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Compromised Sexual Territoriality Under Reflexive Cosmopolitanism: From Coffee Bean to Gay Bean in South Korea

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이성애 중심 공간에서 조화로운 게잉과 게이의 성적 수행 공간으로: 종로구 '게이빈' 사례를 중심으로

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Abstract : This article examines the sexualization of place under conditions of the compressed modernization and reflexive cosmopolitanism. In particular, I adopt Michel de Certeau's spatial didactic model of strategy and tactic to investigate the dynamics at play in the gay labelling of a Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf (Coffee Bean) in South Korea, and explore the 'gaying' that takes place within preconceived heteronormative space. Using interview data, I additionally explore the negotiation tactics and coping mechanisms at work when gays compete with heterosexuals for non-gay place. The results illustrate how gays gay in heteronormative space and how heteronormative space harmoniously embodies gay men. The findings suggest that spatial location and tactic play important roles in stimulating compromise of sexual territory. Gay Bean benefits from being nestled between locations with histories of tolerance, while it also prospers from reflexive cosmopolitan ideals of diversity and acceptance of others. Gay identity and gaying is interpreted as foreign in Korea, which buttresses gay performativity in spaces welcoming of foreigners and so-called "deviance." However, how gaying functions within place relies not only on spatial histories of tolerance outside, but also on the tactics of identity negotiation within. The findings suggest that spatial and tactical conditions induce gay individuals to police other gay-identified individuals when gays gay in so-called heteronormative places.
Key Words : Gay Bean, Gaying, Sexual Space, Territoriality, Reflexive Cosmopolitanism, Jong-no

요약 : 본 연구는 종로구에 위치한 커피빈이 어떻게 '게이빈'으로 불리며 게이들의 모임 장소라는 성적인 이미지가 생겼는지를 분석하는 것이다. 이를 위해 Michel de Certeau의 모델을 이용하여 이성애 중심공간(heteronormative space)에서의 게잉(게이 행위-행동-수행)의 활발한 역동성을 연구했다. 인터뷰를 통해 수집한 데이터를 활용하여 특정한 공간을 두고 경쟁하는 게이와 이성애자들 사이의 협상전술(negotiation)과 대응기제(coping mechanisms)를 분석했다. 이를 통해 특정한 공간에서 성적 정체성이 상이한 주체들 사이에 공간을 차지하기 위한 비폭력적 경쟁이 지속되는 것을 관찰할 수 있었다. 이는 게이들이 이성애 중심 공간을 어떻게 조화롭게 '게이화'할 수 있는지를 보여주고 있다. 게이빈이 자연스럽게 '게이화'될 수 있었던 배경에는 성찰적 코스모폴리타니즘으로 인해 공간적 위치와 전술이 성적 공간의 평화적인 상호 양보(compromise)를 이끌어냈다는 것이 중요하다. 특히, 게이빈은 비정상행위(deviant behavior)에 관대한 역사를 가진 두 공간인 인사동과 탑골공원 사이에 위치하여, 다양성과 '타자'에 대한 수용이라는 코스모폴리탄의 이상의 혜택을 누려왔다. 즉 외국인을 환영하는 공간(인사동)과 비정상적 행위에 관대한 공간(탑골공원) 사이에서 게이의 수행성은 존재할 수 있었던 것이다. 그러나, 이성애 중심 공간에서 게잉이 조화롭게 유지된 것은 외부 공간의 관대한 역사에 기인한 것뿐만 아니라 내부에서의 정체성 조절 전술 덕분이기도 했다. 이성애 중심 공간에서의 질서 유지(policing)는 게이 커뮤니티를 기반으로 게이들에 의해 자체적으로 이루어졌다.
주요어 : 게이빈, 게잉, 성적 공간, 영역성, 성찰적 코스모폴리타니즘, 종로

1. Introduction

It took around 20 minutes, I think. Most of the time I was focused on my coffee and at him reading some book. I was thinking, oh good, he's finally going to the restroom. He peeked in my direction and I wasn't sure if I caught his eye.

He smiled at me when he came back and I could tell he liked me. I'm almost sure he saw me staring directly at the *moyang*

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> [outline] between his legs under the table before he got up. (Mingoo, 23)

I first learned of Gay Bean from a native, heterosexual Korean friend in South Korea. He spoke of a "Gay Bean, a gay *Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf* that was straight, but gay." At the time, I had no clue what this meant. His was a third-hand account, something he'd heard through a friend of a friend or so he says. His imaginary descriptions mirrored the mundane, media-driven image of gay culture, a garden of Adam and Stevens of two distinct types: the chin-chiseled, model-worthy 20-somethings clad in Prada or the latest D&G, and toting LV bags; or the statuesque, bodybuilder types with muscles pushing the boundaries of Hollister tees or bulging through overtly constricting Polo shirts. However, when I broached the subject of what precisely a straight café for gay men meant, the conversation tapered off into a different subject. My friend was stumped, and so was I. This all took place back in 2003.

Today, Gay Bean lives on unperturbed by the relative incomprehensibility of those who know of it. Nearly a decade and a half later, I have yet to find a single academic investigation into the sexualization of this place, or an account explaining how it has survived for so long in a country where high café density makes competition fierce, and where homosexuality is considered weird[2], demoral[3], and unpatriotic[4]. This research aims to fill this academic void and explore spatial sexualization in Korea.

It is clear that space is always sexual, and that its sexual nature is a viable force in many social interactions. Much work, for example, has uncovered the intricate tie between economics, the city and the development of sexual space and place. Yet, while researchers have illuminated how and why sexuality matters, they also have often presumed universal gradual development, while downplaying or completely ignoring socio-historical particularity.

This article explores spatial sexualization under conditions of rapid economization within the backdrop of strong East Asian traditions—traditions that would, presumably, work against it. Namely, how did a heteronormative coffee shop, *Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf* (Coffee Bean), become gay when, it is clear that it was not 'born that way'? Does the sexuality of an establishment's clientele invariably lead to an extension of sexuality, eclipsing the boundaries of body and concomitantly destroying hetero-normative spatial assumptions? Or are spatial sexualities similar to bisexuality, in that they are susceptible to forces of external labeling as much as through self-determination? Is Gay Bean the flowering of a gay ghetto, a component of what could later become a contested 'gay lifestyle'?

One thing is certain: all spaces are sexual, but some are clearly more so than others. In the US, for example, the sexualization of space is so intertwined with a person's sexual identity that it is often interpreted as part-and-parcel of a sexualized 'lifestyle'. The city, as this line of argument usually runs, provided the environmental necessities for homosexuality to survive (Bech, 1998; Aldrich, 2004; Collins, 2013). It connected capital growth with delineated movement fortifying homosexuality in pockets of political openness leading to both visibility and acceptance (D'Emilio, 1983). The growth of sexualized ghettos, the argument continues, served as 'regimes of representation' (Weeks, 1985, 232) and resistance leading to negotiation between tolerance and new forms of discrimination. In *There Goes the Gayborhood?*, for example, Amin Ghaziani (2014) provides a provocative analysis into the sexualization of space at the macro-level, investigating the future

of gayborhoods in the US in a supposedly post-gay world (not necessarily a view Ghaziani shares). In a post-gay world, he explains, "Each man asserts that who he has sex with is not necessarily related to his self-identity or to the cultural communities in which he participates" (44). As such, lifestyles are indistinctive when it comes to sexuality, a state 'gained' after a taken-for-granted unilateral western development of sexual identity.

