the 1920s to the present) published in Korea (http://archdb1.chosun.com/pdf/archive] (Chosunilbo Archive), from the 1920s to the present.

7. In the case of Seoul's population change, Sung-Hong Kim says: "After the Korean War, however, the population growth rate rapidly accelerated, 1.6 million in 1955, 3.5 million in 1965, 8.4 million in 1980 and over 10 million in 1990." In Contemporary Korean Architecture: Megacity Network, by Sung-Hong Kim and Peter Cachola Schmal (Eds) Jovis Verlag, p.43.

8. Eric Hobsbawm. The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914 – 1991, Vintage Books, 1994, p.346: "It is important to begin any account of the Third World with some consideration of its demography, since the population explosion is the central fact of its existence."

9. T. G. McGee and Gisele Yasmineen. "Work, Space, and Place in the Cities of the East Asian Pacific Rim" in Culture and the City in East Asia, p.67: "... the so-called 'Third World' has been urbanizing since the Second World War at a far more rapid rate. The shift is also of greater demographic importance. Hundreds of millions of people are involved in the shift from an agrarian to an urban way of life."

10. Peter Rowe, East Asia Modern, p.129: "... the realm of what might be called 'Neon Environments' and places where no expensive

11. Benjamin, Walter. The Flâneur (pp.35-66), Charles Baudeclare: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism, Translated by Harry Zohn, Verso, 1976, p.37.
11. Neil Leach, Camouflage, The MIT Press, 2006, p.250: “Benjamin developed this theory in two short writings, "Doctrine of the Similar" and "On the Mimetic Faculty," the latter being a condensed reworking of the former.”

12. Benjamin. "Doctrine of the Similar", Translated by Knut Tarnowski, New German Critique, No.17, 1993, p.65.

13. Leach, p.19: “What Benjamin is alluding to here is the theory of mimesis. For Benjamins, the concept of mimesis allows for an identification with the external world. … To reproduce something is to step beyond mere imitation.”

14. Ibid., p.19.

15. Jung, C.G. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, Translated by R.F.C. Hull. New York: Princeton University Press, 1969, p.42: “The collective unconscious is a part of the psyche … have never been individually acquired, but owe their existence exclusively to heredity.”

16. Susan Buck-Morss, The Dialectic of Seeing, 1991, The MIT Press, p.254.

17. Kim, Kwang-Hyun. Heubakhan Yoksawa Dosieui Janggo (Thin Architecture and the Place of City), Journal of Architectural History in Korea, June 2007 pp.214-226.

18. On other studies on the idea of place in Korean cities, see Kim, Kwang-Soo. (2004) “Xell City” in City of The Bang: 2004 Venice Biennale 9th International Architecture Exhibition (pp.45-72), Edited by Guyon Chung, Korean Culture & Arts Foundation.

19. “Changup Junbhibaseoyo? <4> - Shin-chon Sanggyun” (Are you preparing the inauguration of a shop?) <4> - Shin-chon commercial power), Korea Marketing Newspaper, July 5 2004 [www.mknews.co.kr]: Translated by the author.

20. See Sa-Gang Kim. Form and Meaning of the Ordinary Architecture on Urban Streets.

21. The number of each university: Yonsei University (19, 138), Ewha Women's University (16,124), and Sogang University (7,775): Yonsei Annals, Vol. 45, No. 4, June 2006, p.29.

22. Yonsei University (19, 138), Ewha Women's University (16,124), and Sogang University (7,775), with the number of students: Yonsei Annals, Vol. 45, No. 4, June 2006, p.29.

23. See those essays on Shin-chon: Hye-Sook Kim. “Shin-chon Moonwha” (Shin-chon Culture), in Philosophy and Reality, no. 35, 1997, pp.89-93: Hyung-Chul Kim. “Kanpan, Idaero Joeunga?” (Signboard, Is it as good as the nowadays?), Philosophy and Reality, no. 41, 1999, pp.136-141: Young-No Ahn. “Hyuchunggurineun Shin-chon” (Shambling Shin-chon), Society Criticism, Nov & Dec 1992, pp.296-302.

24. The Yonsei Annals, Ibid., p.29.

25. Hyung-Chul Kim. Hanbakshahoei Dodukgyaehyot (Moral Revolution of Korean Society), Cheolhakgw Hyunsilsa, 1996: “Jungboshahoei Yunri” (Ethics of Information Society), Philosophy and Reality (pp.86-98), no. 30, Fall 1996.

26. Hyung-Chul Kim. “Kanpan, Idaero Joeungu?” (Signboard, Is it as good as the nowadays?), Philosophy and Reality (pp.136-141), 1999, pp.138-141.

27. Hye-Jung Cho. Talsikmin Sidae Jisikineui Geulilkiwa Samilgi: Hansoese Shinchonkagi (Reading text and life of intellectuals in the postcolonial age: from Hanoi to Shin-chon) (pp.233-264), Ddo Hanaeui Munwha.

28. Cho, Ibid., p.234.

29. See Seung-Han Paek. “Commercial Architecture and Sense of Place” (2008): Study on Meaning of Architecture throughout Architectural Experience in Shin-chon Commercial Area (2006).

30. See Certeau, Michel de. The Practice of Everyday Life, Translated by Steven F. Rendall, University of California Press, 1984.

31. See his essay “The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction” in Illuminations: Essays and Reflections, Edited by Hannah Arendt and translated by Harry Zohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1968.

32. Leach reinterprets Lacan’s “mirror stage” in his book: Leach, p.137.

33. Kevin Lynch. The Image of the City, The MIT Press, 1960.

34. Fredric, Jameson. Postmodernism, or the Logic of Late Capitalism, The Duke University Press, 1991, p.51.

35. See Learning from Las Vegas by Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour.

36. Leach, p.39.

37. Walter Benjamin. The Arcades project, Translated by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, K2a.4: “Fashion, like architecture, inures in the darkness of the lived moment, belongs to the dream consciousness of the collective. The latter awakes, for example, in advertising.”

38. I quote the phrase from Katz’s article: Marc Katz. "Rendezvous in Berlin: Benjamins and Kierkegaard on the Architecture of Repetition" (pp.1-13), The German Quarterly, Vol.71, No.1, 1998.

39. Boyer, Christine. The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments, The MIT Press, 1994, p.7.

40. Jameson, pp.356-357.

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2) Benjamin, Walter. (1976) “The Flaneur” (pp.35-66) in Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism, Translated by Harry Zohn, Verso.

3) Benjamin, Walter. (1933) “Doctrine of the Similar”, Translated by Knut Tarnowski, New German Critique, No. 17.

4) Buck-Morss, Susan. (1991) The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and The Arcades Project, MIT Press.

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