This chapter provides an insight into the sudden rise of neo-traditionalism in the Korean residential building sector at the turn of the 21st century within the context of rapid modernization and globalization: its link to the identity construction enacted through Korean nationalist projects, and the discourse present during the time about how tradition should be continued. In the first part of this paper, I explore the irreconcilable debate between the conservative and progressive traditionalists who advocate or negate the use of modern technology in constructing traditional buildings; I also examine further how, in the everyday lives of Koreans, modernity and traditionalism intermingle through commercialism. I also recognize the creativity of modern-day Koreans in coming up with hybrid ways of living that exist between the traditional and nationalistic past and the globalized modern.1

My basic stance here is that of a social interpretivist. I observe how people blend issues of nationalism and identity through seeking out authentic Korean buildings and negotiating the practicality of living in them. Theoretically, I consult the notion of “reactionary modernism” (Herf, 1986) and “multiple modernities” (Eisenstadt, 2000), both of which portray science and engineering basically as formless, serving as counter-modernist ideals. Particularly relevant in the Korean context is Pai’s (1997) ...
portrayal of Korean architecture in the latter half of the 20th century—notably, the use of reinforced concrete systems for the erection of prominent public buildings in traditional building shapes meant to represent Korean identity. Many of the intense discussions that the participants shared with me during the study were basically about the amount of modern technology they could use for traditional buildings, yet still make a claim for the building’s authenticity in terms of building structure, process, appearance, and the experience of inhabiting it. Here, the debates between the practicality and originality of traditional buildings become paramount I explore this issue by examining the design of Korean traditional architecture, its building process, and the discourses surrounding it.

Through this study, I suggest that traditional buildings are not value-neutral, nor a simple reflection of the old ways of living. Instead, they go through active interpretation and manipulation on the part of receiving generations in order to be considered traditional. For this reason, traditional buildings are also reflections of our current life. How this occurs will become more apparent as I touch on issues of modern technology as they are used and/or rejected in the building industry in Korea.

Methodology

This study is based on two interrelated qualitative studies conducted in Korea during 2008 and 2009. The first was an ethnographic study of the recent revival movement of Korean traditional houses in general. I approached this rather broad idea through three interrelated strategies. First, I took part in an association that specializes in traditional architecture in Korea and collected formal and informal correspondence exchanged amongst the members. This association combined scholars and practitioners who were concerned about Korean traditional architecture, offering regular conferences and educational programs. The association’s agenda included both ideological and practical approaches to traditional architecture. Ideologically, they strived to identify and make known the authenticity of Korean buildings, especially their unique heated floor called the ondol, ultimately connecting this particular traditional domicile to Korean identity. Practically, they devoted a great deal of effort to adapting traditional building features and materials for modern building contexts through standardization and innovations in traditional building materials, in an effort to popularize traditional buildings in Korea.
Secondly, I participated as a student in a summer intensive educational program aimed at building Korean traditional houses. The program was organized by the International Society of the ondol and was taught by both scholars from several universities and practitioners in the field. The program sponsors included several notable building materials manufacturers. During the program, the participants attended classroom lectures and gained hands on experience in the field which ultimately culminated in the construction of a “traditional building.” While participating in the program, I observed teaching and learning activities, took field notes, recorded lectures, and conducted informal interviews with both students and instructors. Intense discussions and arguments amongst scholars, practitioners, businessmen, and lay people, each with their own distinctive attitude toward traditional buildings, yielded a rich set of data.

Thirdly, I attended a construction exposition held in the Seoul metropolitan area. Amongst various materials exhibited, I focused on building materials used for Korean traditional buildings, and new building materials that borrow various concepts from traditional buildings. In the exhibit, I examined actual materials, took field notes, and collected advertisement materials in order to identify marketing concepts.

