

Inheriting Negative History*

Feminist Movements and the Transformation of Red-light Districts in South Korea

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of the feminist movement in transforming South Korea's red-light districts (RLDs), focusing on how feminist activism engaged with other stakeholders to close RLDs and address the history of sex work and women's exploitation. The case of Jeonju City offers a unique example of feminist involvement in RLD transformation, where feminists actively advocated for closing the RLD and participated in city planning. Public facilities were established to commemorate the RLD's history, using culture and art for city development. This paper analyzes responses from feminists, local communities, policymakers, and the public to understand why potentially detrimental urban development was realized. Specifically, I focus on the political representation of civil society and protest signals, exploring why politicians respond to feminist interests. The findings highlight the interaction between feminists and other organizations, which influenced policymakers and defined the changes. This case study has important implications not only for the role of feminist actors in RLD in general, but also for how social movements produce outcomes in niche issue policy processes.

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Introduction

Red-light districts (RLDs) generally refer to entertainment districts, brothels, and streets in urban areas where businesses (individuals, shops, and businesses) for the purpose of sex, whether legal or illegal, are concentrated ([Ashworth, White, and Winchester 1988](#)). The term “red-light district” is commonly used because many of the shops and businesses that sell sex in Europe and Asia are lit with red light, creating a glamorous atmosphere.

This paper examines the role of the feminist movement in transforming South Korea’s RLDs. Specifically, this paper identifies how feminist activism engaged with and built consensus among other stakeholders in town revitalization efforts, aiming to close the RLDs and address the history of sex work and women’s exploitation.

Academic research on the RLD began with a series of sociological studies by the Chicagoans ([Liempt and Chimienti 2017](#)). For example, Burgess ([2008](#)) drew an ecological map of the city, in which the red-light district was depicted as an important district. On the other hand, Reckless ([1926](#)), another Chicagoan sociologist, based on empirical research in Chicago, clarified the distribution of in the city and concluded that Burgess’s definition of a district was too narrow. Such painstaking descriptions of society by the Chicagoans placed the RLD in an academic position.

Since then, many studies on RLD have been conducted. Factors explaining where sex work occurs in cities have begun to be examined ([Ashworth, White, and Winchester 1988](#); [Hubbard 1999, 1997](#); [Ryder 2004](#); [Weitzer 2014](#); [Weitzer and Boels 2015](#)). Among them, Ashworth, White, and Winchester ([1988](#)) have examined the determinants of where RLD is located, dividing them into accessibility, opportunities, and constraints. Regarding accessibility, they point out that RLD has been built near key transportation and logistics points such as stations, bus terminals, wharves, and port basins. Regarding opportunities, they point out the importance of places with a lot of people going in and out, that is, places with a lot of potential customers, while pointing out the importance of high anonymity for both customers and sex workers. In addition, in terms of constraints, they often refer to the movement and redevelopment of RLD due to soaring land prices. Following these studies, more detailed

studies have been conducted in the fields of history, folklore.

On the other hand, geography, tourism, and urban studies have accumulated research on spatial and cognitive changes in red-light districts. For example, Chapuis (2017) examined tourists' perceptions of RLD and normative awareness of sex consumption from the perspective of emotional geography through interviews and fieldwork in the De Wallen district of Amsterdam, which is often taken up in RLD research. As a study dealing with not only changes in perceptions but also changes in space, Liempt and Chimienti (2017) examined it from the perspective of geopolitics and spatial theory. They asked why and how the RLD in Amsterdam and Zurich changed. They clarified that both cities had implemented policies to "hide" or "marginalize" the RLD from urban areas with the discourse of protecting sex workers as victims of "human trafficking" and "exploitation," but in fact, in order to maintain the charm and thrill of the city, the sex industry was protected under certain conditions. They also pointed out that such policies have resulted in the marginalization of the sex industry and the creation of a new negative gender and racial order, which raises concerns about discrimination and the reduction of treatment for sex workers.

Urban research, on the other hand, considers the closure and redevelopment of RLDs from the perspective of urban gentrification. Gentrification is a general term for a series of spatial changes associated with the 'revitalization' of economic and social activities in declining urban districts. Since it is a concept mainly used in urban research and geography, it focuses on spatial changes. Specifically, it refers to a series of processes in which low-income former residents are driven out, the middle class advances, housing and landscape are materially renovated, land prices rise sharply, and ownership of real estate changes (Hamnett 1984: 284; Hamnett 1991: 175).

In particular, even if the RLD is closed, the "charm" of the city will be lost from the image until then, and there will be no people. If it is left as it is, it will lead to depopulation and devastation of the city. Therefore, urban policies to eliminate sex work and increase the attractiveness of the city are important. However, it is difficult to restore the district where the sex symbol has disappeared from the original image and industrial structure. Therefore, gentrification by artists and artists has been attracting attention in recent years (Sasajima 2011;

Singelenberg and van Gent 2020).

Sasajima (2013) examined how the red-light district around *Koganecho* station, Yokohama in Japan was gentrified into a town of art by the efforts of local residents, the police, and the government from the perspective of urban renovation and geography. *Koganecho* is often mentioned and referred to as a successful example of the revival of RLD through art. Singelenberg and Gent (2020) classified gentrification of RLDs based on the London-Amsterdam case studies. As a result, they pointed out that it should be noted that many actors have interests in gentrification policy, so there are always tensions, and depending on the relationship of the actors, RLD may be maintained or even developed. In addition to the above, research on gentrification of devastated areas has been accumulated based on the reconstruction of other industrial decline districts and urban development processes, but research on gentrification and transformation of RLDs is still scarce.

In addition, there are few studies on political processes related to RLDs. For example, urban studies have touched on political processes to some extent (van Liempt and Chimienti 2017; Singelenberg and van Gent 2020). However, they focus on geographical changes and changes in the image of the place, and are not interested in political processes themselves. Therefore, it is not clear how the decision-making of the actors in the political processes related to RLDs was carried out and what chain of events led to the political consequences.

This paper examines the policy process of the RLD from the perspective of political science, and examines the conditions and mechanisms under which feminist interests are reflected. Specifically, I construct a theoretical framework from the perspective of political representation and protest signals, and discuss the interactions between feminist organizations and other civil society organizations, residents, and even political elites to clarify the process by which feminist opinions are reflected in policy. If I look ahead to the conclusion, it becomes clear that in Jeonju, South Korea, when only feminists are signaling to politicians, politicians hardly act and do not lead to the closure of the RLD, but when resident organizations start expressing their opinions, whether in favor or against, the result of politicians acting is the construction of buildings that “inheriting negative history” sought by feminist movements.

This paper is organized as follows. The next section introduces the case of this paper

and explains that the case of Korea is very unique in capturing the politics of RLD. It then introduces the data and analytical method of this paper. After that, it clarifies how the RLD of Jeonju City, Korea was closed and the town planning was achieved with the feminist interests reflected. Finally, it discusses the results of the analysis and explains the limitations and implications.

Case Selection

The case studies in this paper are the closure and redevelopment of RLD, known as “성매매 집결지”(means ‘sex trafficking congregation points’) in South Korea, and the policy processes surrounding policies to support the elimination of sex work. In South Korea, interest in the issue of sex trafficking grew after women engaged in sex work were killed in a series of fires in 2000 and 2002 at RLD in Gunsan, North Jeolla Province(Jeollabuk-do). Against the backdrop of growing public opinion calling for the need to crack down on sex trafficking, the Law Concerning the Prevention of Sex Trafficking and the Closure of RLDs was passed in 2004 under the Roh Moo-hyun administration. The Law on the Prevention of Sex Trafficking, which was passed at that time, was epoch-making in that it not only prohibited sex trafficking and established penal provisions, but also included measures to support the elimination of sex work.

Even after the enactment of the law, however, the RLDs continued to exist. The law left it up to each local government to decide how to provide support and expose sex traffickers. Therefore, it took some time before the law was actually used. On the other hand, in the late 2010s, many RLDs were dismantled and closed down in the course of the development of condominiums and commercial facilities. As a result of the closure of the RLDs based on the “logic of development” described above, the sex trade became literally invisible, but it continued in an *invisible* form, such as online. In addition, there are few RLDs that are still operating as of 2024, about 20 years after the enforcement of the law, and there are areas that took many time to close down. In other words, there are regional differences in the closure and persistence of RLDs.