While gayborhoods were originally meant to provide protection and security with greater social tolerance, their existence is now circumspect, at times viewed as the product of self-inflicted segregation by and for gay people, at times part of some immoral social agenda (Reilly, 2014), and at others as a somewhat non-human condition caught up in the interplay of political-economic conditions (Jacobsen and Zeller, 2008).

The above, however, is merely one approach to understanding gay identity and gay lives, a tale particularly suited to the US. However, a vast part of the world remains far from (not necessarily behind) this post-gay ideal. In these places, the divide between state liberalization of regulative mechanisms and notions of citizenship bound to moral nationhood is less ambiguous (Altman, 2001). Gayborhoods are inconceivable, and campaigns, laws, and policies serve as mere gimmicks to display an outward appearance of sexual equality, while simultaneously sustaining infrastructures that work counter. This is particularly true of rapidly developed nations with presumably incompatible traditions, such as those with rigidly Confucian pasts (Shim, 2001; Martin, 2004; Du, 2007). The mismatch between social and economic development has revealed that the ties between space and sexuality is highly diversified. A reason why, Altman and Symons (2016) in *Queer Wars*, for example, stress that countries do not ineluctably embrace Hollywood-driven "western modes of sexuality," nor do they sweepingly embrace the accompanying rhetoric of gender and sexual equality (157).

There is a myriad of possible outcomes when it comes to how countries adopt, reject, and/ or manage so-called globalized sexual ideals. Some countries, such as those in East Asia, for example, could even develop Confucian models of tolerance in which "…sexual diversity and bodily autonomy are protected without homosexuality forming a basis for a master identity" (Altman and Symons, 2016, 134).

In this research, I first posit that the relationship between space and sexuality is not simply a matter of choice, appropriation, or opinion. Second, I believe that a focus, instead, on the intricate behavioral properties of identity negotiation within place and the sexualization of space itself tell much about the performative nature of sexuality. In this regard, I investigate just how space and place merge and act as vessels through which sexuality is both created and performed in Korea.

I adopt Michel de Certeau's notion of strategy and tactic, an arguable best-fit approach to understanding the sexualization of place in South Korea, a country with strong connections between ideal citizenship and family-based morality, which are continuously altered by consumerism and notions of reflexive cosmopolitanism.

Though Gay Bean is a veritable bean among the many *Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf* cafés that comprise the franchise in South Korea, the particular café under study here has become an imaginative landmark within which the sexual tensions between heteronormative assumptions and gay sexual performativity have withstood the test of time, and a heteronormative place onto which gay identity has been transfixed. Both the former and the latter have worked

primarily through de Certeau's concept of strategy and tactic.

The next section examines previous works that have led to the current study and should clarify how I engage the trinity of space, place, and sexuality and how and why I take into the contentious space/ place dichotomy to begin with.

2. Literature Review

Space is always sexualized, a point illustrated in Mingoo's depiction of his hook up at Gay Bean above. From the public toilet to the park to the home to the spatial imaginary of the mind, all spaces have the performative potentials and propensity towards sexualization (Giddens, 1992; Bell and Valentine, 1995; Adkins and Merchant, 1996; Carver and Mottier, 1998; Bell and Binnie, 2004; Johnston and Longhurst, 2010).

Beatriz Colomina's groundbreaking work was one of the first to take an interdisciplinary approach to connecting geography and sexuality. It fundamentally inserted feminism and sexuality into a masculine discourse, seeing sexuality as a component of geography, while elucidating "how sexuality acts itself out in space" (Colomina, 1992). Her work has served as the catalyst for research on the role of the public toilet and the backroom in gay sex, on museums as pick-up grounds for intellectual singles, on voyeurism at peep shows, and on the gendering of architecture and film scenery (Tewksbury, R., 1993; Betsky, A., 1995; Berlant and Warner, 1998; Keogh and Weatherburn, 2000). This interest in the connection between the sexual self (authentic and realized) and space has produced many works in the experimental self while also shedding light on a static view of space within this framework (Colomina, 1992; Knopp, 1990; Binnie and Valentine, 1999; Binnie 2004; Brown *et. al.*, 2002; Rooke, 2007; Oswin, 2008; Sacremento, 2011).

Eventually, a desire to understand patterned behavior pushed this interdisciplinary approach further to the area of urban development, and towards an inquiry into the social consequences of sexualities' roles in city space and vice-versa. Scholars, particularly in the mid-90s, are credited with having deduced the susceptibility of urban spaces to capitalist forces of production and consumption (D'Emilio, 1983), often giving way to the perception of 'good' and 'bad consumers' and to the illusion of socially acceptable subjects, and by default acceptable sexualities (Rubin, 1994; Knopp, 1995; Binnie, 1995). Anyone who has tuned in recently to the slew of American TV sitcoms and programs depicting the 'good gay couple', might perceive a general pattern: the characters are often white Americans, middle class, educated, sexless, and seldom working and/ or merely enjoying leisure in workplace settings.

The 'globalization of sexuality' illustrates a dilemma that permeates even mainstream academia. Namely, when preconceptions are applied to certain societies, albeit with some truth, much can be lost in conceptual translation —especially when it comes to (nearly all) things sexual.

First, with sexuality, there is a general disregard for socio-historical particularism, what some authors caution as a tendency to focus on the emergence of, for example, "…gay activism as a defining event anticipat[ing] a specifically western construction of what, exactly, constitutes a gay history" (McLelland, 2005, 94). Instead, theorizing on sexual space relations has often led to the view that homosexual identities and homophobia are universals—an interpretation that authors frequently contest (Greenberg, 1988; O'Murray, 2000, 2002). The subtleties created in the process of spatial creation, coming in part from differing speeds of

infrastructural development or from contrasting cultures of sexual desire and expression, often take backseats to presumably universal identity labels. This research, however, contextualizes these identities through an investigation into how a commercial café functions as a vessel through which same-sex performative behavior thrives in heterosexual space, and where gazing at imagined genitalia is both acceptable and not acceptable, *and* also commonplace.

Second, the vast differences between the free-floating peripheries of the private and public spheres are often overlooked when it comes to spatial conceptualization within certain societies. Many scholars argue that sexuality-based studies focus too much either on the spatial re-appropriation of gay space tending towards the complete dissolution of space (Moran *et al.*, 2001), or on the threats to gay space, places, and activities that the presence of non-gays impose (Whittle, 1994; Bell, 2001; Rushbrook, 2002). They warn that space is not a universal, disconnected from sexual identity or negligible in terms of its effect on sexual performativity. Sexual identities are often misinterpreted as expressions of free-floating object-selves, spatially unlimited and uninfluenced. Gay identity, for example, appears fixed and essential within space and over time, while inconceivably detached from any modicum of the performativity that space both provides and/ or strips away.

In recent years, much attention has moved to sexual territory and competition over sexualized space. Several authors have produced penetrating works explaining the high numbers of non-LGBT individuals, the so-called 'allies', participating in Pride Parades for example (Longhurst, 2001; Johnston, 2007; Munt and O'Donnell, 2007). Other researchers have also looked at the presence of heterosexuals in 'gay spaces' (Rushbrook, 2002; Elling, *et. al.*, 2003; Matejskova, 2007). Both of these areas have produced illuminating findings regarding the roles of space in sexual identity formation and mitigation. However, in East Asia, the general focus has been on macro-level dynamics typically occurring at the juncture of government and civil society (Bong, 2008; Kvng, 2008; Kong, 2009, 2011; Cho, 2009).