The second study on which this article is based is a discourse analysis of the so-called Bukchon Revival Movement (Bukchon Salighi Undong) in Korea. The Bukchon is a small area at the center of highly-developed Seoul, a place where traditional urban configurations and houses of the 1930s still remain (Figure 1 & 2). During my research, I specifically focused on recently renovated traditional buildings within the town. Originally, this area contained prestigious traditional houses used by aristocrats during the Chosŏn dynasty, lasting until the beginning of the 20th century. During the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945), housing developers replaced these traditional residences with smaller houses, specifically targeted towards the newly emerging middle classes (Saeroun hanokeul uihan geonchukin moim, 2007). In that sense, the reconfigured Bukchon was a part of the modern response to increasing urbanization and modernization. The town was relatively well-preserved owing to many government policies and regulations throughout the late 20th century, but the most recent governmental policy concerning the revival of this town has resulted in significant physical changes. The revival project exposed the intrinsic and extrinsic controversies over keeping tradition, as it resulted in numerous discussions on the topic in newspapers and internet blogs. I collected newspaper articles and discussions posted on on-line blogs and discussion boards, particularly those focusing on the
issue of individual building renovation projects. I also visited traditional buildings in
the town that have been converted to commercial use in order to conduct detailed
observations. Observations have been recorded in the field notes with complementing
visual images. This series of activities resulted in various forms of data, as described
in Table 1 on page 6.

Figure 1. The map of central Seoul where the Bukchon is located between major palaces
(adapted from Seoul Metropolitan Government, Department of Housing, http://bukchon.com/
zbxe/?mid=speech&listStyle=gallery&sort_index=readed_count&order_type=asc&document_
srl=1199, annotation added by the author)
During the initial stage of the analysis, I skimmed through the entire data twice, adding reflections and notes. This activity helped me to identify several sets of repeating themes, which I then organized into a chart format. Similar themes were grouped together under a more abstract theme. After this initial content analysis, I went back to the data set, comparing the initial set of themes and contents. This allowed me to refine the major themes, their sub-themes, and concrete examples of each. These are described in the following sections.
Teacher? What is the exact definition of hanok?

It is debatable. In academia, scholars define “hanok” (meaning Korean traditional houses) as a traditional house with a wooden structure. They often say that an important characteristic of the Korean traditional house is its wooden frame structure with its unique joint system. But I think it has to be changed. In fact, more traditional houses were made out of earthen materials and had a different spatial arrangement than traditional wooden houses...

Not many of our ancestors lived in traditional hanok (this time, implying traditional upscale wooden structure). Only wealthy people lived in such houses, and the rest lived in a structure that cannot be called hanok. The traditional hanok that are being built these days are way too luxurious.......My father’s generation used to live either in mud houses or wooden houses that were much more humble than the ones that we see these days.

(Discussion during the summer intensive program)
The word that Koreans frequently use to refer to their traditional buildings is *hanok*, which literally means “the Korean (style) house.” The word first appeared in 1907, around the time that new types of residential buildings were introduced into Korea via Japan. Although the word was used sparsely and arbitrarily during the early 20th century, it gradually gained recognition amongst the larger public in the 1970s, at the same time that the authoritarian military regime’s national modernization project reached its full swing and Western-style houses and high-rise apartment buildings were quickly replacing Korean traditional buildings. The word *hanok* during this time was used to represent Korean style houses in general, as opposed to the Western-style houses that were collectively called *yangok* (양옥/洋屋/ “Western house”). Around this time, the *hanok* was considered an embodiment of pre-modern inefficiency and a roadblock to the successful modernization of Korea. The meaning of the word, however, narrowed and took on a different connotation at the end of the 20th century. The definition of the word as it appears in various ordinances and government documents related to preservation and the development of tourism since the early 2000s shows that it refers to a type of Korean-style house consisting of a timber-frame structure, a unique wood-joint system, and a baked-tile roof—a typical ruling-class house at the turn of the 20th century (Figure 3). In these documents, as well as in popular media produced during the same period, the *hanok* was redescribed as something to be preserved or reconstructed. In this article, I use the word *hanok* according to the later definition, reflecting its popular use in contemporary Korea.