Furthermore, it is essential to punish the traffickers and support the women who worked there, so that even if a business is closed in one area, it will be shifted to another area or to online. Therefore, it is necessary to punish the traffickers and stop them from operating in the future. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide various forms of support to resolve the economic and social circumstances that force women to engage in sex trafficking, and to prevent them from reengaging in sex work in other areas or from engaging in *invisible* sex trafficking online. Because women who engage in sex trafficking may be re-engaged in other areas due to the problems of poverty and social isolation, even if they close certain RLDs.

However, the degree of punishment and support for desexing differ greatly depending on the local government. In particular, the method and amount of support, as well as the existence and extent of additional support measures, differ even though the Sex Trafficking Prevention Act stipulates that support from the national and local governments should be provided. In this respect, the case of the RLDs in South Korea is unique.

Specially, The case studies in this paper focus on the process of the government's policy on the closure of *Seonmi-chon*(선미촌), a RLD in Jeonju, North Jeolla Province. Jeonju, the capital of North Jeolla Province, is a city in the southwestern part of the country with a population of about 660,000 and about 290,000 households. Jeonju is known as the “city of history” for its historical landmarks, including its tangible and intangible cultural properties.

Seonmi-chon in Jeonju City is known as the “most successful case” in South Korea in terms of the closure of RLDs. There are three reasons why *Seonmi-chon* is considered the “most successful case”:

First, the methods and consequences of redevelopment. Jeonju City and *Seonmi-chon* have achieved the closure of the RLD, but they are considered to be particularly successful in the subsequent revitalization of the town. Specifically, they not only attracted people by attracting artists and studios and holding events, but also improved the infrastructure by paving roads and installing municipal institutions. Most notably, as a result of these developments, the “Sex Equality Jeonju” was established in *Seonmi-chon* as a base for disseminating women and human rights, and a project to archive the history of *Seonmi-chon* is being carried out. The history of being a RLD is originally recognized as a negative aspect. Therefore, from

the standpoint of local residents and the city, the project to leave a negative history should be hesitated. However, there is an idea that feminist groups should establish a base to inherit and raise awareness of the negative history. The case of Jeonju City is rare in that the idea of feminist movement is reflected in the town development.

The second is a substantial support policy for sex work. In 2017, Jeonju City enacted the “Self-Support Ordinance for Victims of Sex Trafficking,” and has been expanding its support by “adding” or “extending” it to the national support. Specifically, it provides 1 million won (about 732 USD) for the cost of living, 300,000 won (about 219 USD) for vocational training, 7 million won (about 5,127 USD) for housing support, and 5 million won (about 3,662 USD) for self-reliance support per person. In terms of the total number and total amount of support, it provided support for a total of 38 people and spent 1.35 billion won in the budget from November 2017 to December 2021. It is a model case in terms of support for sex work, not only in terms of living costs but also in terms of various expenses ranging from vocational training to housing costs.

Third, civil society organizations and the political elite actively collaborated in the process of enacting the above policies. In South Korea, where the history of decentralization is short and public participation has stagnated, opinions to increase collaborative projects from the perspective of public autonomy are growing. Jeonju City and *Seonmi-chon* are attracting attention as a model case.

Theoretical Framework

Political Representation of Civil Society and Protest Signaling

Feminist actors in *Seonmi-chon* have been calling for the recording of RLD history as a “negative memory” in the process of promoting the reconstruction of the town. However, there is no incentive for the city and local residents to record the memory of being RLD. Rather, they want to hide the “shameful” and “disgraceful” history for them. In fact, local residents, middle groups and the city initially rushed to create a “new” town without emphasizing the

fact that it was RLD as much as possible. The idea of community-led and gender-friendly town development advocated by feminists was not acceptable to other actors.

Under these adverse circumstances, when is the argument of the feminist movement accepted? This paper focuses on the interests expressed by each actor in civil society, *political representation*. The advocacy function of civil society organizations in the policy process has been emphasized in political science. However, the success of advocacy by organizations and the realization of policies in line with the interests of organizations depends on politicians receiving their arguments and reflecting them in policies. In other words, the motivation of politicians to receive the message of civil society is important.

A discussion of the signaling effects of social movements is instructive. Gillion (2012), for example, argued that politicians are sensitive to protests in their constituencies and therefore change their behavior when a related protest event occurs in their constituency. He examined the relationship between the number of protest events in a constituency and related roll call votes by using roll call votes of state legislators in the United States and protest event data at the constituency level. The results showed that when there are many protests in a constituency, the probability that a politician elected from the constituency in question will hold a roll call vote related to the protest is high. Although roll call votes themselves do not necessarily lead directly to policies, Gillion is suggestive of the possibility that protests can serve as a signal to politicians to change their behavior.

Politicians do not receive all protest signals, however, because many social movements operate within a pluralistic democratic government, so the signals have to be filtered. Therefore, previous research has focused on the clarity of civil society's signals as a whole. That is, a complex message conveyed by a protest is less likely to be conveyed, whereas a single signal is more likely to be conveyed (Lohmann 1993). For example, in the case of women's organizations, protests sometimes convey not only "women," "gender," or "well-being," such as sexism and sexual violence, but also "environmental," "protection of animals," and "peace." In fact, Fassiotto and Soule (2017) have quantitatively shown that social movements are successful in areas where protests are "loud and clear," as their title suggests, or where only protests on a single topic are observed. That is, if the protest signal within a constituency or

region is a single subject, the protest message may be more likely to be conveyed to policy makers.

The above discussion, however, applies only to policy areas that voters consider to be of relative importance. This is because politicians do not seek to engage in policies that are of little interest to voters in the first place. When politicians engage in policies, they need to devote evidence, costs, and political resources sufficient to convince the bureaucracy and voters. From the point of view of politicians acting for re-election and promotion, it is irrational to devote limited resources to the realization of “niche” policies that do not attract the attention of voters. Therefore, the policy in question is not a policy that is so important to voters. In other words, in the policy processes of *low salience*, the simplicity of the signals of social movements rather emphasizes the “niche” of the policy and does not lead to the promotion of the policy.

What kind of signals do social movements send in order for politicians to act? In this paper, I believe that politicians should focus on the intensity and variety of signals as “fire alarms” (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984), rather than constantly watching the activities of social movements in civil society, which are diverse and complex. In this view, politicians should focus on the fact that whether or not actors in different positions are sending signals.

Therefore, this paper considers the following theoretical framework. First of all, in policy processes of *low salience*, not the simplicity of signals, but “diverse” and “strong” messages by social movements expressing different positions are important for policy progress. This is because when there are approaches from different positions, politicians get an incentive to act for policy change because they perceive the pressures of policy change from civil society to be high, and therefore the benefits of responding to social demands are high.

In the process of policy making, politicians will prefer consensus among the actors involved after they have begun to engage in policy through strong signals from social movements with different positions. Since politicians do not have preferences for policies that are of little interest to voters, the amount of information they possess is small compared to that of civil society and bureaucracy. Therefore, they will try to formulate policy by forming a council rather than actively formulating policy by themselves. Therefore, in the case of policies that

are of little interest to voters, it is assumed that the mechanism is such that policy making is attempted through interaction between social movements and bureaucrats with different positions, and policy is gradually established.

On the other hand, if social movements with different positions do not protest against the policy and do not send a signal to politicians, politicians should think that the pressure from civil society is weak. In this case, politicians are not expected to act because they think that the costs of acquiring expertise and political resources are higher than the benefits of approaching the policy.

To put the above together and apply it to the case in this paper, the following prediction holds. If *only* feminist movements that want to close the RLD and that want to raise feminist values by remembering its history are holding protests about the RLD, the closure of the RLD and related policy processes are expected to stagnate. This is because for many voters, the closure of the RLD is not a major concern, but rather a concern for the well-being or development of the larger city. On the other hand, if social movement organizations representing other interests, such as local residents and intermediary organizations, focus on this issue at the same time as feminists and take action regardless of whether they are for or against it, politicians will consider the pressure from civil society to be strong and will move to enact policies. In addition, in the process of policy making, politicians will try to form a council to form policies in order to favor agreement among the actors involved. To verify this prediction, this paper examines the political representation of actors and the interaction between actors as follows.