In this regard, I attempt to bring the macro and micro levels together, while maintaining an appreciation that space and identities are always at grips with one another. The dynamics of the ensuing competition begs for re-interpretation of identities within place—leading to altering notions of self. It also explores for clues as to how space is sexualized in Asia to begin with, and especially of places located in cultures that have not experienced gradual economization. Seoul, with its rapid development, fast-pace internationalization, and growing number of openly self-identified sexual minorities is at the intersection of this dynamic.

Third, there are scholars who have moved to a queering of spatial realities (burgeoning on pseudo-realities), stripping it from any pivotal groundings in the static world. Their interpretations of space are hyper-dynamic to the point where any attempts at temporality are either dismissed or viewed with suspicion (cf. Massey, 2005). While I support a problematizing of 'space/place' and its meaning, delving into the existential nature of the dichotomy itself is not my goal. Instead, I argue that misconceptions of spatial realities (including the dichotomy itself) matter as much as, if not more than, the push for erudite re-interpretations of space itself. Seeing space as coeval multiplicity of super-dynamic proportions, in my view, verges on advocating a revolution in the notion of how space is structurally conceived and goes far beyond the goals of this article, which is to understand a small part of this (perhaps ill-

conceived) dynamic.

In addition, though deconstructionist views of both space and identity have merit of theoretically debilitating proportions, I argue that the social constructions already at play—including their misconceptions, misuses, and unintended consequences—are foundational and revealing of how people negotiate and interact in the worlds they inhabit. As such, I believe that the study of social behavior at times requires a momentary partitioning out of smaller dynamic points in time, taking them as semi-static and semi-fixed realities under the microscope. This is not to be equated with interpreting identities as absolutes nor of spaces as completely closed systems, but an attempt to comprehend humans as social beings, whose irrational individual behaviors form a collective order—including the commonly accepted (and perhaps ill-placed) belief in the space/ place divide itself.

Adding to the tradition set out by Colomina, this article aims to illustrate the complexity of sexual competition for space, and in particular, how such competition plays out in a culture in which expressing homophobia and homosexuality remains ambiguous, and where distinctions between private and public do not necessarily fit any so-called universal heteronormative assumptions.

In the next section, I adopt de Certeau's model to frame the spatial dynamic and show how South Korea, and particularly Seoul's socio-political infrastructure produces territorial competition leading to identity negotiation within space and place.

3. Theoretical Framing

1) Territoriality and Space

To understand the dynamics of gay spatial usage and sexual territoriality, it might help to clarify what is meant by territoriality and space, and how they both come to be used during spatial sexualization.

According to Edward Soja, territoriality is "a behavioral phenomenon associated with the organization of space into spheres of influence or clearly demarcated territories which are made distinctive and considered at least partially exclusive by their occupants or definers" (Soja, 1971: 19). This is an area where "space and the political organization of space express social relationships but also react back upon them" (Soja, 1980). It is exactly this reflexive dynamic that remains unclear when it comes to sexuality and sexualized spaces. What is sexual competition for space within the dialectics of territoriality—of inside and outside dynamics, of agency and sexual performativity, of institutionalized socio-historically moral surveillance, or of the everyday life tactics that serve to discipline the people within each?

To explicate the defining qualities of space, I conceptualized the relationship *between* space and practices by applying Michel de Certeau's (1984) distinction in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, which creatively frames the interplay of space, time, and human interaction into *strategy* and *tactic*. By *strategy*, de Certeau means "…the calculus of force-relationship which becomes possible when a subject of will and power can be isolated from an 'environment'. A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, 'clienteles', 'targets', or 'objects' of research)" (xix). Strategies are linked to institutions and structures of power.

Tactic, however, is a "…calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional

localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance…the 'proper' is a victory of space over time" (Ibid). These distinctions imply both temporal regularity as well as practices in which "…multiple and fragmentary [operations that] relative to situations and details, [are] insinuated into and concealed within devices whose mode of usage they constitute, and thus lacking their own ideologies or institutions [yet] conform to certain rules" (de Certeau, 1984, xv). A tactic refers to the ways people act within the power regimes fashioned by strategies, often with expression as its goal.

When it comes to the sexualization of space, it is neither static nor is it the mere product of aggregated sexual identities of its population. Rather, it plays an intricate role in sexual performativity and in self-reflexive behavioral adjustments that constitute that performativity, a tactics of sorts. Within this dynamic, space envelops performativity, while space itself is embedded in the agency of its own production (Butler, 1993; 2010). Again, the aggregated presence of gay identities inside particular places does not automatically constitute the formation of gay space.

I believe that de Certeau's didactic model provides a more suitable frame for analyzing the intricate relationship between regulation of space and the sexualization of place through tactic—especially when considering the mode of rapid economic development and compressed modernity that South Korea experienced.

The next section explains how Korea's particular development promotes negotiation, as opposed to aggressive or even violent territorial competition, even when traditions are at stake and social sensitivities are roused. I argue that reflexive cosmopolitanism serves as a social force, inducing passive negotiation processes that foster compromise for spatial sexual territory.

2) Reflexive Cosmopolitanism in South Korea

Sexual realities are embedded in cultural ones. Viewing modernization on the global level, David Harvey found that global condensing of time and space creates cultural hybridity and, by default, syncreticity. This global perspective was further developed to make it applicable to the national and regional levels through the combination of Chang Kyung-sup's compressed modernity and Ulrich Beck's reflexive cosmopolitanism concepts. Ultimately, all three theories frame how people see space and interact within spatial realities, the latter two serving as frames through with the first has been applied.

Compressed modernity is a mode of rapid structural and infrastructural adoption, a form of 'modernity by strategic appropriation' that often characterizes the modernizing patterns of late developers or un(der)-developed nations (Chang, 2010b). While reflexive cosmopolitanism, or the combination of modernity and social reflexivity, refers to the somewhat risky or haphazard adoption of social elements that are seen as conducive to or necessary for a country's self-reflexive view of what constitutes "cosmopolitanism" (Beck, 1992, 2006). Seen in connection, reflexive cosmopolitanism and compressed modernity induce a unique civilizational condition marked by the interconnection of modern and distinctly traditional indigenous characteristics (Chang, 2010). Their influence is particularly acute when a country embarks on a self-driven path toward modernization through self-protracted modernizing schemes rather than the arguably slow pace of

"autonomous second modernity" nation-states (Beck, 2010). South Korea, along with many other nations, is highly representative of the former.

The delicate interplay of modernity and tradition, as can be imagined, influences the ways in which societies produce and reproduce spatio-temporal processes, often leading to a blurring of the real and the façade. Such is the experience of a person of an autonomous second modernity country who visits a country embedded in reflexive cosmopolitanism and marked by compressed modernity. The person is almost immediately hit by contradictions between development-via-behavioral-necessity and development-as-facial-makeover: newly installed Western-style toilets separated by side obstructions, yet completely lacking the privacy of a front door; the adoption of Western-style clothing, yet the denial of Western customs while wearing them; the strong grip held onto indigenous ways, despite the adoption of spatial re-orientation befitting autonomous second modernity country ideals, to name only a few. Such mismatches in expectations and realities are common place in many of Chang's (2010) modernity-by-strategic-appropriation countries.