**Disappearing Tradition, Realizing Tradition**

The first two thirds of the 20th century in Korea was a time of continuous social upheaval. After a long period of closed-door policy during the Chosŏn dynasty—the predecessor to the Republic of Korea—Korea started opening its doors to foreign countries at the end of the 19th century. But before the open door policy could be properly established, the country was colonized by Japan in 1910. The colonization and modernization project that the colonial government employed for easier exploitation of Korea’s economic resources had a significant impact on its cultural landscape. The master plan for Seoul, whose roots are in the 14th century, was systematically altered, with traditional urban planning and architectural structures downplayed as an embodiment of old habits and characterized as objects that would hinder modernization; new building technologies and materials such as concrete replaced traditional buildings, as these newer materials were considered the most advanced in many aspects (Pai, 1997).
The demolition of the hanok continued even after independence from the Japanese. The civil war of the 1950s resulted in mass destruction of existing hanok. The continuing national modernization project, this time run by an authoritarian military regime dedicated to reconstructing Korean society, maintained replacing the hanok with modern buildings. The hanok were again considered inefficient and representative of old (and thus, undesirable) habits. Instead, high-rise apartment buildings and modern buildings were erected as emblems of successful national modernization projects. Ironically, the regime employed traditional building features in large-scale building projects, such as the presidential house, cultural centers, and public museums. However, the projects were mainly appearance-oriented: most of these buildings were built using a modern, reinforced concrete system (Figure 4).
The rapid disappearance of traditional environments, especially during the 1960s and 1970s, had the effect of instigating a reevaluation of Korean tradition. In 1977, the Seoul Metropolitan Government designated the hanok of the Bukchon as Local Cultural Assets. In 1983, the government designated the entire town an aesthetic zone. While generating numerous complaints from the residents for the reason that no repairs or further construction could be done on the hanok, thus making their houses difficult to inhabit, it also resulted in a relatively well-preserved traditional town of the 1930s. It was the first step in recognizing a cultural environment as “ours”—conscious activity that surfaced when “others” become present, or more succinctly, when “others” (modern buildings) replaced “ours” (traditional buildings).

Figure 4. The Kwanghwamun disassembled during the major restoration project in the late 1990s. The meaning and location of the Kwanghwamun is comparable to that of Tiananmen in China, serving as a face of the modern Korean state. The original gate was relocated to the side of the major palace during the Japanese occupation period and then destroyed during the Korean civil war. After the war, the military regime rebuilt the gate with a reinforced concrete system. In the 1990s, during the major restoration project, this concrete structure was disassembled and put into exhibits, while the new structure was built strictly following traditional building processes and materials (photo by the author)
Defining tradition, representing the self

In 2000, when globalization and international tourism had deeply penetrated the lives of most ordinary Koreans, the Bukchon faced another preservation plan, popularly called the Bukchon Revival Movement. This time with economic subsidies from the government, the existing hanok were quickly replaced by more contemporary versions, mostly by outside speculative investors who rightly predicted soaring land values. The contemporary hanok differed most basically in that they had more modern building features—most significantly, basements—and contained modern materials, such as reinforced concrete and cinder blocks. This generated an intense discussion on how the Korean traditional house should be defined, as I witnessed taking place in online discussions:

*The standard used to define the hanok is arbitrary. Should it be built with a timber frame structure and an old type baked roof tile following the tradition of Chosŏn dynasty? Or could we call it a hanok if it is built with concrete-reinforced structure but looks like a hanok, as in the case of the Blue House (the Korean presidential house)?*

Indeed, Koreans had built various types of traditional buildings throughout history, with significantly different configurations across regions. And yet, document analysis reveals that traditional images of the hanok in the mind of the Korean general public mostly came from the period of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1897), particularly those used by the aristocrats. In that sense, the Bukchon was not truly traditional. Another internet article argued:

*...the hanok in the Bukchon are not truly traditional to begin with. They were modern adaptations of traditional buildings tailored to dense urban environments of the 1930s. It was a second-class architecture developed by house sellers back then...*

Nevertheless, the hanoks in the Bukchon still contained several key building features of traditional buildings that allowed the general public to perceive them as traditional: the wood structure, joint system and the baked tile roof, all of which dominate the appearance of the Korean traditional house, the traditional heated floor called the *ondol*, the inner courtyard with gardens, and the extensive use of natural materials. These features represent a loose combination widely used in the new construction of traditional buildings today. Against high-rise apartment buildings, which became
the dominant mode of Koreans’ contemporary lifestyles, this loose combination of features representing the *hanok* became the representation of Korean life in the age of globalization and tourism, both international and domestic.2

*We don’t want to show them (foreign tourists) grey buildings, monotonous high-rise apartment buildings, and destroyed nature. In this sense, it is important to conserve the Bukchon. It better represents Korean culture.*

A promotional material found in one of the tourist destination puts it this way:

*We can communicate with our ancestors through the hanok. Shouldn’t we pass on to our next generation the good scientific knowledge that our ancestors accumulated through experience? Get away from ordinary life closed off by cement and concrete buildings. Experience the traditional hanok.*

The dramatic contrast between cement/concrete buildings and traditional buildings that these voices are trying to evoke warrants some more explanation here. The sudden rise of modern apartment buildings, despite being viewed by Koreans as a natural solution to their unusually high population density and sudden urbanization during the 20th century, has attracted academic attention both inside and outside of Korea. Scholars have been particularly interested in the persistent development of high-rise apartment complexes on a large scale, often times in mega-sized complexes with more than 200,000 residents. Even more surprising to them has been how this housing solution, which failed in most Euro-American countries, not only succeeded in Korea, but has been well-received by the public, quickly replacing the traditional urban landscape (Figure 5, Gelézeau, 2007).3 Not long ago, in the 1960s, the urban landscape of Seoul was dominated by individual houses connected by a maze of narrow pedestrian alleys, similar to the outlay of the Bukchon.