Actors and Their Roles

This paper focuses on political representation of civil society including feminist organization: the *Jeonbuk Center for Human Right of Woman (JCHRW)*. And I also focus on local residents, intermediary organizations, sex traffickers and landowners as actor of civil society. At the beginning of JCHRW's campaign, the positions of other actors were very different. In particular, trends in local residents and the intermediary organization, the *Jeonju Sustainable Development Council (JSDC, formerly known as Jeonju Agenda 21)*, seem to have been

important factors influencing the political consequences of feminist movement.

In addition, I will examine how the politicians, administrative officials, and police, the mayor and the council, reacted and acted in response to the above-mentioned expressions of the interests of civil society. In particular, the mayor, as the head of the administrative body, had great authority over the development of *Seonmi-chon*. On the other hand, the council had initiatives in the policy process to support sex-free workers when local government budgets were needed. Taking into account these differences in roles, I will examine the dynamism of civil society advocacy and elite action against it.

Data and Methodology

The purpose of this paper is to examine the mechanisms by which feminist movements bring about political outcomes. In order to examine the policy processes of the closure and revitalization of *Seonmi-chon* and the support policy for the elimination of sex work, I use a method called process tracing ([Van Evera 1997](#)). Process tracing is a method of examining the chain path of events or the decision-making process in which initial case conditions are transformed into case outcomes. It is one of the case study methods used to connect and clarify the connections between phases in order to examine how the causes derived from theories and hypotheses affect the outcomes ([George and Bennett 2005](#)). In the theoretical framework of this chapter, it is possible to clarify how the coexistence of groups or the clarity of signals influenced politicians and led to policies. Process tracing is a valid method because the purpose of this chapter is to examine the mechanisms by which feminist movements bring about political outcomes.

As detailed fact-finding is necessary to conduct the above case studies, this paper conducted fieldwork focusing on documentary and interview research. In the documentary research, primary materials such as minutes of local assemblies and committees and administrative materials (some of which were obtained by the author's request for information disclosure), materials issued by organizations and civil and governmental councils, and non-public materials, as well as secondary materials such as newspaper articles (mainly local newspapers),

statistical data on newspaper articles, related books, and statistical data on local governments were collected and arranged.

Interviews were conducted with women's organizations, politicians, and administrative staff in each municipality. Basically, the interviews were conducted in the form of semi-structured interviews in which the questions were decided in advance and additional questions were asked according to the answers. Interviews were conducted face-to-face with the permission of informants and recorded. However, interviews were conducted with administrative staff and some women's organizations in the form of informal interviews. Interviews were also conducted by exchanging the questions by e-mail or chat depending on the situation. The total number of interviews related to this chapter conducted as described above was 10. The average length of formal interviews alone was 1 hour and 45 minutes. The list of interviews and informants related to my case study is shown in the table Table 1.

Table 1: List of Informants

Organization	Informant	Date	Time
JCHRW	A(Executive staff)	Jan. 19, 2022	2 hours
Gender Equality Jeonju	B(General staff)	May 12, 2022	(Written responses)
JSDC	C(General staff)	May 12, 2022	1 hour
Private-Public Council	D(Urban engineering specialist)	May 12, 2022	1 hour
Jeonju City Office	E(General staff)	July 13, 2022	(Informal)
Jeonju City	F(Former mayor)	May 12, 2022	2 hours

In addition to documentation and interviews, field visits were made to sites where development and revitalization had already taken place, to offices of women's organizations providing support and lobbying for women, and to other areas where sporadic sex trafficking was reported to be taking place. Photographs were taken and existing documents and documents were checked for evidence.

In this paper, the data obtained in this way were arranged and analyzed as follows: first, a table of dates for each policy process was prepared mainly from newspaper articles, minutes, and administrative materials; second, part of the interview data was transcribed and the relevant table of dates was added and corrected; third, facts were checked by informants where the timing and content were unclear, and if there were errors in the table of dates, they were corrected; and fourth, the policy process was described in detail by comparing it with the local environment, photographs taken by the author, and materials obtained.

Case Study

The Historical Formation of *Seonmi-chon*

As in other parts of South Korea, the RLD in Jeonju originated from *yukaku* (red-light districts in Japanese) and *kashi-zashiki* (Japanese-style place for assignations) established during the period of Japanese colonial rule. In the 1910s, after the annexation of Korea, a Japanese-style *yukaku* was established in the neighboring city of *Gunsan*, North Jeolla Province. Later, in 1916, there is a record that the Police Department of North Jeolla Province of the *Chosen Sotoku-fu* (Governor-General of Korea) allowed *kashi-zashiki* businesses only in specific areas in accordance with Article 3 of the Regulation for *kashi-zashiki*. Since then, *yukaku* and *kashi-zashiki* districts have also been established in Jeonju.

With the end of the war in 1945, the *yukaku* and *kashi-zashiki* were dismantled, but under the US military government, they were used as *comfort stations* for the US military. Later, from around the 1950s, Korean vendors set up shop again in various parts of Jeonju. Among them, *Seonmi-chon* was formed when brothels gathered around the former Jeonju Station (located in the current Jeonju City Hall, Fig). As mentioned earlier, RLD was often formed near important urban transportation points such as train stations and bus terminals, and *Seonmi-chon* was a typical example. *Seonmi-chon* attracted tourists from various parts of the country and developed.

Seonmi-chon has remained almost the same as it was at the time of its formation,

although it has been gradually relocated due to development and road construction. *Seonmi-chon* is located about 200 meters north of the current Jeonju City Hall, and there is a high school and a residential area nearby. There is even an agricultural cooperative and a large supermarket on the main street in front of the Jeonju City Hall, which has been improved due to the loss of the train station. If we went north on one of these main streets, we would see a ‘red-lite’ entertainment district(Figure 1).