Reflexive cosmopolitanism necessitates a re-evaluation of what many geographers have found as performatively enabling when it comes to sexual space. Namely, the body has become increasingly privatized via the pitting of sexual actions in line with biological essentialism. At the same time, however, we are pushed to re-conceptualize spaces to befit conditions of which sexual practices might be less normalized beyond the sex organs. We are thrust into a paradox of how to interpret the 'private' and the 'explicit' when such spatial traditions may not exist in their own right and when biological essentialism no longer serves as a means of understanding gender or sexuality.

I believe that a probe into the peaceful negotiations that characterize the sexualization of Gay Bean will help answer not only how sexual identities transform notions of self, but also how this rapid privatization of the body (in the form of sexual identity) interacts with the public, leading to the sexualization of place.

4. Methodology

This research adopted a territorial approach to understanding spatial competition seeing

Table 1. Demographics on Participants

ID	Age	Sex	Gender	Sex Orientation	Work Duration/ Patron Duration
MR. PARK	52	M	M	HETERO/ STRAIGHT	5 YEARS
MR. YOON	34	M	M	HETERO/ STRAIGHT	2 YEARS
JI-SUN	24	M	M	HETERO/ STRAIGHT	1 YEAR
HYUN-SOO	23	M	M	HETERO/ STRAIGHT	APPROX. 4 MONTHS
MINGOO	21	M	F	GAY	1 YEAR
CHULSOO	30	M	M	GAY	UNSURE/ 3 YEARS OR MORE
DONG-WON	26	M	M	GAY	LESS THAN 1 YEAR

Mr. Park: Former Partial Owner
Mr. Yoon: Former Manager
Hyunsoo: Former Employee
Mingoo: Informant/ Customer
Chulsoo: Informant/ Customer
Dong-wan: Informant/ Customer

space as delineated into space and place. I use snowballing rather than random sampling, because the latter has been found to be less useful in studying populations that are partially hidden or 'closeted', especially when the criteria for membership lacks agreement (Weston, 1991; Morin 1977; NOGLSTP, 1987). The 'informants' are regular visitors, and/ or those who are well-known, within the gay community, as frequenters of the shop. In addition, I was able to recruit former servers, members of management, and a previous partial owner of the establishment (See Table 1).

All interviews were conducted from 2013 to 2015 at Gay Bean with me and an accompanying native male Korean assistant, who is a publically open, gay male and a Ph.D. student. Though I have lived in South Korea for nearly two decades and have few problems communicating in the Korean language, I felt that the accompaniment of a native speaker, familiar with the nuances of gay slang, would help to avoid communication problems.

The interviews were conducted fully in Korean, recorded and transcribed. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms, and much care has been taken to ensure personal confidentiality.

5. Findings

1) The Gendering of Coffee Shops Under Reflexive Cosmopolitanism

South Korea succeeded in condensing historical processes, not always voluntarily, which has created various asymmetrical social structures and seemingly contradictory dynamics. Chang refers to this phenomenon as compressed modernity, or specifically "…a civilizational condition in which economic, political, social and/or cultural changes occur in an extremely condensed manner in respect to both time and space, and in which the dynamic coexistence of mutually disparate historical and social elements leads to the construction and reconstruction of highly complex and fluid social systems" (Chang, 2010b, 446).

Under conditions of compressed modernity, urbanization in South Korea is a prime example of where East-meets-West and where self-reflexive cosmopolitanism is arguably at its highest level. Take Seoul, for instance, a city that lacked much contemporary urbanization until after its 1953 post-war experiences, but now a sprawling international metropolis. This swift modernization, combined with traditional/ indigenous values, symbols, and memories have produced a "phatasmagoric" urban society (Giddens, 1990, 18-19).

According to Chang, "Condensed urbanization and compressive urban life, however, do not themselves constitute an honorable civilizational alternative, so that constant reconstruction of urban spaces becomes a built-in feature of East Asian urbanism. Urbanism here is not only 'phastasmagoric' but also structurally ephemeral." (Chang, 2010, 12). Extending this argument, I posit the addition of a resurgent neo-traditionalism, which has fueled pockets of reflexively counter-modern movements in the form of retroactively internalized forms of pseudo-traditions that have few if any pre-modern foundations (cf. Turner, 2010). Such neo- traditionalist ideas, often delivered as a part of Confucian dogma, play themselves out in modern competitions for space, which will be elaborated later in the paper.

With compressed modernity, one sees immediately the destabilizing effects of cultural change on sexualized spaces. For one, there is an insurmountable inability to establish infrastructures that support diverse sexualities or to relate them to dominant modes of

Table 2. Changing Population in Seoul (1949~2016)

	Population in Korea (persons)	Urban Population (%)	Population in Seoul (persons)	Growth Rate (%)
1949*	20,188,641	—	1,693,224	—
1955	21,526,374	28.5	1,574,868	-7
1960	28,181,096	29.1	2,445,402	55.3
1966	31,465,654	28.8	3,470,880	41.9
1970	34,706,620	41.2	5,525,262	59.2
1975	37,436,315	48.4	6,889,502	24.7
1980	37,436,315	57.3	8,364,379	21.4
1985	40,448,486	65.4	9,645,932	15.3
1990	43,410,899	74.4	10,612,577	10
1995	44,606,199	85.7	10,231,217	-3.6
1999	47,542,573	88.3	10,321,449	0.9
2000	46,206,271	79.2	10,078,434	-2.8
2005	47,605,863	80.4	10,011,324	-1
2010	49,090,041	80.9	10,050,508	-0.4
2015	50,293,439	81.6	9,860,372	-2
2016	50,503,933	81.7	9,834,687	-0.3

Sources: National Bureau of Statistics & Economic Planning Board of the Republic of Korea and the Seoul Statistical Yearbook of 2016 (*Data unobtainable due to the Korea War)

heterosexual practices in the city.

I want to stress, however, that I am not advocating an uncritical analysis of the heterosexual domain, as if it is either universal or an ignorable cultural norm.[5] However, in the backdrop of fast-paced urbanization and infrastructural developments, we witness quickly adjusting gender relations that heavily impact notions of sexuality, often in the form of limitations or penalties on their diversification. A look at the effects of the apartment culture below, will perhaps elucidate the point.

From 1949 to 1999, the South Korean population grew from 20 million people to a little less than 50 million. During this time, the population in Seoul increased rapidly from 1.7 million to more than 10 million people—accounting for 24.5% of the total population (See Table 2). As a result of both the high population influx, spatial limitations, and economic push-pull factors, 58.6% of the city's population currently reside in apartment complexes (KoStat, 2016). Additionally, a simultaneous rise in incomes during much of the same time, resulted in increased leisure time as well as to a growing need of leisure spaces.

The resultant effects of the above on gender relations are fundamental to apprehend, first, why I chose to analyze a café and second, why a café is a particularly interesting place when it comes to understanding the effects of the body's privatization in the form of sexuality identity, and how this privatization meets the public domain in the country.

Bak Sangmee, in detailing the social history of coffee drinking and *Starbucks Coffee* (another large coffee chain) in Korea, identified

several social trends in coffee shop consumerism: most were white collar workers in their 20s and 30s, and that the ratio of women to men was approximately 6:4. Though the author provides no direct interpretation of the gender ratio, I argue that the added leisure and living arrangements, and specifically the rise in apartment life, led to a need for female-friendly meeting grounds.

