

## Urbanizing the Countryside: The Developmentalist Designs of the New Village and Farmhouse in 1970s Rural Korea

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### Introduction

“Liberation from the thatched-roof house, liberation from the oil lamp-light, and liberation from the A-frame carrier.” The 1970s was full of slogans. The above motto was one of them, appearing at a local officials’ meeting in 1971.<sup>1</sup> More than two decades had passed since the end of Japanese colonial rule, but everyday Koreans still sought liberation from the past. It was clear that the first two “liberations (*Haebang*)” expressed a statement relating to the roofing and electrification projects, while the last phrase required a more complex and comprehensive alteration of conditions. The A-frame carrier (*Chige*) is a traditional Korean back-carrier made of wood. By the time of the New Village Movement (*Saemaül Undong*), it had come to symbolize backwards farming methods still remaining in the period of rapid industrialization. “Liberation” from the A-frame carrier essentially meant bringing in modern means of transport like trucks and other agro-machines; but to do so, it was necessary to ex-

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1 “‘Pürip’ing-syo’ yŏnch’ul e pappä [Local officials meeting is busy briefing just for show],” *Maeil kyŏngje*, July 17, 1971.

pand roads and infrastructure as a precondition. Embedded in the phrase for the emancipation of farmers from *Chige* was an appeal, not only for the mechanization of farming and transportation methods, but also for the general restructuring of village space.

The issues of village design and production have always been intertwined in rural areas. Given this structural context, a complete reformatting of urban-style houses and village complexes was thought to be necessary for the spatial conditions required by mechanized agriculture, cooperative farming, and finally, the increase of agricultural productivity. This study will delve into the relationships between the renovated farmhouse, restructured village layout, and agricultural production in the New Village Movement of the 1970s.

The New Village Movement was officially initiated by the South Korean government as a comprehensive state program for ‘rural modernization’ in 1970.<sup>2</sup> The Park Chung Hee government perceived that the growing economic gap between the countryside and the city would be an obstacle to the expanding industries in the manufacturing sector, and more fatally harmful to the legitimacy of the military regime.<sup>3</sup> At the time, rural poverty was simply associated with the spatial images like the grass-roof shanty, standing in contrast with the collective images of urban sky-

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2 According to participants in the New Village Movement, since the 1950s and 60s, many farmers had already made efforts to construct public facilities, expand village roads, and increase the household income for themselves; these spontaneous projects were afterwards synthesized into the various features of the New Village Movement in the 1970s. In other words, the farmers’ own efforts had existed before the South Korean government institutionalized them within a state program. (See Kim Yōng-mi, *Kūdūl ūi Saemaūl Undong [Their New Village Movement]* (Seoul: P’urūn yōksa, 2009).) For comprehensive and historical information on the Rural New Village Movement, refer to the following publication: Yi Hwan-byōng, *Nongch’on Saemaūl Undong: Sinhwa wa yōksa sai esō [The Rural New Village Movement: Between Myth and History]* (Seoul: Sōn’in, 2017).

3 Kim Sungjo, “The Countryside and the City: A Spatial Economy of the New Village Movement in 1970s South Korea” (PhD diss., Department of East Asian Studies, University of Toronto, 2015), 61-65.

scrapers. The New Village Movement thus from the beginning targeted on the symbolically important and easily visible places of farmers' daily lives such as roofs, houses, indoor spaces, accessory buildings, roads, and the village layout.<sup>4</sup> This study on the designs of new homes and the planning of a new village structure will reveal how the norms of industrial developmentalism in the 1970s worked in the very concrete living spaces of the peasants. By doing so, this study will provide readers with a more spatial and cultural perspective on the New Village Movement beyond

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- 4 As for the transformation of farmers' houses during the New Village Movement in the 1970s, refer to the following studies: Kim Sungjo, "1970-yöndae nongch'on chugö kong'gan üi pyönhwa wa sobija nongmin: Int'eriö kong'gan kwa t'ellebijön sobi rül chungsim üro [Televisions and the New Interior Space: The Transformation of Rural Housing and Farmers as Consumers]," *Han'guksa yön'gu* [*The Journal of Korean History*] 184 (March 2019): 307-343; Kim Sungjo, "1970-yöndae nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saöp üi chön'gae: Chöngbu, nongmin, chabon üi kwan'gyae rül chungsim üro [The Dynamics among the State, Farmers, and Manufacturing Capital in the Rural Housing Improvement Project in 1970s South Korea]," *Yöksa wa silhak* 64 (November 2017): 261-295; Chang Po-ung, "Nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saöp esö p'asaengdoenün munje wa kü taech'aek: Chönnam chibang üi chönt'ong nongch'on chut'aek kwa kaeryang nongch'on chut'aek üi pigyo yön'gu [A Study on Some Problems Derived from Improvement Work of Rural Houses and Their Solutions: A Comparative Study on the Traditional Rural Houses and New Rural Houses in South Chölla Province]," *Chirihak* [*Geography*] 14, no. 1 (March 1979): 41-51; Kim Söng-u, Yi Yu-mi, and Chang Tökch'an, "Kyönggi-do chibang üi chaeraesik nongch'on chut'aek üi künäehwa kwajöng e kwanhan yön'gu (1): Yongin-gun Yongin-üp Samga 1, 3-ri maül chut'aek üi mullijök yoso üi pyönhwa kwajöng ül chungsim üro [The Process of Modernization of the Conventional Rural Houses in Kyönggi Province (1): Based on Physical Changes of the Houses in Samga 1 and 3 Villages, Yongin County]," *Taehan könych'ukhakhoe nonmunjip* [*Journal of the Architectural Institute of Korea- Planning and Design*] 11, no. 1 (January 1995): 3-16; Yi Söng-hun, "1970-yöndae nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saöp: Chusaenghwal üi pyönhwa wa nongmindül üi taewing [The Rural Housing Improvement Project and Changes in the Living Environment in the 1970s]," *Chöngsinmunhwa yön'gu* [*Korean Studies Quarterly*] 29, no. 4 (December 2006): 233-264.

political and ideological approaches.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, this study expects to contribute to the critical understanding of the hegemonic power of developmentalism and the historical experience of industrial modernization in South Korea.