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2 High-rise apartment buildings consisted of more than 50% of Korea housing stock at the turn of the 21st century (Korea National Land and Housing Corporation, 2006)

3 According to Gelézeau (2007), Korean apartment complexes are modeled after two distinctive urban planning ideas: (1) The Garden City Movement, founded in 1898 by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the United Kingdom, with its distinctive concepts, such as self-contained communities surrounded by greenbelts, and (2) the modernist approach advocated by Le Corbusier and the Congrès Internationale d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM) as a residential solution. Mediated by Japanese influence during the colonial period, the Korean apartment complexes were considered by the researcher as a uniquely Korean modernism that was well-received by the Korean general public.
Koreans have persistently sought out the lineage of traditional houses in modern residential buildings. Jeon and Kwon (Jeon & Kwon, 2008), for example, look into the historical development of Korean residential buildings, starting in the pre-historic period and continuing to modern residential buildings, tracing how three archetypal components of Korean houses-- the kitchen, the ondol, and the maru (raised wooden floor)--were gradually merged together into one unit in contemporary residential buildings. In a similar vein, Koo & Park (Koo & Park, 2009) survey Korean traditional buildings built in 1930s and conclude that the combined space of the living room, dining room, and kitchen in contemporary buildings is in fact the continuation of the kitchen, courtyard, maru, and ondol in traditional residential buildings. Given the fact that the maru, ondol, and kitchen were indeed at the core of Koreans’ everyday lives, creating a visceral sensation of coolness in the summer and warmness in the winter, not to mention the maintenance of familial bonding and gender/generational conflict (Shin, 2008), this may not be a surprising finding. The flexibility of applying the ondol and maru systems, as well as the fluent spatial relationship that can be easily reconfigured within the high-rise buildings, contributed to this lineage.

Despite this search for a lineage in the context of modern high-rises, Korean’s search for national identity through actually constructing and experiencing traditional buildings continues to grow. During the course of this study, I observed several newly established hanok-related associations between 2000 and 2009, and their educational programs attracted the general public with unprecedented success. Newspapers and reports called for a more organized effort to advance the building of hanok to re-establish “our own” in the age of globalization and to utilize them as an effective tool

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According to Gallup Korea (2010), which is one of the most prominent marketing research companies in the country, 31.8% of their consumer sample indicated that they wanted to live in a hanok surrounded by nature in the future.
for generating economic revenue therefore surviving unprecedented global market competition. The ubiquitous image used in this public discourse was that of the hanok, peacefully positioned against the backdrop of pristine nature.

**Tradition versus modernity: competition or reconciliation?**

Traditional buildings embody traditional ways of life, the social, cultural, political, and economic milieu of the time of their production. When these elements change as society evolves, traditional buildings lose their original contexts and become difficult to maintain unless the building itself evolves. In this case, two different ways of continuing tradition exist: (1) conserving them as faithfully as possible, no matter how much extra cost and inconvenience arise, as is frequently observed in the case of historic preservation of residential buildings designated as national/regional treasures and cultural assets by officials in Korea; or, (2) modifying them so as to fit alongside contemporary lifestyles. During this study, I found that these two different attitudes coexisted and frequently clashed with one another, even outside of the preservation cases. I named adherents to the former *conservative traditionalists* and the latter *progressive traditionalists*.