Essentially, coffee shops became feminized and romanticized terrain where women could meet others on neutral grounds, i.e. cafés are places outside of their apartments, and outside of the age-based, family-fixed, patriarchal customs of home life. Coffee shops thus filled a gap that could not be filled with other masculinized places, such as bars, billiard rooms, or even parks[6]. Bak rightly points out that "…coffee consumption in Korean society is not simply an act of passive acceptance of foreign culture, but a way of actively achieving 'global modernity'" (Bak: 40).

It is exactly how this modernity or reflexive cosmopolitanism plays out in place and space, and how this perhaps budding lifestyle culture leads to the sexual territoriality that I explain below.

2) Compromised Territoriality and the Manifestation of Gay Bean

Applying de Certeau's (1984) conceptualization of space and place to Gay Bean, I deduced a relationship model of territorial compromise in the sexualization of space (Fig. 1). This figure simply explains the flow of interaction and environmental influences related to the sexualization of Gay Bean.

(1) Strategy Surrounding Gay Bean

First created in Jong-no district in 1999, according to my informants, this particular *Coffee Bean* (from here on referred to as Gay Bean) has served as a meeting ground for members of the gay community, non-Koreans and the elderly, particularly due to its geographic location.

Located in Jong-no, the heart of Seoul and nestled between two socio-historical locations, Gay Bean provides two contrasting social extremes: Insadong & Tapgol Park (Fig. 2).

Two-minutes' walk from the small alley to the west of Gay Bean lies a sprawling shopping area. More than any shopping area in the country, this long outdoor mall prides itself on providing Koreans and non-Koreans alike with the authentic tastes of South Korean cuisine and Korean culture. Originally called "Mary's Alley," this commercial area is actually a street now known as Insadong, and first became a popular tourist destination during the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Symbolically, Insadong encompasses both

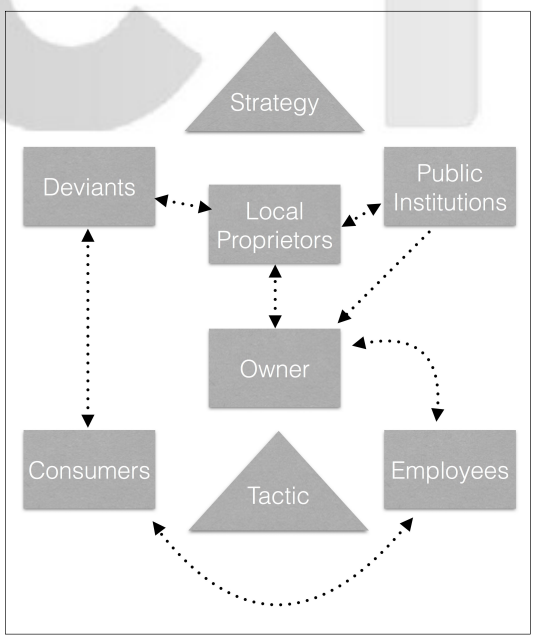


Fig. 1: Flow Chart of Strategic and Tactic Relations at Gay Bean (based on frequency of concern presented during interviews).

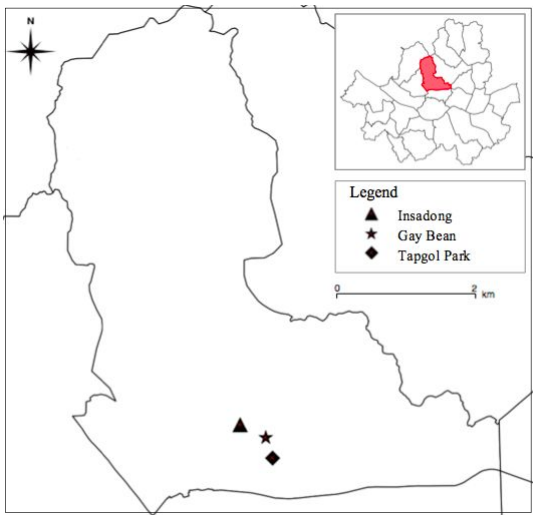


Fig. 2: Map of Jong-no Positioning Gay Bean Geographically to Areas of Tolerance

the bitter past and the often-violent move toward globalization. Unwanted state-sponsored renovation and the government's rubric for what constituted 'tradition' frequently sparked social protests in the area on a regular basis (Krich, 2000). Every Saturday from 14:00 to 22:00 and Sunday from 10:00 to 22:00, the streets are closed off to traffic and the area transforms into a cultural mecca where booths and kiosks are set up to sell traditional trinkets and goods. The street becomes an open-air museum in which traditional fine arts are put on display, and a stage where entertainers perform traditional dances. The area has garnered much attention as a place of culture, and even on weekdays the streets fill with tourists weaving between cars to savor the tradition that the area provides.

To Gay Bean's east, accessible through a massive tunnel, which coincidentally helps to conceal the café underneath a canopy-like veil, is Seoul's first modern public park, Tapgol Park. The park opened in 1920 and encompasses the Wongaksa Pagoda, a 10-story stone pagoda listed as the country's second national treasure. In the past, the park played an important role as a symbol of Korea's move toward modernity, but was soon cast into darkness with modernity's increasing commercialization of the female body (i.e. prostitution). After its creation, and due to high volumes of female prostitution, Tapgol Park became synonymous with sexual deviance and vice. Even an official ban on prostitution in 1948 could not break the area free of its historically tagged lascivious image. As a result, the park became an area of interest to the government, which protracted strong policies aimed at eliminating all forms of sexual deviance, including gay bars, LGBT organizations, and the like. However, the ensuing global pressures these policies caused and social concerns for human rights it spurred in the country, eventually led to the government's hands-off approach, summarily switching from a policy of intervention to one of toleration.

As a consequence of the area's global popularity, its role as a locus of political protest related to globalization, and proximity to areas of sexual deviance (both prostitution and high concentrations of gay bars[7]), Gay Bean is set symbolically in the center of reflexive cosmopolitanism—a product of cosmopolitan aspirations, neo-traditionalism, and sexual liberation.

According to our respondents, two of whom used the words 'equality' and 'liberty' in their replies to the question of *what does Jong-no mean to you as a gay person?*, the area outside of Jong-no is a constant reminder of sexual marginalization.

> This is our area. I feel upset that our government would care more about foreigners or capitalism than about its own people. Sometimes it makes me feel like I am a foreigner…and being here I sometimes imagine that I am a foreigner…like…an Asian from Hong Kong or Taiwan. It's the only



Pic 1. Security Patrol Controlling Traffic and Preventing Crime Underneath Tunnel [Photo credit: Author]

way I can feel respect sometimes when I'm here. (Chulsoo, 30)

As a gay man who publicly revealed his sexuality in the early 1990s, during the country's gay heyday (Bong, 2008), Chulsoo (30) paints the environment outside of Gay Bean today as a territorial loss for "his people," while also seeing this loss as a motivation for recapturing the historical connection to the sexuality he came to know there. He laments:

> There was once a time when people didn't want to visit this area. Yes…foreigners were always here, but they were confined to one street. But expansions like this, outside of that area…creates…uh…well…it makes it so that we don't have our own area anymore. So, well, that's why I think this Gay Bean is important. We need to show that this is ours …regardless of what you put here. (Chulsoo, 30)

Other respondents also collaborated Chulsoo's sentiments above. Two of our participants elaborated on this marginalization, expressing their concern over the connection made between sexual minorities and criminality requiring surveillance of the area, an attitude that the former-manager of Gay Bean seemed to share with the government.