The new rural houses under construction in the 1970s were often called “urban style houses (*Tosihyōng chut’aek*)” or “cultural houses (*Munhwa chut’aek*).”<sup>6</sup> The first section of this study will show that these new houses represented a kind of spatial unification or homogenization between domiciles in the countryside and the city. The design of the urban-style cultural farmhouse paid particular attention to ways of dividing living spaces from workplaces, which were often integrated in earlier designs

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- 5 As for government and quasi-official perspectives emphasizing Park Chung Hee’s political leadership and the developmentalist regime’s ‘modernization’ policies in the New Village Movement, see the following materials: Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong 10-yōnsa [A 10 Year History of the New Village Movement]* (Seoul: Naemubu, 1980); Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong – Sijak esō onül kkaji [The New Village Movement – from Beginning to Today]* (Seoul: Naemubu, 1973-1979); Park Jin-hwan, *Park Chung Hee taet’ongnyōng ūi Han’guk kyōngje kūndaehwa wa Saemaül Undong [Modernization of the Korea’s Traditional Economy and the New Village Movement under the Leadership of Late President Park Chung Hee]* (Seoul: Park Chung Hee taet’ongnyōng kinyōm saōphoe, 2005).
- 6 “‘Tosihyōng’ ūro t’albakkum, Nongch’on ch’wirak kujo [Rural village structure completely changes into urban style; Rural village structure],” *Chosōn ilbo*, December 20, 1977; “Kōnsōlbu sunsi sō Park Taet’ongnyōng chisi p’yojunhyōng nongch’on chut’aek yōn’gu [President Park orders to conduct research about standardized rural houses at inspection of Ministry of Construction],” *Tonga ilbo*, January 22, 1977; “Kōnsōlbu orhae kungmin chut’aek 25-manho kōllip [Ministry of Construction to build 250 thousand national houses for this year],” *Maeil kyōngje*, January 4, 1978; “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (155): Chugō pyōnhyōk (14), Munhwa chut’aek [New trend in the countryside (155): Housing revolution (14), Cultural house],” *Kyōnghyang sinmun*, June 5, 1978; “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (168): Chugō pyōnhyōk (27), Poillō sisōl [New trend in the countryside (168): Housing revolution (27), Boiler facilities],” *Kyōnghyang sinmun*, July 19, 1978.

for rural domiciles. To maximize sanitation and productivity, rural housing bureaucrats and architects in the Ministry of Home Affairs recommended that farmers construct a house divided into rooms, a main floor, and a kitchen and then build a separate ancillary structure to serve as the household barn, shed, and warehouse. This design also suggested that, in the future, the auxiliary building should be removed completely from individual farmhouses and constructed at the level of the village to serve as a common workplace like an industrial complex. This plan expected the new farmhouse to be used only as a farmer's residence, which like urban homes were located away from the resident's place of work. This planning was based on a prospect that agricultural production would and should be mechanized and collaborative, as in manufacturing production. However, farmers often complained that the new urban-style farmhouse was not optimal for the patterns of life of the countryside, and the common warehouses under construction were too distant from each farmhouse. Some villagers and architects also came to the conclusion that the uniform urban-style houses could not meet the diverse needs of agricultural production and caused discomfort for the residents.

The second section of this study will examine the so-called Village Structural Improvement Project (*Ch'wirak Kujo Kaesŏn Saŏp*). Launched in 1977 in conjunction with the Rural Housing Improvement Project, the Village Structural Improvement Project was guided by the dual aims to construct productive rural villages and to achieve the "urbanization of the whole country."<sup>7</sup> The initiative placed an emphasis on three major components of community infrastructure: urban-style housing, common workplaces or facilities, and widened roads for machines and trucks. In fact, the project was not a new initiative at all – regional projects had already been conducted since 1970 under the name of the New Village Movement. However, the Village Structural Improvement Project presented a whole picture about how those diffuse constructions would be

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7 "Sasŏl: Maül kujo ũi kaesŏn [Editorial: Improvement of village structure]," *Chung'ang ilbo*, April 14, 1977.

related to each other systematically in order to increase agricultural productivity.

## Building Urban Homes in Rural Spaces

During the late 1970s, new houses in the countryside, called “urban style houses (*Tosihyŏng chut’aek*)” or “cultural houses (*Munhwa chut’aek*),”<sup>8</sup> began to represent a deliberate blurring of the designs used for housing in the city and the countryside, serving as a form of spatial unification. Newspapers described the virtue of the new house comparatively such as “a rural cultural house, just like that of the city”<sup>9</sup> or “a cultural house not inferior to an urban one.”<sup>10</sup> One article went even further, suggesting “the complete transformation into urban style (*Tosihyŏng ŭro*

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8 “‘Tosihyŏng’ ŭro t’albakkum, Nongch’on ch’wirak kujo [Rural village structure completely changes into urban style; Rural village structure],” *Chosŏn ilbo*, December 20, 1977; “Kŏnsŏlbu sunsi sŏ Park Taet’ongnyŏng chisi p’yojunhyŏng nongch’on chut’aek yŏn’gu [President Park orders to conduct research about standardized rural houses at inspection of Ministry of Construction],” *Tonga ilbo*, January 22, 1977; “Kŏnsŏlbu orhae kungmin chut’aek 25-manho kŏllip [Ministry of Construction to build 250 thousand national houses for this year],” *Maeil kyŏngje*, January 4, 1978; “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (155): Chugŏ pyŏnhyŏk (14), Munhwa chut’aek [New trend in the countryside (155): Housing revolution (14), Cultural house],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, June 5, 1978; “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (168): Chugŏ pyŏnhyŏk (27), Poillŏ sisŏl [New trend in the countryside (168): Housing revolution (27), Boiler facilities],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 19, 1978.

9 “‘Tosihyŏng’ ŭro t’albakkum, Nongch’on ch’wirak kujo [Rural village structure completely changes into urban style; Rural village structure],” *Chosŏn ilbo*, December 20, 1977.

10 “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (168): Chugŏ pyŏnhyŏk (27), Poillŏ sisŏl [New trend in the countryside (168): Housing revolution (27), Boiler facilities],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 19, 1978.

*t'albakkum*).<sup>11</sup> Sometimes, this rhetorical syntax was presented with visual images. In 1979, a government publication on the Rural Housing Improvement Project inserted the typical before and after photos to show the dramatic change of rural housing conditions. (Figure 1) Next to the pictures, readers found a title saying “Improvement into Cultural Houses without a Gap between the City and the Countryside.”<sup>12</sup>

There was no clear definition as to what constituted the urban-style cultural house for the countryside. The term, however, frequently appeared with modifiers like “sanitary” or “convenient.”<sup>13</sup> To understand the content of the representationally homogenized space, it is thus necessary to examine architectural designs that the blueprints emphasized to secure hygienic and comfortable living conditions in the new rural houses.