**Conservative Traditionalists**

Frequently found amongst traditional building practitioners whose training was in traditional building apprenticeships, and also, not infrequently amongst the public, conservative traditionalists insisted on authenticity of the traditional buildings, not only in terms of the form, but also in terms of spatial configuration, building materials, and original meanings. Commenting on the most popular form of the hanok renovation project in the Bukchon—adding a basement or second floor—a person wrote in an internet discussion board:

*Have you seen the two-story hanok? Those buildings with concrete basements and Korean traditional houses on top cannot be called hanok. It is like a man wearing a western suit and a Korean hat. Some people put a glass roof above their courtyard. Once this outdoor space becomes indoor space, it loses its original meaning as a hanok. It is not a hanok anymore.*
The insistence of conservative traditionalists on the original forms and meanings behind the traditional buildings are again reinforced by their emphasis on following traditional building practices. This issue was frequently raised during the summer program. The program was organized in a way that ordinary people could learn about traditional buildings and apply that knowledge to their own building processes. Logically, a significant portion of building materials and processes were modified so as to be easily followed by non-professionals. Against these “adapted” methods, several program participants, especially those practitioners who were involved in the actual erection of the wooden building frame, made frequent arguments for traditional materials/processes. Besides the total rejection of modern building materials designed to mimic traditional building materials, the conservative traditionalists also insisted on traditional building processes, as argued by a practitioner during the program:

In the real traditional building process, people did not use those standard timbers delivered from factories. The real dopyunsu (the chief carpenter in traditional building process) managed not only to erect the timber frame but also selected trees with the knowledge of appropriate species and age for different parts of the building, harvested trees with the knowledge of when to harvest, trimmed the timber with the knowledge of the direction of natural growth, carved out joints considering how the timber would be placed in relation to the site, and assembled them without using any modern fasteners.

This holistic approach—as opposed to practices in the modern building industry where standardization of each process makes the building process efficiently transferable to different builders—could be, according to the conservative traditionalists, properly taught only through traditional apprenticeships. According to the field instructor of the summer program, who was a field practitioner:

It is better to learn under a dopyunsu by observing and doing it. A dopyunsu works without architectural drawing, while people trained in schools work with drawings. The real dopyunsu worked without drawings. It was all in here (pointing to his head)... I do not recommend schools.

In various media that reports major hanok restoration projects, including several cases in the Bukchon, the “star” designer was always referred to as an “apprentice” of a well-known legendary dopyunsu, therefore emphasizing the lineage of traditional skills. In that sense, the traditional buildings became an art piece to be preserved at any cost, or a luxury for wealthy people to enjoy as a vacation home, as is happening with a significant portion of the Bukchon, rather than as a utilitarian dwelling space.
Progressive Traditionalism

Mostly coming from scholars, with their predilection for academic objectivism, the progressive traditionalists argue that the core idea of conservative traditionalism, i.e., insistence on original form and process, and the rejection of standardization, were the major reasons behind the disappearance of traditional buildings. The organizer of the summer program argues that:

*We need to continue the tradition that is suitable for contemporary life. But they (conservative traditionalists) insist on tradition... as if only something that is painstaking to make is real tradition... We need the system that works for our current lifestyle...*

During the actual construction of the hanok in the summer program, the argument between the two parties frequently heated up enough to halt the entire construction process, ultimately leading to delays for the entire program. On the penultimate day of the program, the organizer dismissed the carpenters, who were the most arduous followers of the traditional building methods, and bitterly stated to some of his colleagues and me that he would use modern materials to finish up the rest of the construction without the presence of the carpenters. He stressed that, in the context of the modern building system, standardization of building materials and processes is a rational choice, and perhaps the only answer. The bitterness between the two parties was even more pronounced in the case of the Bukchon. In a short documentary film that reveals how designated cultural assets in the Bukchon are “destroyed” through modification and rebuilding due to the “erroneous” guidance of the government, the reporter asks:

*Is there such a thing as a two-storey hanok?*

To which a government official replies:

*Is there any law against a two-storey hanok? The average hanok in that neighborhood can’t really keep a traditional interior. The government can’t buy and maintain them. This is how the hanok are supported now: The interior can be like a modern building so that it is comfortable to live in, with things like Western-style kitchens. Only the exterior of the building matters.*
 Tradition and modernity: intrinsic union

The intersection between modernity and traditional environments has been explored by many researchers, with concentration on its link to nationalism and identity building (Fuller, 1988; Mitchell, 2001; Pai, 1997; Robinson, 2001) and issues of resistance arising from these activities (Mitchell, 2001), as well as tourism and the commodification of traditional places (Daher, 1999; Good, 2005; Latter, 1999; Oliver, 2001), which often times lead to a larger community narrative about modernism, capitalism, and globalization (Chan, 2005; Robinson, 2001; Upton, 2001). Upton (2001) in particular, explains the phenomena with the language of late-capitalism, particularly how the global economy searches out cultural raw materials in exchange for hard cash. The ways in which tradition and modernity were combined in the hanok of the Bukchon can be explained by the idea this late-capitalism. The traditional buildings were frequently packaged so as to create multi-dimensional experiences tailored to the needs of tourists, both international and domestic. The converted hanok were frequently used as cultural centers or small gallery spaces for Korean traditional teas, dinnerware boutiques, and artisans’ shops. In these spaces, the total experience of traditional life was packaged and sold to both Koreans and tourists from other countries.