> There are many problems with this whole area. Too many tourists. Too many beggars. Too many thieves, both Korean and foreign. Too many prostitutes, sexual weirdos, and gays. It's really a problem that needs fixing. (Yoon, 34)

Strategic surveillance methods have been installed to geographically manage the area, despite low actual crime reported (see Ramstad, 2011). There are several signs warning would-be criminals that CCTVs are vigilantly watching the surroundings. Security guards are stationed in the underground passageway beneath the tunnel leading to the area. And traffic lights have additionally been installed (Pic.1), which seems counterintuitive considering the relatively low level of traffic and the size of the street measuring only 440-600 cm wide.

With this strategic surveillance, Gay Bean (from the outside) is physically enclosed, which, in many ways, provides the café with both seclusion and security.

Gay Bean's geographic location not only divides it from the tourist area—located on a somewhat remote side-alley leading to the 5-star hotel that houses the café—but also isolates it from its east side, commonly considered the prostitution area. Both visual and physical obstacles (e.g. the overbearing tunnel underpass, the presence of the impoverished citizens who often inhabit the area, the traffic lights, and the security guards) separate Gay Bean from its east side.

The strategic elements of control—surveillance

and security—are the products of the socio-historical context of both civil and governmental risk prevention and management. Mr. Park (52) makes this connection to the surrounding risks several times, expressing concerns over how best to avoid crime, while keeping the poor from taking unwanted advantage of his facilities.

> The hotel [management] and I have had several conversations regarding how best to avoid problems with people in the area. However, the government has had no real conversations with me in terms of how I should run my business…there was only one time when an official asked that I prepare for the World Cup. We were asked to increase security to make sure that we could deal with this problem. (Park, 52)

Throughout the interviews our informants expressed feelings of loss when it came to the strategic level management from outside of Gay Bean, often stating that the government had criminalized the area, image-wise, with no legitimate reason. This was interpreted as an affront in reaction to their sexualities.

However, the informants did not see this as a complete defeat and emphasized that their lack of participation in the image-making outside of Gay Bean could be resolved through their tactical approaches from within.

> If we make our presence more easily felt, then people can't help but to accept us for who we are…the way we do that is by numbers…the more there are of us the more they [heterosexuals] will have to accept us. (Dong-wan, 26).

Just how this strategic dynamic connects to the tactical, as expressed in Dong-wan's comment above, is important in understanding how gays maneuver spatial modalities of action, and how non-gays tasked with serving them negotiate preferences and values, all of which induce territorial compromise and ultimately benefit all involved.

(2) Tactic Within Gay Bean

The concept of place is psychological, and gives way to conscious and unconscious behavioral and/ or performative realities. This performative aspect is of extreme importance in understanding how de Certeau's *strategic* affairs outside of Gay Bean lead gay men to *tactic* ones within it. Namely, at the strategic level, reflexive cosmopolitanism coupled with Gay Bean's geographic location between historically deviant areas has positioned it within an environment of tolerance. This has helped Gay Bean survive in the area, but what of conflicts between gays and non-gays? How has hostility inside a place that, for all intents and purposes, falls within the sphere of "compulsory hetero-sexuality" (Rich, 1980) managed to foster harmony?

Writing about heterosexuals in gay bars, Matejskova (2007) argues that "a gay bar is a place established primarily as a communal—if commercial—venue, it might be thought of as a particular type of a semi-public place" (138). This communal sentiment was evident in terms of why patrons enjoy themselves at Gay Bean.

In several interviews, I noticed distinct behaviors that would be unwelcome in strictly heteronormative establishments: at one table a young male in a tight leather jacket sat alone, looking into a pocket mirror while applying mascara; at another a 20-something gently combed a synthetic wig hanging from his hand, while actively engaged in animated conversation with a friend; and during one interview, a man next to us conversed with his friend through a cloth cosmetic skin pack completely unperturbed

by the presence of anyone else in the café. These behaviors pressed the boundaries of sexual expression without crossing them, a sentiment that was often connected to "home," but not necessarily to the westernized notion of home as a place of privacy.

"This place belongs to me…you know…like it feels like my home," said Mingoo, our youngest informant. Mingoo, 21, identified as gay and had revealed his sexual identity to his parents at 12 years old. He explained that his early coming out experience was prompted by a need to "realize my self-identity as a gay man," a choice that he interpreted as giving up his family in exchange for living honestly.

In *Families We Choose*, Kath Weston (1991) argued that sexuality was creating more flexible interpretations of kinship relations, a flexibility that would require re-thinking family and family values. This argument is valid but also one that I argue is founded on a Judeo-Christianity's preoccupation and reverence of confession as an act of authenticity. In South Korea, however, few traditional roots point to confession as a means of 'authentic living' as it has been romanticized in the west (cf. Foucault, 1978). Mingoo's story of how he was kicked out of his family and currently living on his own underscores this view. He confided that "[he] felt horrible for telling them [his parents]. I didn't really need to and it didn't make me feel any better." He went on to explain that "where I spend my time, now has to do less with family and more with comfort." Throughout the interviews, comfort and the disconnect from family-based notions of home recurred repeatedly.

A repetitive refrain from the informants was the need for the combination of place and comfort when it comes to their sexual identity. They all stressed the need for a 'place' where one could act naturally, which at times meant stepping outside of heteronormative boundaries, while staying simultaneously within them. In other words, Gay Bean provided a place where the informants could use covert gay coded behavior to make gay friends, hook-ups, or date, while at the same time mingle guilt-free with other "open-minded" non-gay allies or straights. In fact, none of our participants claimed that the café allowed for unlimited sexual expression, and even kissing and hugging was considered inappropriate behavior. Instead, each informed me that Gay Bean is a place where covert coded behavior is essential for "checking out guys." It is a place where engaging in the 'gay gaze' is essential to communication.

Investigating "gaydar," Cheryl Nicholas wrote an insightful paper that examined the eye-gaze associated with identity recognition among gay men and lesbians (Nicholas, 2004). She found that the gaze can be accentuated by the presence of other forms of nonverbal communication such as posture, gestures, and smiles.

In Korea, these nonverbal cues, including micro-expressions, are culturally constructed but also trans-culturally mitigated by media's appeal to what it means to be gay, i.e. through the kaleidoscope of reflexive cosmopolitanism. Such behavioral signals are not only picked up by gays, but also capable of being registered by some members of the heterosexual community. As such, in commonly heteronormative places such as our *Coffee Bean*-turned-Gay Bean, homophobic reactions remain a possibility and a threat. As a result, even in Gay Bean, moral surveillance is not only practiced from hetero-sexuals to gays, but also from gays to gays, especially when it came to physical displays of affection.

The customer informants in my study shared the above view, and explained that such moral surveillance and disciplining depended more

on the time of day, and was practiced primarily from gays to other gays.

