

Editors' Note

We the editors of *Korean Anthropology Review: A journal of Korean anthropology in translation* (KAR) are presenting our fourth volume. This time we have selected articles that focus on space and place as anthropological problems. Anthropologists have long recognized space and place as objects of, and participants in, cultural meaning construction, and this volume's contributors explore how spatial phenomena are constructed and contested. The fourth volume also expands the geographical scope of our journal by including pieces that deal not only with South Korea but also present research conducted in another locale, Japan. Our goal is to showcase the geographical diversity of South Korean anthropologists' interests, and we intend to continue translating articles that look beyond Korea for future volumes.

To introduce the three Korea-focused articles first, Kang Oreum offers an analysis of how lesbian women residing in Seoul's Mapo-gu (Mapo District) constructed it as a political site of sexual minorities and conveyed a queer identity to the area. She details the history of sexual minorities cultivating a safe space for their everyday lives in Mapo-gu and ethnographically tracks their mobilization to collectively assert their political agency. Kang also offers a critique of the seemingly sympathetic public attitude that posits sexual minorities as being "tolerated," as opposed to being embraced as equal members of the urban community. In the second article, Kwon Hyeokhui delivers an exciting case study of a recent invention of tradition, legitimated through an alleged spatial continuity with historical events. A *jangseung* ritual—traditionally the erection of a wooden pole carved with a face to protect a village—was "reinvented" in an urban Seoul neighborhood to attract locals and tourists. Kwon tracks how

an inconclusive historical record of royal processions through the area was mobilized to develop the ritual, and he details how various participating groups and motivated individuals struggled to stabilize the new tradition as it developed. The spaces of Kim Soojin's article are virtual—she delves into the fascinating world of South Korean real-time internet broadcasting via the AfreecaTV website, developing a pioneering in-depth study of South Korean internet culture. Treating the website community “as a society existing in cyberspace,” Kim clarifies the logic of the connection between AfreecaTV broadcasting jockeys and viewers. Drawing out the complexities of trading and gift-based relationships on the platform, Kim explains how the AfreecaTV users come to understand themselves as “monsters created by capitalism,” with intriguing implications for understanding contemporary internet socialities.

The spatial themes continue in the two articles on Japan. Jin Myong-suk analyzes a regional revitalization project in a declining farming and mountain community in Matsubara District. She explores the local government's initiative to cultivate forest therapy recreational facilities for residents, highlighting tensions between the policy's top-down conception and implementation. Jin tracks how the initiative eventually won the support of residents, while situating these developments within arguments about symbolic power, community, and regional revitalization. Similarly focused on Japan's rural communities, Kim Heekyoung explores how place and placelessness mediate the experience of aging and pose public policy challenges for Nagano Prefecture's government. Offering an ethnographic window on the elderly's sense of place, the article critiques the gap between the elderly's wishes and the offerings from central and regional governments, while also exploring alternative places created by the elderly's cooperatives and other volunteer groups.

Continuing with the last volume's innovative features that foster a dialogue between anthropologies in South Korea and other countries, this volume also carries commentaries and book reviews. We have invited responses to Kim Soojin's and Jin Myong-suk's articles, to situate them within, respectively, media studies (Yi-Chieh Lin's commentary) and anthropology of Japan (Kim Myungmi's commentary). This volume also carries two book reviews, of Kim Kyoung-hwa and Ito Masaaki's *Demonstrations in the twenty-first century: Media, festival and social change*, reviewed by Kim Joohee; and of Jeong Hyangjin [Jung Hyang Jin]'s *An anthropology of the Korean family and kinship: Theoretical considerations*,

issues, and changes, reviewed by Elisa Romero.

We hope that our readers find these articles and short pieces stimulating and that presented research contributes to larger conversations in anthropology in South Korea and beyond.

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