It seems that the issue of identity construction is an intrinsic part of the late-capitalism. During the course of the study, I encountered numerous traditional villages already developed or in the planning stages, through which local governments and commercial sectors offer programs for children or families to experience an old way of life, therefore learning what it means to be an “authentic” Korean—although one can also observe the capital side of this business as a tool to generate revenue for the local community.

Another area where the theme of tradition was prominent was in the production and marketing of building materials. The theme of traditional houses and the exclusive use of natural materials became a very powerful marketing theme, particularly when compared to the ubiquitous high-rise apartment buildings and their extensive use of modern materials, such as concrete and synthetic materials. While increasing incidences of modern ailments such as asthma and cancer are frequently attributed to modern built-environments in the media, traditional building materials such as yellow clay, wood, and natural stones are advertised as “beneficial,” with the ability to cure
or prevent these modern ailments. More recently, several public apartment projects emulated the hanok interior in their high-rise apartments. The photographs of the interior, as shown in newspapers, were indistinguishable from the traditional hanok—except for the fact that the courtyards have blank, white ceilings instead of sky.

In all of these cases, one can observe that Koreans freely move between traditionalism and modernism, continually negotiating the blending of modern convenience and traditional naturalism. In this context, one can no longer distinguish Korean traditionalism as an identity marker and modern technology as a tool to establish it. If identity building is indeed a fundamental part of human nature and activity, and modern convenience and efficiency is something that cannot be lived without, both traditionalism and modernism are indeed integral parts of Korean identity, and perhaps these represent a reasonable answer to the effects of globalization that Koreans will continue to face.

**Conclusion**

This chapter examines how the notion of tradition is perceived, interpreted, and then remade in the contemporary building industry in Korea. While traditional houses were an embodiment of the culture in which they were originally made, traditional houses as separated from their original contexts have taken on totally different meanings. A quickly disappearing traditional environment caused by intense modernization made Koreans perceive these disappearing features as precious vessels of their national traditions. As an efficient way of establishing self-identity and creating tangible income through commodification, tradition shows itself to us as “a product of modernity, which itself was the product of change and history” (Graburn, 1997).

In this context, the theme of tradition has indeed become quite utilitarian. In this study, traditional environments were packaged into two distinctive formats: a kind of stage where total experiences are fabricated, and a venue where modern industrial products borrow from the concept of tradition. In the latter case, the theme of tradition and its symbolic meanings become part of everyday life as contained in

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5 Amongst 301 construction-related companies who exhibited their products during the construction expo held in 2008 in Korea, 60 companies (25 in interior and exterior finishing, 16 in residential heating systems, and 19 in various other areas) borrowed concepts from traditional houses, or the naturalism found in traditional buildings, in developing and packaging their products.
modern buildings. A more active desire for traditional lifestyles in contemporary Korea resulted in traditional buildings tailored to new lifestyles, with bold uses of modern building features utilized within them.

In this sense, the public discourse surrounding the construction and maintenance of traditional houses in Korea—conservative versus progressive traditionalism—was not quite successful in contextualizing their technocratic argument into a larger social political backdrop. This suggests important future research directions. Rather than debating over which detail of the hanok is authentically Korean, scholars need to look into the actual, everyday uses of the traditional houses. Assuming that a house inevitably reflects the worldview, values and lifestyle of the people who live in it (Bourdieu, 1979; Duncan, 1982; Pader, 1993; Rapoport, 1969; Yan, 2005), examining these unexplored territories can be meaningful. What parts of traditional houses and the meanings attached to them survive and change through time, and what parts of them disappear? The answers to these questions can give us insight into: (1) how traditional ways of life are perceived, evaluated, and reconstructed by receiving generations, and as a result, (2) how the house form evolves alongside a rapidly globalizing society with its unprecedented complexity and diversity. In this way, the dichotomy between modernity and tradition disappears and the issues of tradition, identity and environment can be meaningfully explored as they relate to the practices of our everyday lives.
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