> Of course, we can't be so gay during the day hours…why? Well, I guess it's just not acceptable. (Chulsoo, 30)

> For me, I guess I care what people think about me when I feel different, but when there are other gay people like me around, I don't care what they think…[Does it matter if it's during the day?]…in the day time? Well, I think gays only come out at night. For me, I'm…well…straight-acting during the day. I only become a *Ggi-sooni* [a flamer] after a couple of drinks. (Dongwan, 26)

Throughout the interviews, Gay Bean was described as a common sexualized place of tactic, where gay men could practice and take advantage of the gay gaze—an act that required consideration of time and highly dependent on the presence of other gay people in the establishment. Visibility was essential, placing high value on seats that allowed for unobstructed views of others (Pic. 2). In addition, though not necessarily an extension of family, the venue was described in several cases as an extension of place in the form of 'home', as well as a place of adventure due to its heteronormative personae.



Pic. 2. Unobstructed Frontal View Within Gay Bean Allowing for Gay Gaze [Photo Credit: Author]

Meagan Morris found that "in the space of a boys" own adventure, "home is the feminized place of stasis that functions as beginning and end. The voyage, a masculinized phase of change and development, is the action in between" (Morris, 1992: 33). Gay Bean culminated as a blend of the two ideas: an identity that was once trapped within the body, first invaded, then broadened through the physical extension of home. Gay Bean within this conceptualization thus becomes a territorial battle ground for the peaceful negotiation between private-public territory, and consequently between self and other. In essence, Gay Bean, for our informants, stood paramount to a physical moving 'out' of the closet, an expansion of spatial understandings of home into heteronormative place. Gay Bean represents de Certeau's place of "panoptic practice" and thus a "practicing place" where gay men can *gay*, both internally and externally (de Certeau, 36).

In addition, rather than simply a makeshift extension of home, even within the gay community, Gay Bean serves as a place of power dynamics between gay men, where one can prove social power through the display of one's social networks. The greater the number of people one knows, the more gay social capital the person appears to possess. "Being well-connected is key," Mingoo explained.

The employees expressed differing views of Gay Bean and how they interpret sexuality within it. Ji-sun, 24, a self-identified heterosexual male and former employee who had worked at Gay Bean for one year, before quitting to pursue further education, explained that the employees are privy to the presence of gay customers at certain periods of the day and are

often asked by management to show restraint and "understanding" for non-traditional sexualities. Ji-sun explained that management linked the café's east-side proximity to gay bars and prostitution directly to the need for toleration of staff members. However, server restraint did not always lead to either satisfied customers or happy employees.

> To be honest, I just quit because I couldn't stand it. Guys were looking at me strange and even one guy gave me his number. I wasn't flattered. I was insulted. Do I look gay, I wondered? Assholes. (Hyunsoo, 23)

Having worked at the café for more than three months, Hyunsoo explained that his only coping mechanism was to think about his girlfriend, or to make insulting jokes about certain gay men with his fellow coworkers to the chagrin of his superiors, who promoted a policy of tolerance.

"We actually started judging and ranking them. A ten was super gay and a zero was mostly-straight or a person who was confused," Hyunsoo jokingly explained. This rationalization presents another layer of competition in the café; server versus the served added to the heterosexual versus homosexual divides. It also shows that within place, the effects of outside strategic factors influence tactic within, both between gay men inside as well as between the heterosexual staff and Gay Bean's management. The strategic influences help explain the naturalness of which Mr. Yoon interprets his management job as one set on managing both his staff and his customers, especially when the latter engage in behaviors that blur the private and the public divide.

> I try to *manage* the gay customers by sometimes asking that they not talk loud and by making sure that we change the bathroom lock combination at least once a week. Well, that's also to get rid of the poor…When did we start it? We knew we needed that after we found a condom on the floor in the restroom. [emphasis added].

Three of the customer informants validated the rumor that the restroom had become a place for tearoom trade or casual sex. The incident had become a growing issue for both the staff, management, and privy patrons, dangerously pushing Gay Bean toward a place of ill-repute. Interestingly, rather than risk Gay Bean's reputation of tolerance, Mr. Yoon sought out two regular customers (one of whom happened to be one of my informants) and asked that they tell their friends that the café should not be used for fornication or sexual behavior.

Mr. Yoon's resolution is significant, because instantly the tightly-knit community of regulars at Gay Bean became the primary mechanism for sexual territorial compromise. In other words, direct moral policing of gay behavior shifted from heterosexuals to its gay regulars. This was also explained in a separate interview session with Mingoo, whose comment below reflects the internalized role that the gay community is seen as playing in maintaining the moral order and outside reputation of Gay Bean.

> Actually, after someone was found having sex in the restroom…well it was only a condom…we started looking at people who don't come to Gay Bean often with a bit of disgust and suspicion. I was really angry that they were destroying the café's image. (Mingoo)

The reasons for this gay-to-gay moral surveillance show signs of cultural roots with

the interviewees explaining their responsibilities in line with age-based hierarchical differences, whether the customer in question was a regular patron (which establishes a loose pecking order), and the visibility of the acts.

However, not everyone internalized this moral responsibility equally. For example, Dong-wan expressed indifference to his surroundings.

> It's not my business. I mean management should do it. It's his job even though it's our place. But to be honest, I also started telling people not to do things they'd regret. It's not like anyone wants to be forced to go to someplace else. (Dong-wan)

In the interviews, I was informed of several cases of 'skinship' or kissing, hugging, and other forms of physical contact in the café that had led to management or employees asking customers to "have respect or leave" (Mr. Yoon). It had also intensified gay-to-gay moral policing.

As a result of "too much skinship," the owner had asked that management hire female, rather than male employees. This was not altogether a purely sexist presumption on the owner's part. Mitchell Wood, for example, found that "unlike feminist and lesbian cultures…gay men lack a strong tradition of critical analysis of power relations within their communities…this lack of self-critical analysis has persisted because many gay men are still deeply identified with the gender hierarchies endemic to patriarchal society" (Wood, 2008, 57). As such, the presence of the female gender could play a strong role in disrupting gay behavioral culture by reintroducing heteronormative attributes into the café when the typical territorial capturing of the café is at its peak hours (according to our informants these were Friday-Sunday 19:00 to 23:00).

The re-introduction of heteronormativity, arguably achieved, by merely the addition of female workers, provided added moral surveillance. It was also not a tactic that had skirted by unnoticed.

> I mean there are still women in the place. There used to be many guys who wanted to work here…in fact, I think some were secretly gay and only acting straight [rolls eyes]. Now it's just a bunch of young poor girls working here. They make the place a bit weird at times. (Hyunsoo).

While explaining the above, Hyunsoo visibly grappled at words to express the awkwardness he felt with the addition of women working at Gay Bean. It had, in a sense, jarred the usual tactics of gaying[1]. He explained that "men who aren't gay, just don't pay much attention to the tactics used between people who are gay." Women, however, were viewed as more susceptible or perceptive of gaying. Additionally, Mingoo explained that "even for gay men, skinship in front of women is disrespectful."

In consideration of the tactics mentioned above, I reflect on a central theme in queer geospatial studies, which strongly posits that gay territorial competition results primarily from capitalist forces. I do not outright disagree with this argument, and proffer a need to further understand both heterosexism's and homophobia's influences on sexual performativity, a process at the intersection of spatial tolerances and gay men's reflexive views of self. Specifically, gays *gay* space, but space is also *gayed* through tolerance and sustained negotiated behavior, a careful balancing that maintains spatial identity—*along with*, not *because of*, the presence of people who self-identify as gay individuals.