The Department of Rural Housing Improvement, an office under the umbrella of the Ministry of Home Affairs, asserted that rural houses were unsanitary mainly because living spaces were integrated with working spaces.<sup>14</sup> According to their publication, “In a traditional rural house, a yard for working was located at the center, and sections for living and working were put in disorder and mixed up. Therefore, noise, dust, and

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11 “Tosihyŏng’ ūro t’albakkum, Nongch’on ch’wirak kujo [Rural village structure completely changes into urban style; Rural village structure],” *Chosŏn ilbo*, December 20, 1977.

12 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 49.

13 “Kŏnsŏlbu sunsi sŏ Park Taet’ongnyŏng chisi p’yojunhyŏng nongch’on chut’aek yŏn’gu [President Park orders to conduct research about standardized rural houses at inspection of Ministry of Construction],” *Tonga ilbo*, January 22, 1977; “Kŏnsŏlbu orhae kungmin chut’aek 25-manho kŏllip [Ministry of Construction to build 250 thousand national houses for this year],” *Maeil kyŏngje*, January 4, 1978.

14 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 549.

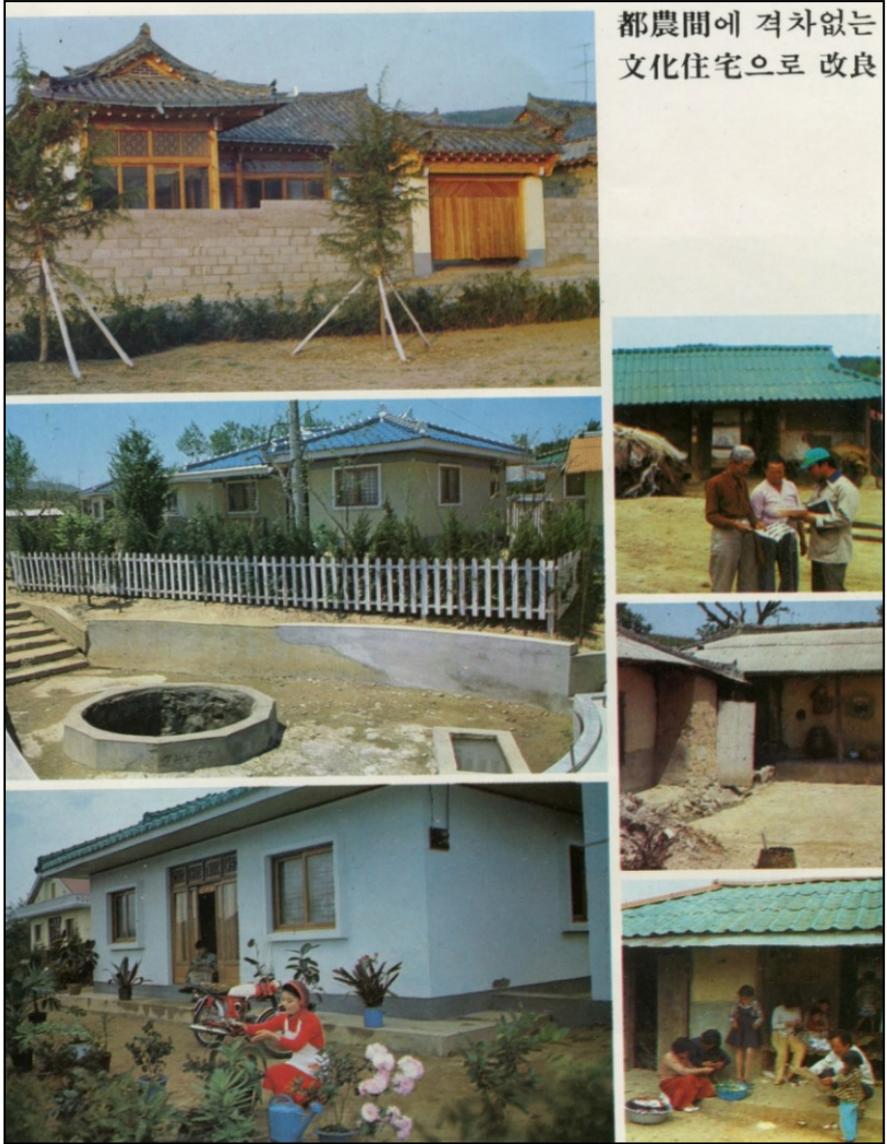


Image from Naemubu chibang haengjōngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 49.

Fig. 1. "Improvement into Cultural Houses without a Gap between the City and the Countryside"

foul smells disturb the residential environment.”<sup>15</sup> Under the premise that this adulterated space was the main reason for rural uncleanness, the solution was simple and clear – “division.”<sup>16</sup> As a part of explaining the orientation of the government’s housing policy, officials clarified that “rural housing be based on the principle of separating the production-focused working section from the residential section.”<sup>17</sup>

The rural housing bureaucrats and architects thought that a clear separation between living and working spaces would bring farmers a more convenient lifestyle; they regarded this type of spatial arrangement to be efficient in terms of the convergence and management of working places.<sup>18</sup> The widely distributed blueprints and bird’s eye views that the techno-bureaucrats offered reflected this assumption. These blueprints standardized a main building consisting of only rooms, a main floor, and kitchen and another completely detached building for use as a barn, or for housing livestock.<sup>19</sup> Going even further, the government’s publications

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15 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 550.

16 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 446 and 549.

17 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 549.

18 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 550.

19 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History

suggested that ideally the separated working places of individual farm houses should ultimately be situated at a district of village to facilitate cooperative production stating that, “Farming in the future will be conducted by means of machines and cooperation at a large scale. At that time, it is expected that the sections for residence and production will be completely separated and rearranged into residential complexes and production districts. In this situation, people will lead their lives (*Saenghwal*) in their house, and work together in a working zone. Rural houses will have similar functions to urban houses in the end.”<sup>20</sup>

The urban-style cultural house, at least from the perspective of the government authorities heading the rural housing project, meant a new rural house where the site for working was clearly differentiated from the indoor space for living. Images in Figure 2 illustrate the integrated environment in earlier housing designs, which existed in the Provinces of Ch'olla, Ky'ongsang, and Ch'ungch'öng before the New Village Movement of the 1970s. When evaluated from the standard of an urban-style cultural house, the problem of the traditional house was evident. Warehouses, cattle sheds or pigsties were attached to the rooms and kitchens in the case of figures 2-1, 2-2, and 2-4. The vegetable garden, pantry, and other places for firewood or compost were in disarray in different corners of house as in the case of figures 2-2 and 2-3. The floorplans of the standardized house in the 1970s displayed the model that these representationally “ugly and unsanitary”<sup>21</sup> rural houses were to emulate in their reconstruction process. Built under the guidance of local government officials, the new house consisted of two independent buildings; a main building