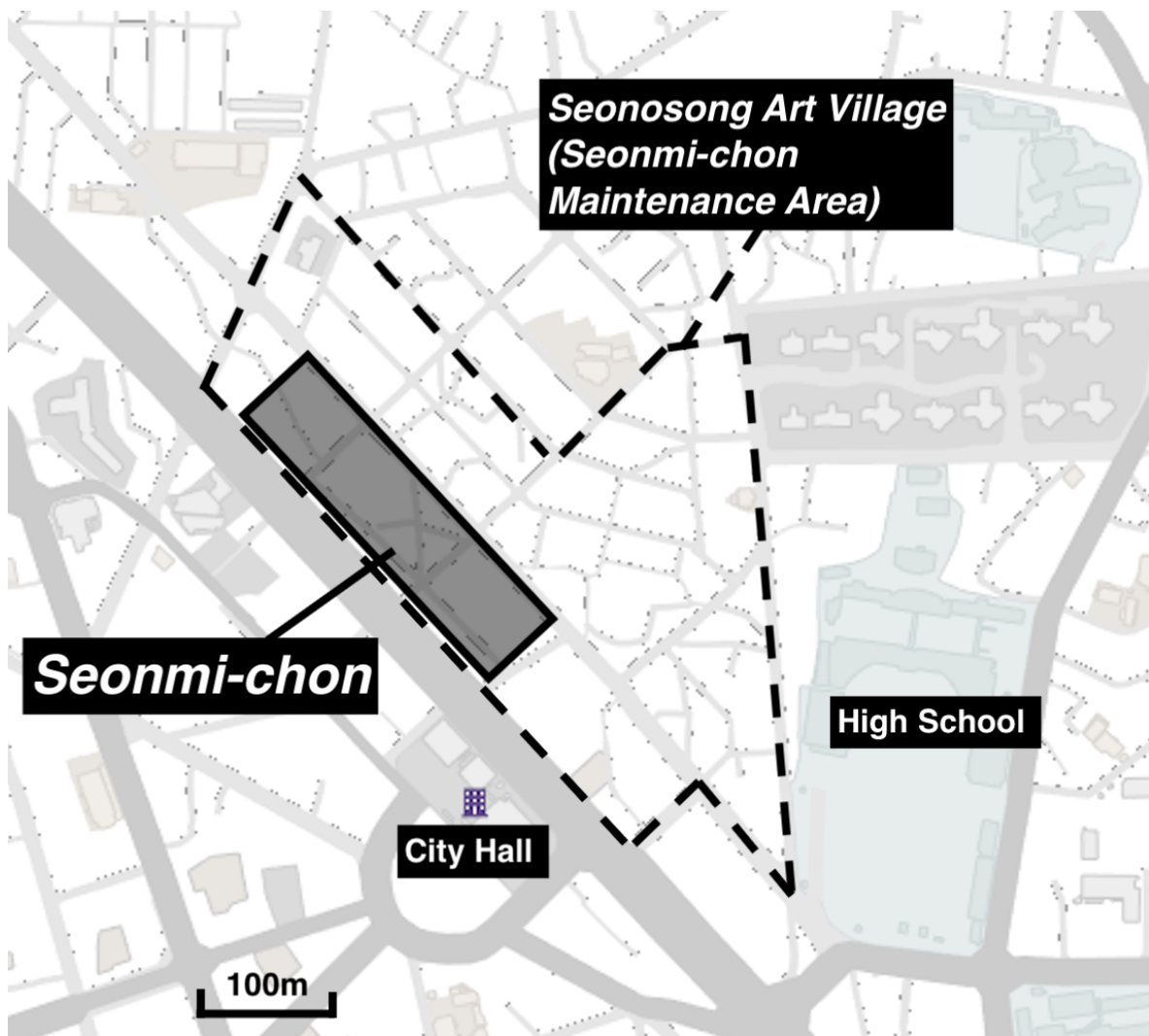


Figure 1: Location of *Seonmi-chon*

Although *Seonmi-chon* was formed and developed in above way, it had been the target of police and government crackdowns even before it was closed down by the city. However,

the reason for this was not to crack down on sex trafficking, but rather to protect young people and maintain public order because there was a high school nearby. On the other hand, there is no evidence that politicians or other government organizations have taken active measures to close down or develop *Seonmi-chon*. For example, the work of the welfare department, which conducted regular examinations for sexually transmitted diseases, was reported. There is also little evidence that *Seonmi-chon* was mentioned by women's organization or other civil society organizations, so by the 1990s, the problem of sex trafficking concentration sites had not become visible.

Closing the RLD and Revitalizing the Town

The focus of attention on *Seonmi-chon* was triggered by the two fires in the Gunsan City Sex Trade Concentration Area mentioned earlier (“*Seonmi-chon* Archive Book 2000-2020”). Gunsan City is also a municipality in North Jeolla Province, which is only about 40 km northwest of Jeonju City. In addition, *Daemyeong-dong* and *Gaebok-dong*, where the accidents occurred, were often mentioned together with *Seonmi-chon* in Jeonju City in newspaper reports as famous RLDs in North Jeolla Province. For this reason, public was focused on *Seonmi-chon* right after the fire broke out in Gunsan City. The police also mentioned measures such as “strengthening the crackdown” right after the fire.

Against this background, the Jeonbuk Women's Organization United(JWOU), a coalition of women's organizations based in North Jeolla Province, established the *Jeonbuk Sex Trafficking Women's Human Rights Support Center*(later known as JCHRW) as a permanent women's counseling organization centered in *Seonmi-chon*. From this time, the women's organizations started a campaign to enact laws, closed down the sex trafficking concentration areas, and began providing support for sex worker women.

At the central level, the above-mentioned movement by women's organizations to enact the Sex Trafficking Prevention Law was in full swing. In 2004, the Sex Trafficking Prevention Law was enacted, and immediately after that, sex traffickers in *Seonmi-chon* held protests in Jeonju City.

Following the enactment and enforcement of the law at the central level, Jeonju City decided to set up a special department that would be able to carry out comprehensive work such as cracking down on sex traffickers and providing administrative guidance in order to prevent sex trafficking. On July 2, 2004, Jeonju City announced that it was planning to shut down *Seonmi-chon*, which had 85 offices at the time, and *Seonhwa-chon*, which had 49 offices at other sex trafficking concentration sites in Jeonju, starting in 2006. In other words, the administration had clearly announced its intention to shut down the sex trafficking concentration sites at that point. In response, the sex traffickers showed a thorough resistance to the government's Sex Trafficking Prevention Law and the phased closure of Jeonju City. However, the resistance movement was not accepted, and the law was enforced on September 22 of the same year.

After the law went into effect, the "red light" faded away for a while. One of the reasons for this is that the police started to crack down right after the law went into effect. In September, before the law went into effect, the police announced that they were going to crack down hard. When the law went into effect, the police did nothing more than patrol the area to see how things were going, but within a month of the law going into effect, they launched a large-scale crackdown. With the enforcement of the law and the subsequent large-scale arrests by the police, it was reported that the number of employees in the area had dropped by about half compared to before the law went into effect.

On Oct. 2 of the same year, 300 sex traffickers, consisting of the owners, employees, and nearby merchants, announced that they would hold a rally in front of the Jeonju City Hall to oppose the enforcement of the special law on sex trafficking. On Oct. 6, the JWOU held a press conference to strongly denounce the. As expected, however, business owners held rallies on Oct. 7 and 8 to criticize the police and women's organizations. On Oct. 12, an incident occurred in which a business owner, who felt bitter about the impact of the special law on sex trafficking on business operations, destroyed a car belonging to a women's organization, further sharpening the conflict between women's organizations and the owners.

After another month of enforcement, owners began to lift the voluntary suspension of business. On October 19 of the same year, the owners in *Seonmi-chon*, announced that they

would resume business in line with offices across the country. As a result, the sex work in *Seonmi-chon* was closed for only one month after the enforcement of the Sex Trade Prevention Act, and it was decided to resume business in earnest.

Since the beginning of 2005, police crackdowns have been on the decline. As a result of a special crackdown on sex trafficking between September 23, 2004, and March 18, 2005, the police announced that they had uncovered a total of 125 cases involving 238 people, 26 of whom had been arrested, and that the number of female sex workers in the province had dropped from 214 in 91 to 136 in 72. Even at this point, however, *Seonmi-chon* was still operating with the “red light” on. In other words, the police did not stop cracking down on sex trafficking in *Seonmi-chon* because it had disappeared.

The reason why the police did not continue to actively crack down on sex trafficking was because they feared that the crackdown would make it difficult to identify criminal acts and eventually worsen the security of the area. The then head of the North Jeolla Provincial Police Agency made the following comment when he revealed his visit to *Seonmi-chon* in a meeting with reporters.

In a meeting with reporters from the Jeonbuk Police Department on Jan. 21, Lim was asked, “What’s going on in the six months since the crackdown on sex trafficking?” He said, “I went to Seonmi-chon with my entourage while jogging at dawn,” adding, “A number of shops have closed down, but one or two of them told me to take a rest.”, “If brothels are completely closed, will inevitably occur in residential areas and in new forms of business,” adding, “We will eradicate the of minors and the of imprisoned and enslaved people.” (Jeonbuk Ilbo, March 22, 2005)

At the same time, the administrative authorities also stopped taking administrative measures that had been taken after the enforcement of the Act. The reason for this was that as a result of the revelation by the police, the sex trade was no longer conducted in a “visible” manner, and it became invisible. As a result, it became impossible for the Bureau of Social

Welfare to carry out the inspection, and there were concerns about the spread of venereal diseases and the deterioration of sanitary conditions. Then, it became increasingly difficult to expect the police and the administrative authorities to crack down on RLD. In other words, although the Act on the Regulation of RLD was passed and the administrative authorities and the police started to expose and regulate RLD, they did not close down RLD as a result. This shows that strong regulation at the central level does not necessarily lead to the closure of RLDs.

Start “Governance”: Establishment of Public-Private Councils and the Setbacks

In 2007, when the police and the government could no longer be expected to crack down, JCHRW launched a new campaign to close *Seonmi-chon*. This was a “governance” campaign involving the political elite and local residents. Specifically, it made recommendations by forming a network in the form of a forum in solidarity with local residents, other civil society organizations and experts.

On Oct. 11, 2007, JCHRW held a forum on the settlement of the sex trade settlement issue to raise the issue of the declining police crackdown. The first forum was attended by senior officials from civil society organizations, including the director of JCHRW, the head of JWOU, lawyers, and the secretary-general of the Jeonbuk Citizens’ Solidarity for Participatory Autonomy. However, the administration’s response at this point was lukewarm, with the director of the Jeonju City Welfare and Environment Bureau saying, “We agree with the closure of *Seonmi-chon* and *Seonhwa-chon*, but it’s practically impossible to impose an administrative punishment.”