In my interviews, the former manager of Gay Bean presented two categorical means of

rationalizing his tolerance of the sexualization of his establishment: *adaptive preference formation* and *preference change by framing*. In the former, a person changes 'wants' to 'possibilities', "…not the deliberate adaptation favoured by character planners, but a causal process occurring non-consciously" (Elster, 1983, 25). In the latter, a change in preferences occurs when the relative attractiveness of options is reframed in a way that makes no difference to the outcome. In our interviews with the owner, I saw derivations of both.

From the beginning of the interview, the owner of Gay Bean expressed a deep-seeded desire to give coffee to people from all over the world. "I started this place because I've always loved coffee. I also wanted to give what I love to others." He went on to explain that "I don't discriminate against anyone, but I do realize there are instances in which I have to be sensitive and understanding. People also want to enjoy the comfort of a relaxing coffee." By the end of the interview, however, his views of coffee had been supplanted with a genuine need to make as much money as possible to support his family.

> I know that there are many gays here, I honestly don't mind. To be honest, they buy a lot of coffee. I think this is important especially at the times that they use the café. Because they come at night and the café is hard to find at night. The gay group is the only way I can be sure to get customers at those times. And yes…they come in large groups. That's good too, but I wish they would buy more coffee instead of just talking and making noise. (Park, 52)

Throughout the conversation, Park's comments shifted between the frames of strategies and tactics often shuffling between risk assessments, rent seeking, to promoting globalization. His preference for continuing the café despite untoward views of homosexuality fundamentally changed depending on how he structured or re-framed his argument.

When discussing the strategies of space outside of the café, the owner focused on risk management, which included pushing all deviants away—including loitering gay men. However, when reframing the situation to capital gain, he would refer to gay men as investment objects, a necessary component of global market mechanisms. And when he assessed the place of tactic within his café, he expressed a general ambivalence. "Honestly, I don't care what gay people call my café. I like having them pay for coffee. But I don't like it if they disturb others. Generally, they can stay or they can leave."

6. Implications

In the larger scheme of things, what does this all mean? How can a *Coffee Bean*, a metaphorical bean among many, matter when it comes to understanding sexual spatial relations? What I set out to explain in this paper is not only that the social constructionist view of sexuality still matters, but also that sexual territorial battles are constantly faced with a reproductive dynamic contingent on self-negotiation, cultural reflexivity, and preference acquisition and/ or transformation. The process of these three factors are further complicated and heightened in the backdrop of reflexive cosmopolitanism and compressed modernity when it comes to Seoul, which can also perhaps be applied to other cities in countries marked with rapid economic development.[8] National particularity, and the implication of the power dynamics at play when something once seen so private—sexuality—is forced into the public (or

separated from it), needs to be understood in a context in which scholars can make the connect between the epistemological and the ontological.

Adopting de Certeau's didactic separation of space into spaces of strategy implementation and places of tactical action, this research helped to elucidate the delicate interplay between heterosexual assumptions and homosexual behavioralism in a country devoid of a history of homophobia, and where the lines between private and public have been blurred by the effects of compressed modernity.

On the level of de Certeau's strategy, location and the histories surrounding location matters when it comes to a venue's survival as a sexualized place, particularly when that sexualization represents a marginalized social group. Gay Bean is nestled between locations that have a history of tolerance when it comes to deviant behavior, and also benefits from reflexive cosmopolitan ideals of diversity and acceptance of Others. Gay identity is interpreted as foreign, which allows it to survive in places welcoming of foreigners. However, how gaying survives without violence within place relies not only on spatial histories of tolerance, but also on tactic of identity negotiation within.

Within Gay Bean, we see tactic at work. The peripheries of gay and non-gay space blend on the inside, leading to territorial competition. Gay Bean provides a place where "home" is extended, a place where people who accept a gay identity can co-mingle in a place of heteronormativity, a non-gay place where gays can be safe being self and other simultaneously. However, it also serves as a social means of normalizing gay sexuality within compulsory heterosexual space. A desire to benefit from this broadening of the sexual self, as well as a desire to be accepted, leads the gay community within Gay Bean to engage in, often self-imposed, moral surveillance as a coping mechanism, leading to compromised sexual territoriality.

In essence, Gay Bean serves as a non-gay place on the inside, where gays can gay and not gay simultaneously, and where spatial gaying happens. On the outside or at the strategic level, Foucault's power/ knowledge allows for assembly, but on the tactic level within, gays police other gays, normalizing gay behavior within heteronormative place. Knowledge of this Coffee Bean's sexualization —its gaying—extends now to heterosexual individuals. However, Gay Bean essentially remains semi-heteronormative on the inside through tactic policing among and between gays.

On the supply-side, workers engage in processes of "adaptive preference" and "preference changes by framing" as the primary means of establishing a balance between tolerance and behavioral policing. Gay Bean's survival has been the fortuitous combination of passive deliverance of state regulatory mechanism in terms of its strategic location outside, while the café stimulates active acquiescence of heteronormative expectations of and between the gay men located within.

This article, in opening up an examination of sexual territorial competition in places under reflexive cosmopolitanism, presented opportunities not only for cross-cultural and transnational investigation into sexual territoriality, but also elucidated the need for further studies in how customer-owner negotiations work themselves out when it comes to the sexualization of space and place. Further academic investment is necessary for understanding the coping tactics in places with similar socio-historical backgrounds and in how gays *gay* space, and of how space performatively encompasses gays.

Notes

1. The use of gay as a verb is not meant to say that gay is pathological, a virus or contagion that spreads itself spatially. Instead, I believe that gay is a process that is constantly in change and vigorously dynamic. This use as a verb aims at underlining this dynamism and the effect (both conscious and unconscious) of breaking through heteronormative assumptions.
2. In 2007, former-President Lee Myung Bak reportedly stated that homosexuality is 'abnormal.' (http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2007/09/14/2007091400770.html)
3. The Korean Anti-AIDS Federation (KAAFS), which focused primarily on educating and assisting youth in the country, set out on an education-driven campaign in 1995 to morally purify middle and high school students. (Cheng, S. 2005. "Popularising Purity: Gender, sexuality and nationalism in HIV/ AIDS prevention for South Korean youths." *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 46 (1), April, 7-20).
4. For more on this see Nami Kim's 2016 The Gendered Politics of the Korean Protestant Right: Hegemonic Masculinity. (Palgrave Macmillan)
5. For more, read J. Katz's The Invention of Heterosexuality/ "Heterosexuality as a problem of feminist theory" Stevi Jackson.
6. In South Korea, women meeting in outside venues or un-enclosed places have traditionally been seen as taboo. The belief was that women need to be protected by four walls (and usually a man). As such, even open areas such as parks were considered non-feminized places.
7. The Jong-no area also has the largest concentration of gay venues and two NGO-related associations in Seoul. As such it has become an area of sexual tolerance. Even so, few cafés or other such gendered, yet presumably non-gay, places have become well-fixed in society and even to heterosexual community as having a gay spatial identity.
8. Implications extend to not only countries/ states that have rapidly modernized such as Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, but also to cities, such as Karachi (Pakistan), Shenzhen (China), Beijing (China), Bangkok (Thailand), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Guangzhou-Foshan (China), Delhi (India), Shanghai (China), Jakarta (Indonesia) and the like.

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Informed Consent: All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Informed consent was received from all participants involved and pseudonyms have been used throughout the analysis and reporting process to preserve informant anonymity.

Notes on Romanization

I utilize the "Revised Romanization of Korean" system developed by the National Academy of the Korean Language and released to the public on 7 July 2000 as generated by Pusan National University's online "Korean Romanization Converter."

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