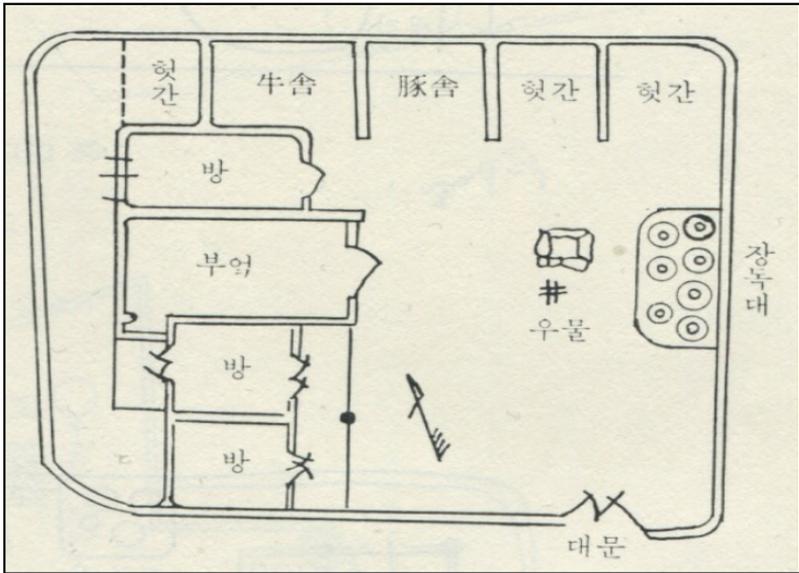
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*of Rural Housing*], 427-445.

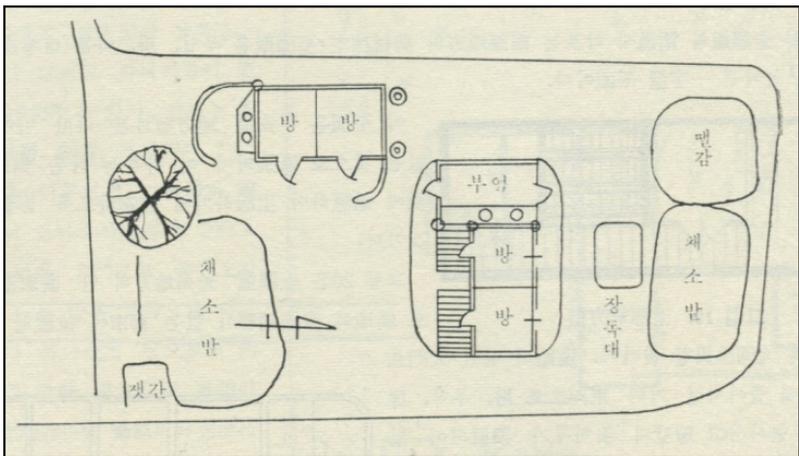
20 Naemubu chibang haengjöngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok üi taeyöksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 550.

21 “Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (166): Chugö pyönhöök (25), Pusoksa [New trend in the countryside (166): Housing revolution (25), Auxiliary buildings],” *Kyönghyang sinmun*, July 17, 1978.

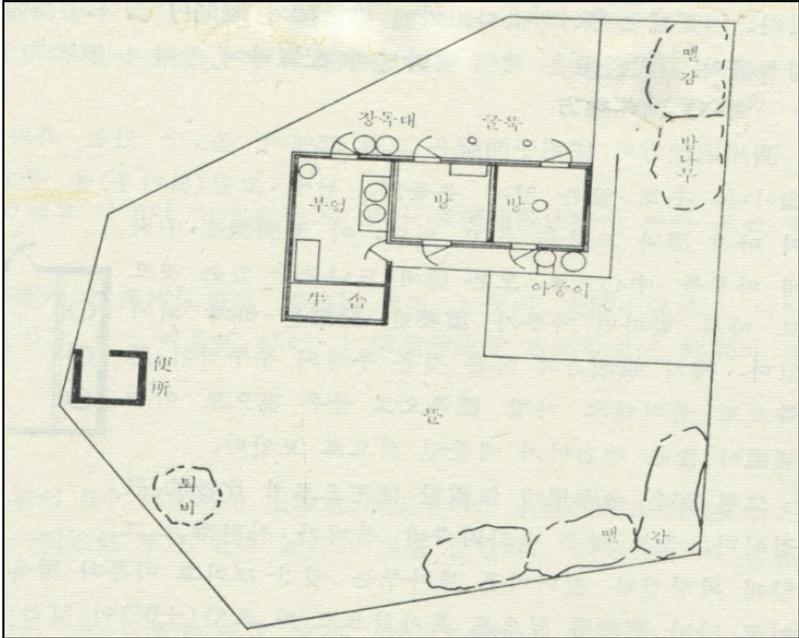
for rooms, kitchen, and floor; and a completely detached adjacent building of other purposes than ‘living (*Saenghwal*),’ as seen in Figure 3 and Figure 4.



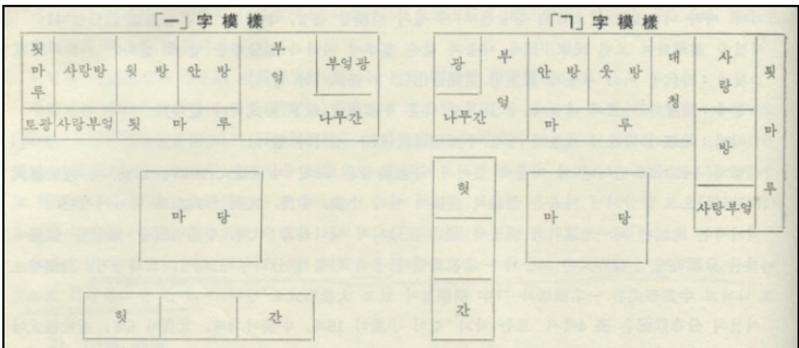
(#2-1) A farmhouse in Kwangju, Chŏlla Province (1920s, estimated)



(#2-2) A farmhouse near Taejŏn, Ch'ungch'ŏng Province (1920s, estimated)



(#2-3) A farmhouse in Andong, Kyongsang Province (1920s, estimated)



(#2-4) Two farmhouses in Koesan, Ch'ungch'ong Province (after 1945)

Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), (#2-1)105, (#2-2)106, (#2-3)107, and (#2-4)116.