On November 2, JCHRW attended the second meeting of the Council for the Prevention and Eradication of Sex Trafficking and the Prevention of Violence against Women, which was hosted by the Council for the Prevention and Eradication of Sex Trafficking. The director said, “In the case of Jeonju City, there were 33 administrative sanctions against sex traffickers in 2004, nine in 2005, six in 2006, and one as of 2007.” The center’s director said, “Local

governments' commitment to the eradication of sex trafficking is poor.” In addition to the North Jeolla Provincial Police Agency, officials from JCHRW, the Provincial Office of Education, and five local governments in the province participated in the meeting, which was set up to grasp the actual situation of sex trafficking in the province. In other words, ‘governance’ in the sense of cooperation between the public and private sectors was established from that time. However, the meeting was limited in that it was not attended by stakeholders such as provincial and municipal councilors and local residents, who influence actual policy decisions.

In light of this limitation, JCHRW held a second forum on December 13 of the same year in which Jeonju city council members, the head of JWOU, and administrative officials participated to discuss alternatives for closing down and improving the assembly site. It is clear that they had already formed a network with the political elite.

The third meeting, which was held the following year on May 15, 2008, was renamed the “Gathering Meeting” and was held in a more open manner. The head of the Jeonju City Women’s Policy Team, who presented the plan to close *Seonmi-chon* during the meeting, said, “It is difficult to buy all the buildings in *Seonmi-chon* at once due to the poor local finances, so we are proceeding with the project step by step,” adding, “This year, we proposed to the government the enactment of a special law to establish a basis for administrative punishment of unlicensed sex traffickers and compensation for gathering sites.” The administrative staff also agreed to punish sex traffickers while considering the financial burden.

The results of these “governance” activities soon became apparent. On March 9, 2009, the following year, Jeonju City announced its long-term plan to purchase brothels and use them as offices for women’s organizations. When the project was planned, Jeonju City estimated that it would cost about 30 billion won to purchase 59 buildings in *Seonmi-chon*. As a local government, it needed a large budget, so it first purchased a building in *Seonmi-chon* to create a space where women could find jobs and receive vocational training. In fact, at that time, the city government was discussing buying a building in *Seonmi-chon* for 500 million won and renovating it for a total of 700 million won, including 200 million won for renovation costs. From the above, it can be seen that Jeonju City had already presented a specific acquisition plan at that time.

On April 1, 2009, Jeonju City, together with the Jeonju City Solidarity for the Protection of Children and Women, which is made up of 18 private, government, and professional organizations, held a discussion in a conference room on the fourth floor of the Jeonju City Hall on the “Plan for the Purchase and Utilization of the *Seonmi-chon* Base,” and conveyed the same policy to the organizations. At that time, Jeonju City recognized that the budget was the biggest obstacle to the problem, and said that it would make efforts to reflect it in the supplementary budget in May of the same year.

However, this plan ended in failure. First, the administration failed to reflect the aforementioned plan in the supplementary budget. Despite the “small” supplementary budget of around 700 million won, negative opinions continued to emerge in the assembly. After that, the city tried to get 1 billion won in budget support from the central government, but it gave up because there was a counterargument that “it is against fairness to provide budget support only to Jeonju City when there are around 30 to 40 places like *Seonmi-chon* where sex trafficking is concentrated.” As a result, the budget from the central government was not secured, and the city budget could not be prepared either.

In fact, according to the minutes of the meeting at that time, the administration side suggested in the committee deliberation that it should be included in the main budget, but the assembly members at that time are evading the budget. The following is an exchange between a member of the Welfare and Environment Committee of the Jeonju City Council and the director of the Women and Youth Division, which was in charge at that time, on July 8, 2009.

Member: At the meeting, I had a lot of discussions with the members of the Diet, but buying No. 11 is not a matter for the government to consider. I talked about the budget for setting up a base that would be built if we bought a building for around 700 million yen as a trial and set up the base anyway. What happened to it?

Director of Youth Division: So we reflected it in the first supplementary budget, but it dropped out because the city's financial resources were too poor. I feel it's a little difficult to secure it with the supplementary budget unless it's included

in the main budget.

Member: By the way, if this year's budget is no good, even if we say next year's budget, those people are not always willing to sell.

Director of Youth Division: That's right. So, while persuading them, we will also make efforts for the budget so that we can improve it, and meet with those people to persuade them.

(Proceedings of the Welfare and Environment Committee of the First Regular Meeting of the 264th Jeonju City Council)

From the above, it can be seen that even though the necessity of improving *Seonmi-chon* was agreed upon, whether or not to raise the budget was a different matter for the politicians. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the mayor did not appear at all so far. Not only the mayor, but also many of the members of the Assembly, except for those who participated in the debate, did not speak out and did not move to secure the budget. On the contrary, even the members of the Assembly who participated in the debate did not seem to have moved to secure the budget. In other words, even though the “governance” was formed by JCHRW on a wide scale, there was little movement by the politicians.

Why did the feminist movement by JCHRW fail to move politicians despite the formation of a network and the involvement of many stakeholders? According to the theoretical framework of this paper, it can be inferred that this is because there were initiatives by women's organizations, while there were few signals by other civil society organizations.

In fact, there were almost no active requests from civil society organizations other than women's organizations or local residents. For example, the city government had been drawing up a plan for the revitalization of *Seonmi-chon* since the beginning of 2004 with the involvement of citizens, but the plan was aborted because few citizens participated. As mentioned above, in 2009, the city government, together with the Jeonju City Solidarity for the Protection of Children and Women, which is made up of 18 private, public and professional organizations, held a discussion on the “Plan for the Purchase and Utilization of *Seonmi-chon* Bases” in the conference room on the fourth floor of the Jeonju City Hall, but it took only 40

minutes. In other words, local residents and other civil society organizations were not active in the activities related to the closure of *Seonmi-chon* and did not send a signal to politicians.

It is also important to note that, compared to before and after the Sex Trafficking Prevention Law came into effect, the sex traffickers and landowners who were in charge of the law had almost stopped staging protests. The reason for this is that sex trafficking had become officially illegal, and the benefits of continuing to operate in the form of a shop had been lost. As a result, the so-called “balloon effect” had made it “invisible” to online and one room businesses. From the perspective of the sex traffickers, the benefits of operating in the “visible” *Seonmi-chon* had been reduced, and they could continue to operate in the “invisible” form without having to raise their voices. Ironically, the silence of the other side of the regulation, which is a major stakeholder, has greatly damaged the signal from civil society to politicians, and this has created a political environment unfavorable to feminism.

On the whole, it can be said that there were only a limited number of protest signals from non-women’s organizations at this point. On the contrary, since 2004, when the Sex Trafficking Prevention Law was enacted, public interest in *Seonmi-chon* began to wane, and local newspapers began to report less about it (Figure 2). At the time of the fire in Gunsan City in 2002 and the enactment of related laws in 2004, interest in the closure of *Seonmi-chon* and the problem of the concentration of sex trafficking was growing, and administrative officials actively formed policies and laid the groundwork. Nevertheless, as the interest of voters and other civil society organizations waned, they became perceived as peripheral issues signaled by specific organizations, and failed to motivate the political elite to act. Figure 3, which shows the number of committees that said “*Seonmi-chon*” shows that the municipal assembly members hardly moved at this point.

Establishment of the Private-Public Council and Approach to the Election

The setback of the debate stalled the discussion on the closure of *Seonmi-chon*. Previous studies have focused only on the success of the Private-Public Council since 2014 and have not examined JCHRW’s earlier attempts. In fact, it can be said that the “governance” at this

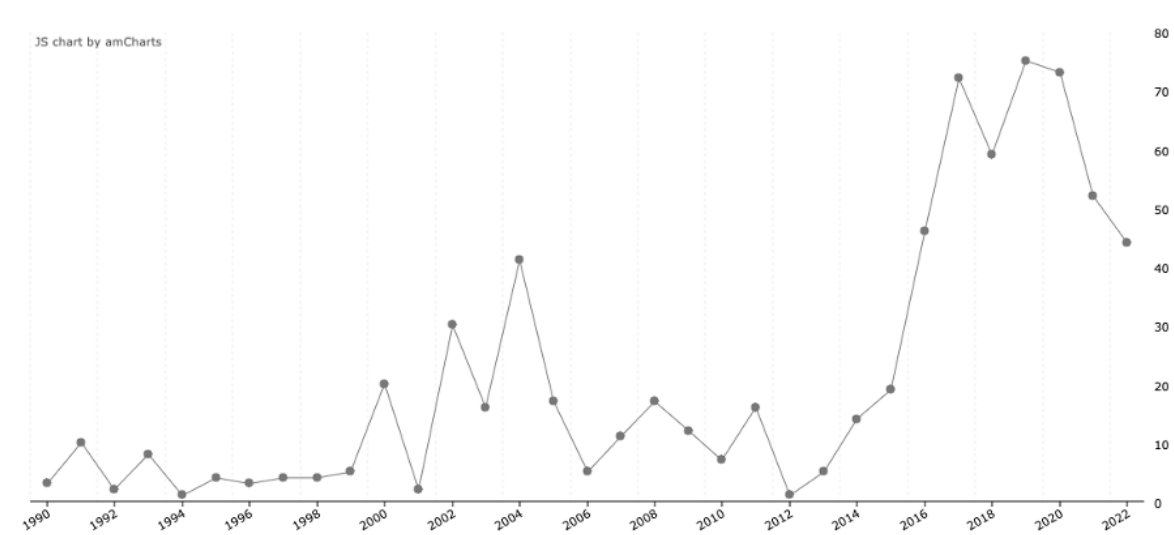


Figure 2: Number of News about “*Seonmi-chon*”

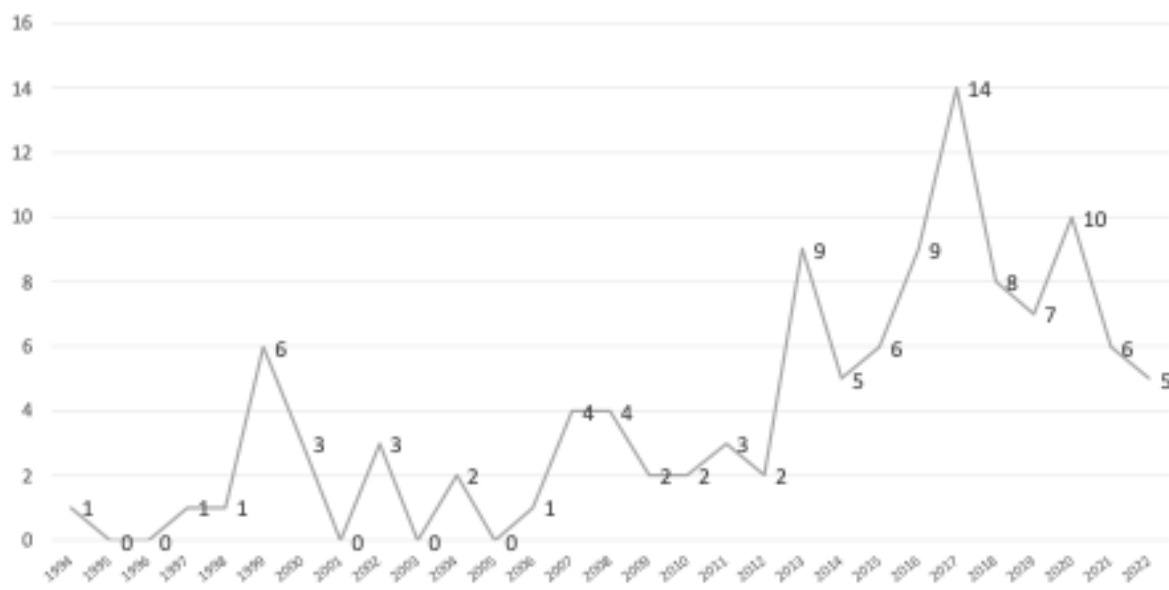


Figure 3: Number of Committees that said “*Seonmi-chon*” in Jeonju City Diet

point was hardly functioning. In other words, even if we form a network and advocate in “solidarity”, politicians do not immediately move.

Discussion sessions started in October 2007 and were suspended after the fifth session in December 2009. They were not held until 2012, partly because the Government’s self-support program was terminated in March 2009, and JCHRW had fewer resources to devote to advocacy. As shown in Figure 6, the movement on the side of the political elite in the Diet has almost disappeared.

In 2014, JCHRW began to use different tactics to increase its approach to politicians. One of the most significant developments was the establishment of the Council of Civil and Governmental Officials and its outreach to mayoral candidates running in the primaries and the general elections. The first to speak out was the then Jeonju Agenda 21 (predecessor of the Council for Sustainable Development), which proposed to JCHRW that a council of civil and governmental officials be established to solve the problem through civil and governmental governance. “At first, I thought it would be impossible,” recalled the director of the JCHRW since then.

So at first I thought, no, we can't solve it even if I try so hard, but I thought, “Can I do it if I try? But it's better than not doing it. Until now, we've been speaking out on our own, but we can do it together,” so I prepared it. So we learned what governance is about from the experts at the Sustainable Development Council, and they got together to learn a lot about and human rights issues. So, I did some research and met with people related to Seonmi-chon. (Interview with A)

As described above, the Council was established and initially held meetings with experts. At that time, however, it was not an official organization of the city, but only a collaboration between an intermediate organization, civil society, and experts. As the meetings continued, “political opportunities” opened up.

So, the Civil Council for the Solution of the Seonmi-chon Problem was officially

held. Until now, (the sex trafficking problem) was the work of our center only, but it became a full-fledged official and public agenda. We had an organizational meeting in February 2014, and what we did at that time was a workshop. A creative workshop, a policy workshop. What we wanted the Seonmi-chon to become, and so on. After talking about this for a long time, there was a local election in June 2014. We chose the mayor. (Interview with A)

On May 8, 2014, the North Jeolla Province Civil Society Organizations Solidarity Council, which is made up of 10 organizations including the JWOU and the North Jeolla Province Environmental Movement Union, held a press conference to present its “38 Good Policies and Pledges.” One of them called for the closure of *Seonmi-chon*. The announcement of such campaign pledges was a political means often used by civil society, and it was said that it was made jointly by progressive civil society. However, the announcement of campaign pledges at that time was clearly made by JCHRW and the Council of Civil Society. Even before the press conference, the Council of Civil Society and JCHRW had been lobbying by visiting all the candidates for the mayoral election and asking questions about the closure of *Seonmi-chon*.

Under the name of the council, we submitted a policy question-and-answer letter to Jeonju mayoral candidates. Usually, this is what we women's groups and civic groups do in the run-up to an election. If they say, “Put it in the campaign pledge,” and reply, “That’s right,” they say, “Well, I’ll let the media know about it.” We put pressure on them like this. (Omission) We met with all the candidates, met with their policy teams, and met the candidates in person and had discussions. (Omission) Then, several candidates held a press conference. “Oh, I’m going to do this to Seonmi-chon.” “I’m going to make it something else. I’m going to shut it down and make it something else.” So, three candidates held a press conference in a row. So, the feeling was that it became a “fad.” We shouldn’t leave Seonmi-chon as it is anymore. We should

shut it down and put something alternative in there. It became a big crowd like this, and this seems to have had an impact. (Interview with A)

As mentioned in the interview above, the then mayoral candidates showed a favorable response to this approach from the civil society. Among them, there was a candidate who was a preliminary candidate for the then Jeonju mayoral candidate of the MDP and later won the election. On May 11 of the same year, he said that he welcomed the “38 Good Policies and Pledges” proposed by civil society organizations in North Jeolla Province, and in it, he made it clear that he would solve the problem of closing *Seonmi-chon* by forming a residents’ consultative body. He won the primary and was elected in the main election, and then served two terms and eight years in the Jeonju municipal government.