Fig. 2. Examples of the Layout and Floor Planning in Rural Houses before the Rural Housing Improvement in the 1970s

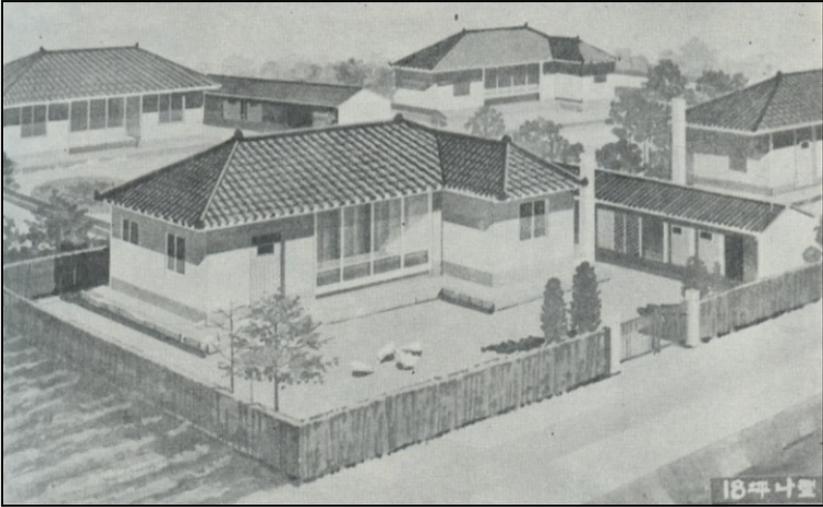
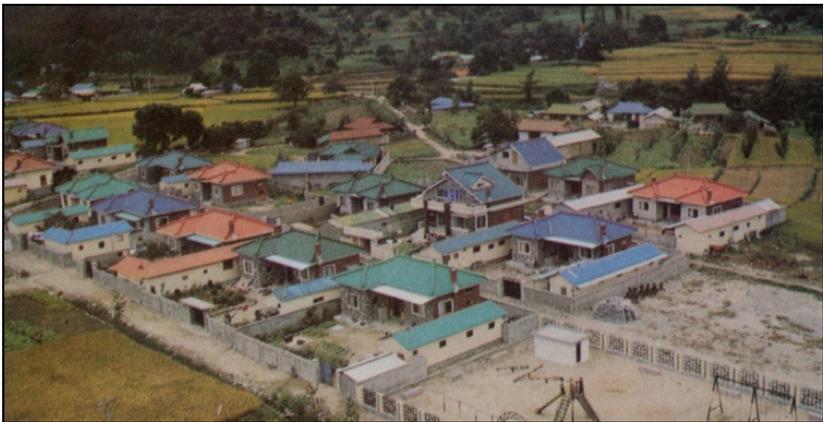


Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [*The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing*] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 433.

Fig. 3. A Bird's Eye View of a Standardized Farmhouse



Sagiso Village in Panp'o Township, Kongju County, Ch'ungchǒng Province  
Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [*The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing*] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 19.

Fig. 4. The Layout of Auxiliary Buildings after the Rural Housing Improvement

However, in the actual construction of the new houses, the officials did not consider the design of working spaces as important as the main residence. In fact, local housing officials working for construction sites often regarded making an auxiliary building (*Pusoksa*) as a secondary and troublesome matter following the completion of the main house.<sup>22</sup> Sometimes the ancillary workplace was hidden in the back of the main house building as in Figure 5.<sup>23</sup> It was even the case that new houses in some model villages had no building for warehouses or barns due to the local government's administrative guidance that those extra structures would "injure the residential environment."<sup>24</sup> However, farmers always needed an annex where they could keep agricultural implements, store grain, and breed livestock.<sup>25</sup> Some villages had a common warehouse or cattle shed, but this was not always a useful solution. In Myŏngju County, villages con-

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- 22 "Sanntūthan munhwa chut'aek ūl chiūn nongga esōnūn hōtkan, oeyangkan tūng pusoksa rūl ōttōtke chiōya hanūnya ka munjeda [The problem is how to build auxiliary buildings such as barns and cattle sheds after constructing a new culture farm houses]," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 17, 1978; "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (166): Chugō pyōnhyōk (25), Pusoksa [New trend in the countryside (166): Housing revolution (25), Auxiliary buildings]," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 17, 1978.
- 23 Chang Po-ung, a geographer, stated that he observed this type of annex in Changsōng County, which was hidden and not to be seen from the highway. Chang Po-ung, "Nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saōp esō p'asaengdoenūn munje wa kū taech'aek: Chōnnam chibang ūi chōnt'ong nongch'on chut'aek kwa kaeryang nongch'on chut'aek ūi pigyo yōn'gu [A Study on Some Problems Derived from Improvement Work of Rural Houses and Their Solutions: A Comparative Study on the Traditional Rural Houses and New Rural Houses in South Chōlla Province]," 48.
- 24 "Sasōl: Muri ōmnūn nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang [Editorial: Affordable construction of rural house]," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, June 11, 1977; "Chugō hwan'gyōng p'inggye ch'uksa mot chitke hanūn p'yedan ōpsaera [Stop prohibition of building cattle shed or pigsty under the plea of residential environment]," *Tonga ilbo*, October 21, 1980.
- 25 "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (163): Chugō pyōnhyōk (22), P'yojun sōlgye [New trend in the countryside (163): Housing revolution (22), Standardized blueprints]," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, July 8, 1978.

structed a common warehouse in 1971, however, the building was not well maintained making the entire village where the structure was constructed look shabby.<sup>26</sup> Kim Man-sik in Yöch'ön County complained that a new village warehouse made his work much more inconvenient and cumbersome because his house was 2 km away from the common warehouse; the daily routine work like putting in and taking out farm implements in the warehouse began to make him increasingly annoyed.<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, most farmers left the common facilities unused.<sup>28</sup>

The new urban-style house was not quite suitable for the lifestyle of farmers. Farmers expressed their dissatisfaction with the new houses through direct and outspoken voices. Sim Kyu-man in Asan County stated, "I built a large basement cellar to store farm products and fruits. Rural houses are now identical to urban houses in terms of appearance, but the structure of the houses should be constructed in different ways because their life structures (*Saenghwal kujo*) are different from each other."<sup>29</sup> Villagers in Sösan County shared this skepticism, saying, "When we look at the completed new house, it's nice. However, there is something inconvenient for rural housekeeping."<sup>30</sup> Sö Chöng-hyu in Yöch'ön County