Appointment of a New Mayor and Changes in the Council

It was thought that if a mayor who was interested in the closure of the RLD and the development of the town took office, the closure of *Seonmi-chon* would proceed at once. In fact, however, there is no evidence that the mayor moved to close *Seonmi-chon* immediately after taking office. In an interview with the author, the mayor said that he could not help but implement the policies he had pledged, but on the other hand, he was “terrified” because the other party was often related to a gang and he had actually received threats.

However, from an objective point of view, it can be seen that the mayor emphasized the importance of building consensus among citizens and was not active in promoting policies at the beginning. The test of this consensus building was the Council of Civil and Public Officials. However, the early Council of Civil and Public Officials hosted by JCHRW followed the same rut as in 2009. As mentioned above, only actors who shared the same position participated in the debate in 2009. As a result, it was impossible to motivate politicians’ actions. Similarly, the participants of the first round of the “Council for Construction of Civil and Public Governance to Solve *Seonmi-chon* Problem in Jeonju” were nine people, including the director of the center, the director of the secretariat, a member of the Jeonju City Council, and the director

of the Jeonju City Women's Family Division, and there were no actors representing local residents among them.

On September 15, 2014, shortly after the transfer of power, the mayor and Jeonju City announced that they would expand the functions of the Council, including the *Seonmi-chon* Revitalization Project. At that time, a council hosted by JCHRW, which had been led by the private sector, became an advisory body to the city. Prior to this, the city launched a project to study the cost of redeveloping *Seonmi-chon* and development measures to change the functions of *Seonmi-chon*. This project was entrusted to the private sector by the Council for Sustainable Development, which was renamed from Jeonju Agenda 21, in order to build opinions including other positions.

At first glance, the mayor seems to have been actively pursuing the project to close *Seonmi-chon*. However, for the following two reasons, the mayor's action was a detour in the process of closing the RLD. First, since the closure of *Seonmi-chon* requires an agreement to purchase land from a sex dealer and the consent of local residents, if the mayor had been willing to promote the policy, there was potentially no incentive to establish a council. Incorporating the opinions of outsiders such as feminists and middle groups in the council would require the adjustment of interests by multiple actors, which could lead to the stagnation of the policy. In other words, the mayor dared to adopt the "time-consuming" method of the council instead of doing what he could immediately do under his authority.

The second point is that the investigation project was entrusted to the private sector again without using the plan that had been considered by the administration. As mentioned above, the administration had already decided on the development policy of purchasing some buildings by the city in 2004. As will be described later, the result of this investigation was almost the same as the policy that had been proposed by Jeonju City. This suggests that the mayor's action was to postpone the policy issue by adopting the time-consuming method. The above consideration shows that changes in the political opportunity structure are not the only explanation for the political consequences of the feminist movement.

Purchase of Land by the City and Start of a Town Revitalization Project

There was no active intervention by the mayor himself for at least half a year after his inauguration. According to the theory of this paper, it is because the mayor was searching for the existence of signals from civil society organizations and local residents, mainly through the early Council for Civil-Government Cooperation hosted by JCHRW. In fact, although the Council for Civil-Government Cooperation announced its policy to cooperate with the *Seonmi-chon* Function Conversion Research Project, it did not have such a strong influence. In other words, at the beginning of the inauguration of the mayor, the policy was practically not promoted.

By 2015, however, the mayor had begun to take action. First, he issued an administrative warning to businesses to immediately cease sex trafficking. The warning was issued not once but several times. This move softened the opinion of the landowners of the sex trade.

Based on the theoretical framework of this paper, I can point out two factors. The first is the change in the members of the Council. The Council, which was established in 2014, was initially composed of civil society organizations and administrative officials who shared the same position as women's organizations. It was not in a position to take in the opinions of the residents. However, at the Council meeting held in November 2014, the representatives of the residents were given the opportunity to report, which shows that the Council has come to play an important role in the Council ("The Complete Collection of Materials of the Council for the Improvement of *Seonmi-chon*"). The second is the demand from the local residents. Some of the requests from the residents, such as the installation of surveillance cameras in the area, were not accepted by the JCHRW. However, it can be seen that the residents have become more actively involved in the problem than in the 2000s. The reason why the local residents have become involved in the problem is that the population in the region is decreasing due to the aging of the population and the entire *Seonmi-chon* is deteriorating. As a result of the interest of the local residents in the problems of *Seonmi-chon*, the mayor has an incentive to close the *Seonmi-chon*.

On March 27 of the same year, Jeonju City launched a new consultative body consisting

of 21 people, including civic and women's organizations, experts, and academia. On June 29 of the same year, Jeonju City drew up the first supplementary budget of 1,459.6 billion won, including 350 million won for the *Seonmi-chon* Cultural Revitalization Project, and submitted it to the City Council. After the supplementary budget was deliberated and passed by the City Council, it succeeded in securing the cost of purchasing a building in *Seonmi-chon*. After that, the city reached an agreement with a landowner to purchase the land, and in April 2016, it succeeded in purchasing the first land and building in *Seonmi-chon*.

In my interviews, I have received testimony that the mayor played a significant role in the closure and development of *Seonmi-chon*. However, these testimonies indicate that the mayor's authority has not been exercised in spite of the fact that the policy has been moved by the mayor's decision. It should be noted that the mayor began to be actively involved in the policy not immediately after his inauguration but six months later. It can be said that the reason why the mayor began to actively intervene at that time was that the signal from the local residents was strengthened by the activities of the Private-Public Council, which was established by the mayor himself.

Conflict in the Private-Public Council and Decision to Build “Gender Equality Jeonju”

In order to close and redevelop *Seonmi-chon*, it was necessary to secure a budget for the renovation of the building. Furthermore, JCHRW and other feminists were dissatisfied that a gender perspective was not included in the town planning.

In response, Jeonju City announced on May 26, 2016 that it would promote the project to build the 'Jeonju Up Cycling Center'. The Up Cycling Center was the main project for the improvement of *Seonmi-chon*, which was promoted with the aim of setting up a city agency as a symbol of the reconstruction of *Seonmi-chon*.

However, it was difficult to secure the budget for the construction. On August 9 of the same year, it was reported that the national budget for the next fiscal year had not been secured for the construction of the Up Cycling Center in Jeonju City, with less than one month

left before the deadline for submission to the National Assembly. The project to revitalize *Seonmi-chon*, which had once started, once again faced a budget wall.

In response, the mayor began negotiations with the government to secure the budget. On August 11 of the same year, the mayor visited the National Assembly and asked for government funding. At that time, the mayor was so active that he met not only lawmakers from his own party but also lawmakers from North Jeolla Province and lawmakers with connections to North Jeolla Province, regardless of party.

Why did the mayor become so active in securing government funding? One of the reasons for this was the loss in the last National Assembly election. In the National Assembly election in April 2016, the candidate of the party that supported the mayor was defeated, and there was no longer a National Assembly member from Jeonju City who belonged to the party. Usually, National Assembly elections in South Korea are conducted by mobilizing all local politicians, and the roles of the mayor and the governor are especially important. For this reason, the loss in the National Assembly election was a great blow to the mayor. If the ongoing construction plan is canceled because the budget cannot be secured, it will have a great impact on the nomination in the 2018 local elections for a second term. Therefore, the mayor tried to achieve the result of the construction of *Seonmi-chon* by utilizing his own political resources.

On October 19 of the same year, the Jeonju City Seonosong Art Village Project was selected by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism for the 2017 Urban Vitality Promotion Area Development Project, and received 3 billion won in government funding. However, this funding was only for the construction of upcycling facilities. The Council of Private Citizens and Citizens agreed on the general direction of not purchasing all of the buildings in *Seonmi-chon* but purchasing them one by one and incorporating public organizations to make it a town of art and culture, but did not agree on what to include.

I think there's a kind of "memory space" in this process. So the city started buying the stores, and I said, "Let's not get rid of this, let's save it as an educational place where people can reflect and reflect," and the civil servants said, "Do you

want to keep it? Let's clean it up," and they argued a lot. (Interview with A)

Thus, what the feminists were looking for was a “memory space” rather than an upcycling center. However, the administration was opposed to this, because it could provoke strong opposition from local residents. In fact, Gunsan City had failed to maintain the status quo as a memory space due to the opposition of local residents. For local residents, the fact that the land was a gathering place for the sex trade is a “stigma” and a past that they want to forget. Therefore, the feminist argument was hard for other actors to accept.