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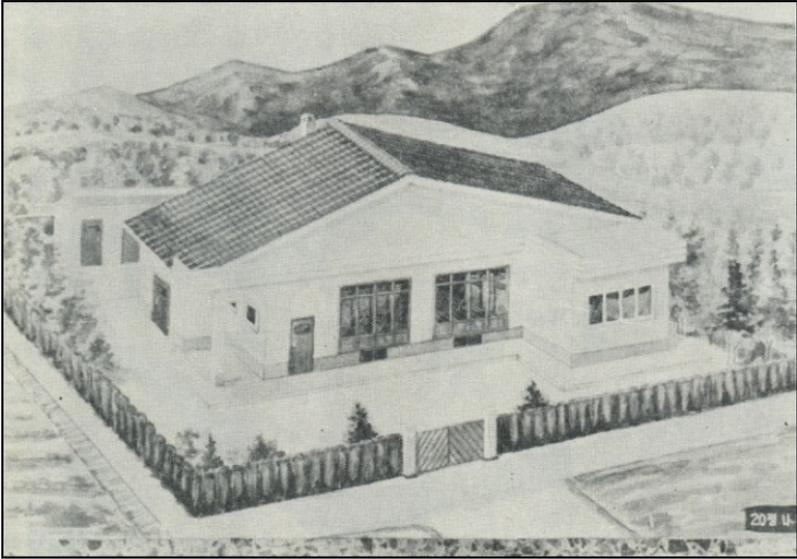
26 "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (166): Chugö pyönhyök (25), Pusoksa [New trend in the countryside (166): Housing revolution (25), Auxiliary buildings]," *Kyönghyang sinmun*, July 17, 1978.

27 "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (166): Chugö pyönhyök (25), Pusoksa [New trend in the countryside (166): Housing revolution (25), Auxiliary buildings]," *Kyönghyang sinmun*, July 17, 1978.

28 Chang Po-ung, "Nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saöp esö p'asaengdoenün munje wa kü taech'aek: Chönnam chibang üi chönt'ong nongch'on chut'aek kwa kaeryang nongch'on chut'aek üi pigyo yön'gu [A Study on Some Problems Derived from Improvement Work of Rural Houses and Their Solutions: A Comparative Study on the Traditional Rural Houses and New Rural Houses in South Chölla Province]," 49.

29 "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (155): Chugö pyönhyök (14), Munhwa chut'aek [New trend in the countryside (155): Housing revolution (14), Cultural house]," *Kyönghyang sinmun*, June 5, 1978.

30 "Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (163): Chugö pyönhyök (22), P'yojun sölgye [New



A bird's eye view of 20 p'yŏng (66.1 m<sup>2</sup>) B1-type farmhouse

Image from Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 444.

Fig. 5. The Hidden Workplace of a Standardized Farmhouse

built a kitchen a little larger than that in the blueprints and made a traditional furnace to make fire with natural fuel produced from nearby forests and fields, stressing, “In the rural areas, to manage a kitchen is different [from that in the city].”<sup>31</sup> Many farmers complained that the kitchen in particular was too small in their new homes, and it was common for residents to alter the layout of their houses to better suit their mode of living in the rural areas.<sup>32</sup>

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trend in the countryside (163): Housing revolution (22), Standardized blueprints],” *Kyŏngnyang sinmun*, July 8, 1978.

31 “Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (163): Chugŏ pyŏnhyŏk (22), P'yojun sŏlgye [New trend in the countryside (163): Housing revolution (22), Standardized blueprints],” *Kyŏngnyang sinmun*, July 8, 1978.

32 “Nongch'on sae p'ungsokto (163): Chugŏ pyŏnhyŏk (22), P'yojun sŏlgye [New

Designs for the new cultural house also did not take into account the domestic culture that had long existed among rural residents. In late 1970s, Chang Po-ung, a geographer, interviewed an old villager in Kurye County regarding the rural housing improvement.<sup>33</sup> The interviewee stated to Chang that, after the improvement of house, he usually went out during the daytime and came back home only for eating and sleeping in order to avoid awkward silence with his son's wife (*myōnūri*). The new house seemed to have not been a comfortable home to him any longer. According to Chang's explanation, the central indoor floor of the new urban-style house was designed to connect and open up to all rooms. While, from a design perspective, there may have been some utility to this, the central indoor floor became an uncomfortable space especially for those with larger families that were accustomed to a more conservative rural family culture; in 1977, it was reported that 30.6% of farm households consisted of a three-generation family. Chang assumed that if the old villager (interviewee) sat on the floor from which he was visible in all the rooms, particularly in the summer, both he and his son's wife would feel uncomfortable whenever they encountered each other in silence.

Considering the problems of the new rural houses, many began to feel skeptical about whether the so-called urban-style rural house was an appropriate housing type for agricultural industry and living. A newspaper editorial wrote, "It is necessary to rethink thoroughly whether the design of houses under construction or already built are suitable as a rural house. Rural houses are not only homes for living, but also workplaces them-

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trend in the countryside (163): Housing revolution (22), Standardized blueprints]," *Kyōngnyang sinmun*, July 8, 1978.

33 Chang Po-ung, "Nongch'on chut'aek kaeryang saōp esō p'asaengdoenūn munje wa kū taech'aek: Chōnnam chibang ūi chōnt'ong nongch'on chut'aek kwa kaeryang nongch'on chut'aek ūi pigyo yōn'gu [A Study on Some Problems Derived from Improvement Work of Rural Houses and Their Solutions: A Comparative Study on the Traditional Rural Houses and New Rural Houses in South Chōlla Province]," 47.

selves.”<sup>34</sup> This editorial illuminated the characteristics of farm work that did not clearly distinguish the sphere of living (*Saenghwal*) from the space of working. From a shared understanding about such an ambiguous boundary, some housing experts criticized the uniformed structure of rural houses that simply copied urban houses imposing an artificial division on rural lifestyle.<sup>35</sup> According to their assertion, various forms of farming such as rice farming, the raising of livestock, and fruit production needed different types of farm houses. The standardized urban-style houses could not meet the diverse needs of the countryside efficiently.<sup>36</sup>

For those who were critical about the urban-style houses in the countryside, the rural village of standardized houses was far from urbane sophistication. Song T’ae-gyu, a farmer in Wanju County said, “Even if it was convenient to build a standardized house, the completed houses gave us a feeling as if we were living in a uniform village constructed for a company’s dormitory.”<sup>37</sup> In a more strident tone, Kim Chung-ŏp, an architect, called them an “eyesore.” For Kim, the traditional workplaces in a rural house were useful and beautiful spaces for multiple purposes; the inner yard was a place not only for production, but also for family ceremonies such as coming-of-age, marriage, funeral, and ancestor worship; barns and sheds were necessary sites for rural livelihood.<sup>38</sup>

However, like so many other features of the New Village Movement,

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34 “Sasöl: Muri ðmnün nongch’on chut’aek kaeryang [Editorial: Affordable construction of rural house],” *Kyõnghyang sinmun*, June 11, 1977.

35 “Nongch’on chut’aek kaeryang orhae 8-man yõ ch’ae [Rural Housing Improvement Project to construct 80 thousand houses this year],” *Kyõnghyang sinmun*, January 22, 1979.

36 “Nongch’on chut’aek kaeryang orhae 8-man yõ ch’ae [Rural Housing Improvement Project to construct 80 thousand houses this year],” *Kyõnghyang sinmun*, January 22, 1979.

37 “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (163): Chugõ pyõnhyõk (22), P’yojun sölgye [New trend in the countryside (163): Housing revolution (22), Standardized blueprints],” *Kyõnghyang sinmun*, July 8, 1978.

38 “Chip [House],” *Tonga ilbo*, October 28, 1979.

the urban was established as the modern norm – and rural spaces were judged by these urban criteria. “The urbanization of rural villages should not be our ideal,” an architect Kim Hwan wrote, in a critical article contributed to the *Seoul sinmun* in 1978.<sup>39</sup> Yet, to urbanize the countryside or to achieve such a spatial unification appeared to be the “ideal” to many who were living in the period of industrial hyper-growth in the 1970s. Even a student in a design competition had adapted such assumptions. In 1971, when the rural housing projects had yet to be initiated on a full scale, the Korea Institute of Registered Architects opened a design contest for desirable rural housing to “modernize” rural villages.<sup>40</sup> The first place prize was given to a university student in the Department of Architectural Engineering. In the first prize winner’s design of a rural house and village, the traditionally dispersed buildings that made up different households were gathered into a collective residence of the “cultural house style.” Each farm household had an individual annex building to be used as a warehouse and livestock shed, and every three households shared an additional common shed to raise livestock and a common storehouse to keep farm implements. In addition to these common workshops, the design included a school, market, and popular urban-style supermarket into the rural village. Even though the university student’s design was not identical to that of the late 1970s government project for rural housing, both projects maintained the basic approach to the division and collection of space in the name of ‘rural modernization.’

### Re-designing the Village

In preparation for the urbanization of rural housing, the Ministry of

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39 “Nongga ūi mihak [Aesthetics of farm house],” *Seoul sinmun*, March 23, 1978.

40 “Kōnch’uksahyōp kongmo isanghyōng nongch’on chut’aek [Korea Institute of Registered Architects opens a design contest for ideal rural village],” *Tonga ilbo*, July 16, 1971.

Home Affairs had even more comprehensive plans for reforming village structures.<sup>41</sup> This was little wonder when it is considered that even undergraduate architecture students' drawings in the aforementioned contest reflected and planned such a comprehensive layout. Images at the time display diagrammatically how the urbanization of individual houses could be connected and shifted to ideal designs of more productive farm villages.<sup>42</sup> (Figure 6) For government authorities, the ultimate dream village consisted of two completely independent complexes; one for housing and the other for production-related activities. The transition to this new model was broken into three stages: first, traditional rural houses, places where living and working were integrated, were to be transitioned to the current model where the two functions were separated inside a house; second, individual houses and ancillary structures were to be collectivized and shared residences and workplaces were to be constructed; finally, a complex for living and another complex for working were to be completely separated from each other. This three-stage plan operated under the assumption that to separate spatially work from living and to construct such independent complexes was necessary and advantageous for large scaled mechanization and cooperative farming.<sup>43</sup> This plan also supposed that the new houses should have similar functions to urban houses in the

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41 As for the government's early interest on the relationship between housing improvement and village reconstruction in the rural areas, refer to the following publication: Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Nongch'on ch'wirak kujo kaesŏn kwa chut'aek kaeryang pang'an yŏn'gu* [*A Study on the Plans for Rural Community Relocation and Housing Improvement*] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1971).

42 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [*The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing*], 550.

43 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [*The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing*], 446 and 550.

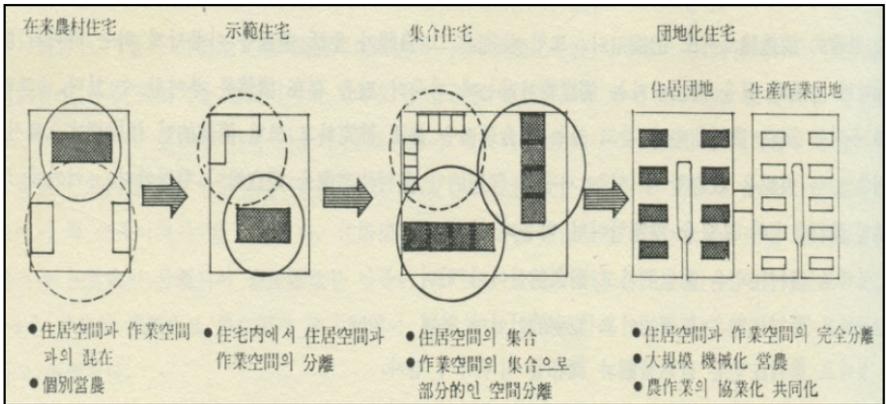


Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 550.

Fig. 6. Three Stages for the “Ideal” Layout of a Residence and Workplace in Rural Villages

agricultural complex village where mechanized and collective production would be conducted like in urban industries.<sup>44</sup>

Such an ‘ideal’ village plan was often expressed through the so-called Village Structural Improvement Project (*Ch'wirak Kujo Kaesŏn Saōp*). The government initiated this project in 1977 in parallel with the Rural Housing Improvement Project (*Nongch'on Chut'aek Kaeryang Saōp*).<sup>45</sup> The project briefing clarified that, “even if only one house is reconstructed, its location and access roads should be decided in the direction for the

44 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 550.