However, the mayor has stepped in as an intermediary, and the pro-feminist policy has been adopted at once. The mayor has adopted the opinion of JCHRW, not the opinion of the administration, and has referred to the keyword of ‘women’s rights’.

The mayor knows the value of preservation. Then the mayor will decide. Isn't he the highest decision maker? The influence is stronger in the countryside. That's why public servants do this when the mayor says this no matter how much they talk about other things. That's why we have the best minds and values with the mayor. (Interview with A)

In October 2016, the mayor made her first public reference to a “women’s rights space.” At the time, she said, “*Seonmi-chon* is taking the first step to transform itself into a new space for the first time in 60 years, and we’re trying to transform it from a painful place into a happy place.” She went on to say, “The administration, women’s rights organizations, the city council, and the residents will come together to think about patience and governance, especially women’s rights, and bring about new changes.” Her remarks came at a time when the council was in conflict.

According to the mayor, this comment had something to do with his interest in “cities.” In other words, the mayor did not want to remain for the sake of “women’s rights.” He was interested in cities and thought it was necessary to enhance their value and attractiveness.

But in addition to the mayor’s personality, it must be mentioned that the timing of the

election and the change in the membership of the Council of Civil and Governmental Officials were also related to the change in speech. As mentioned earlier, the mayor, who needed broad support due to his defeat in the most recent parliamentary election, had an incentive to support the opinion of JCHRW rather than that of the administrative officials.

Furthermore, as JCHRW and other women's organizations, as well as intermediate organizations such as the Council for Sustainable Development, and experts testify, the activities of JCHRW and other women's organizations have certainly had an impact on the Council in terms of raising awareness of women's rights.

Sometimes I get into a fight with the civil servants, but I think we've been seeing each other and arguing with the civil servants, and it has had an impact. I think it's been a learning experience. (Interview with A)

As a result of JCHRW's awareness-raising activities, opposition from local residents was suppressed, which made it easier for the mayor to conclude that he would "preserve the sex trade." This conclusion led to the subsequent construction of "Gender Equality and Jeonju." In 2017, the Council of People and Government began to visit various places in order to form a "memory space."

There's a lot of that stuff(memory space). I've seen it in Berlin, and I've been to Koganecho. This team. A place in Koganecho that used to be a turned into a town of art. It is a town movement. It was very impressive. The City of Yokohama put money into it. There's an area center and an art festival there, so all these glass rooms have been turned into galleries. There are artists in there. I've seen that firsthand. Then there's the Korean Women's Volunteer Corps issue like the Museum of War and Women's Rights in Seoul. There's a museum for that too. It's called "dark tourism." (Interview with A)

On October 18 of the same year, the Council of Civil and Governmental Officials

made an inspection tour of the city of Daegu. In Daegu, they toured the Japanese Military comfort women History Museum, which is an archive facility for the comfort women issue. The purpose of the tour was to see how to preserve history. Through these activities, a common understanding was formed that negative history should be archived.

In October 2018, Jeonju City announced that it had been selected as a result of the final screening of the Ministry of Public Administration and Security's open recruitment project "Communication Cooperation Space by Regional Base." After that, it launched the Jeonju City Social Innovation Center and decided to establish a regional communication center. At that point, it was already based on the premise of building "Gender Equality and Jeonju" as a "Gender Equality Platform."



Figure 4: Gender Equality Jeonju(Photo by Author)

When Jeonju applied for the Ministry of Government Administration and Security's 2018 open recruitment project to create communication and cooperation spaces for local branches, women's groups argued that the fifth store should be built as an exhibition hall for the Seonmi-chon Archive and a space for women and gender equality. (Interview with B)

In other words, as a result of JCHRW's awareness-raising activities, a common under-

standing of “leaving a negative history” and “building a space for women’s rights” was shared not only among feminists, but also among different civil society organizations and local residents. As a result, this idea was “naturally” incorporated into the *Seonmi-chon* improvement project, and there was no opposition at this point.

Author: Was there any opposition to the creation of “Gender Equality and Jeonju”?

Activities to dismantle and reconstitute the Seonmi-chon, a gathering place for sex trade, have been going on for 20 years. Based on this, the construction of “Gender Equality and Jeonju” was agreed upon, and there was no particular opposition. (Interview with City Officer of ‘Gender Equality Jeonju’)

Discussion and Conclusion

From the above case studies, it can be seen that the process of closure and revitalization of *Seonmi-chon* is almost consistent with the prediction of the theoretical framework in this paper, which focuses on political representation and protest signals. In the process of closure and revitalization of *Seonmi-chon*, civil society organizations with different positions from JCHRW and JCHRW sent out signals at the same time. In the middle, the period when the project retreated overlapped with the period when one of the signals was absent or decreased. Not only signals from feminists but also signals from local residents led to the action of influential political actors such as the mayor. The mayor, who judged that an agreement had been formed between women’s organizations, local residents and landowners, gradually promoted the acquisition of land and buildings and the revitalization of the town by using his own political resources such as subsidies from the government. As a result, buildings reflecting the interests of feminists and “inheriting negative history” were built.

However, there are some aspects that are not captured in the theoretical framework. The first is the interaction between policies. In particular, the enactment of the Anti-Sex Work

Support Policy may have promoted the plan to close *Seonmi-chon*. The framework of this paper does not capture such interactions between policies. The second is the movement of the police and administrative staff. Although it is not mentioned much in this paper, the closure of *Seonmi-chon* could not have been achieved without the police's crackdown. In addition, the words and deeds of the administrative staff who actually formulate policies are also outside the scope of the analytical framework of this chapter. The third is that the mayor secured the budget from the national budget. Jeonju is a tourist city with a population of 600,000. It can be said that the mayor was able to raise funds through public offering for a central government subsidy project as a project to enhance the attractiveness of the city because of the city's size and characteristics. In fact, since 2010, the first year of the local development project by the national government, Jeonju has been elected to the public offering project every year and secured the national budget. In 2016, two projects were selected and the national budget was 3.2 billion won. Therefore, it is highly likely that the administrative staff and politicians of Jeonju had the know-how and connections to obtain funds from the national government as of 2016. It is unclear whether the mayor was able to persuade the assembly and promote the policy without the budget.

Nonetheless, this paper makes three contributions. First, the mechanism of political consequences of feminist movements. The theoretical framework of this paper assumes that politicians should consider whether or not to promote policies by receiving different signals from civil society. However, the case study shows that when considering the mechanism, it is necessary to take into account the occurrence of repeated games between civil society organizations and politicians. For example, there was a period when JCHRW did not take a political approach, partly because it became difficult to mobilize resources when it failed in the initial governance during the policy of the closure of *Seonmi-chon*. On the other hand, the initial governance activities led to the formation of networks, which in turn led to new developments. In this way, civil society gradually approaches its desired policies as the consequences of its own resources and the activities of civil society organizations before it affect the subsequent political consequences, the actions of politicians, and other civil society organizations. This is related to the research about protest cycles and political processes (Tarrow 1994; McAdam

1982; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). It also confirms that activists use tactics to expand political opportunities and threats for later movements, as shown by Karapın (2011). This paper clarifies the above discussion by emphasizing the benefits and costs of politicians.

Second, feminist and gender policy. Many previous studies have emphasized “solidarity” between feminists and like-minded civil society organizations. In contrast, our analysis shows that working with like-minded actors does not necessarily lead to the promotion of gender policy. In other words, for policies that do not attract much voter interest, such as gender equality policies, it is necessary to have signals from different social movements to the extent that politicians are given incentives to implement policies. It is also worth noting that this signal does not necessarily have to be “solidarity”.

The third is the politics of RLD’s geographical transformation. Previous studies on RLD’s spatial mobility have tended to portray the political elite as actors who have a great interest in RLD policies. However, the RLD issue itself is not a policy issue that is of great interest to voters. In other words, it is necessary to take into account that the elite who are interested in such policies are a minority. In addition, since there are some RLD policies that are of great interest and others that are not, the preferences and principles of behavior of the elites and civil society are not uniform. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the differences in the cases and preferences of each policy when examining the process of RLD’s transformation from a political point of view.

Slides

The Slides will be available until June 17th at the following URL.

URL: <https://github.com/namiterashita/AFPP2024>

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