45 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 232 and 235.

improvement of the village structure.”<sup>46</sup> In principle, the village plan was a precondition to the improvement of individual houses.<sup>47</sup> It was also publicly stated that the ideas of the Village Structural Improvement Project borrowed the conception of urban planning with the aim to make individual houses function well for the community.<sup>48</sup> Resonating with the government’s briefing, a newspaper editorial asserted, “In the future, the Village Structural Improvement Project will have to be conducted in the direction for achieving the balanced development of the national land, the equalization of living standards, and furthermore the urbanization of the whole country.”<sup>49</sup>

The plan of the Village Structural Improvement Project was full of recommendations related to agricultural production. Preparing for the project, the Ministry of Home Affairs and local government offices gathered information on a subject village relating to its production levels and potential for growth, the speed of income increase, the innovation of agricultural technology and cooperative methods, the increase and decrease of population, and the conditions of distribution system.<sup>50</sup> The local and central

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46 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 393.

47 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 393.

48 “Sasōl: ‘Ch’wirak kaesōn’ ūi sōnhu wan’gūp [Editorial: Order and speed of ‘community relocation’],” *Kyōnghyang sinmun*, April 14, 1977; “Sasōl: Maül kujo ūi kaesōn [Editorial: Improvement of village structure],” *Chung’ang ilbo*, April 14, 1977.

49 “Sasōl: Maül kujo ūi kaesōn [Editorial: Improvement of village structure],” *Chung’ang ilbo*, April 14, 1977.

50 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History

governments did not explain in detail how they would analyze and apply such comprehensive information. However, it was indicated that three parts of village reconstruction would be the main contents of the Village Structural Improvement Project: the improvement of rural housing, establishment of common facilities, and expansion of street networks.<sup>51</sup> The project instructed farmers to secure new housing sites of over 100 *P'yŏng* (330.6m<sup>2</sup>) or sometimes 150 *P'yŏng* (495.9m<sup>2</sup>) per house, further increasing farmers' financial burdens.<sup>52</sup> As for the common facilities, the project usually designed a village hall, a sales shop, a square, and a children's playground at the center of the village, while locating common warehouses and collective workplaces throughout the adjacent farmland. Common cattle sheds, pigpens, and compost grounds were placed behind the village.<sup>53</sup> (Figure 7) The project also planned to expand the width of

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*of Rural Housing*], 393.

- 51 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 545-558; "138-kae maül sŏnjŏng ch'wirak kujo kaesŏn [138 villages selected for Community Relocation Project]," *Maeil kyŏngje*, April 12, 1977; "Sasŏl: 'Ch'wirak kaesŏn' ūi sŏnhu wan'gŭp [Editorial: Order and speed of 'community relocation']," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, April 14, 1977; "Nongch'on ch'wirak kujo kaesŏn e paranda [Suggestions on Rural Community Relocation Project]," *Tonga ilbo*, April 12, 1977; "Nongch'on ch'wirak ūi kujojŏk kaesŏn pangan kyŏngji hwaktae, saengsansŏng chŭngdae [Improvement of rural village structure for expansion of arable land, increase of productivity]," *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, October 18, 1977.
- 52 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 396-397; "Sasŏl: 'Ch'wirak kaesŏn' ūi sŏnhu wan'gŭp" [Editorial: Order and speed of 'community relocation'], *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, April 14, 1977.
- 53 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History

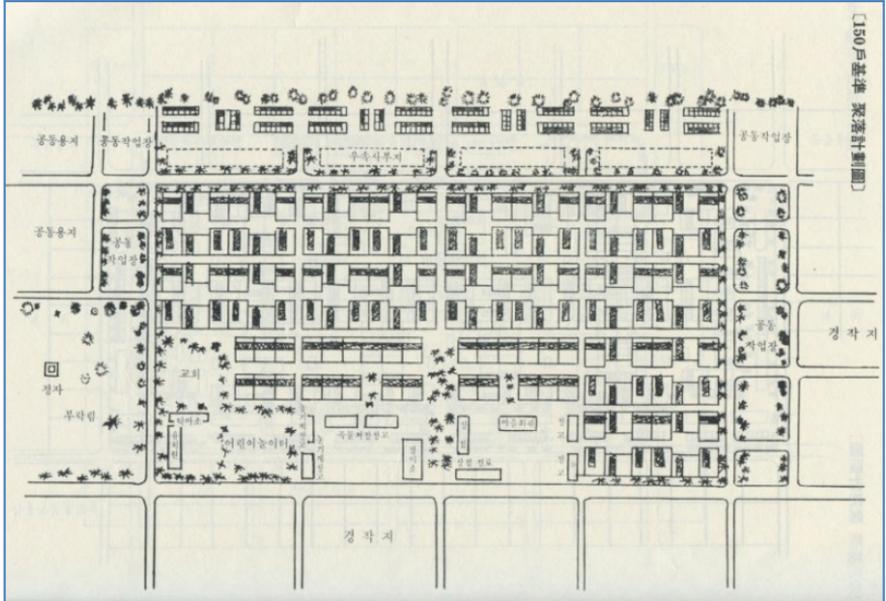


Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 426.

Fig. 7. Standardized Village Planning

main roads to 8 m, and that of branch roads (farm roads) to 4-5 m so that agro-machines and trucks could pass through conveniently.<sup>54</sup>

*of Rural Housing*], 396-397; “138-kae maül sōnjōng ch'wirak kujo kaesōn [138 villages selected for Community Relocation Project],” *Maeil kyōngje*, April 12, 1977; “Sasōl: ‘Ch’wirak kaesōn’ ūi sōnhu wan’gūp [Editorial: Order and speed of ‘community relocation’],” *Kyōngnyang sinmun*, April 14, 1977; “Nongch'on ch'wirak kujo kaesōn e paranda [Suggestions on Rural Community Relocation Project],” *Tonga ilbo*, April 12, 1977; “Nongch'on ch'wirak ūi kujōk kaesōn pangan kyōngji hwaktae, saengsansōng chūngdae [Improvement of rural village structure for expansion of arable land, increase of productivity],” *Kyōngnyang sinmun*, October 18, 1977.

54 Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa*:

The government categorized target villages into three types.<sup>55</sup> Type A was a village where all the houses had to be relocated and rebuilt on different housing sites due to reasons such as the introduction of an industrial complex or the construction of a dam. In type B villages, about one third to half of deteriorated houses had to be reconstructed or relocated collectively to a different housing site. Type C villages were regarded as relatively well structured, requiring only five to six houses be improved. 2,747 rural villages in total were selected for the Village Structural Improvement Project in the 1970s.<sup>56</sup> Most of these (2,094 villages) were grouped as Type B villages, whereas Type A accounted for 562 villages and Type C was only 91. The high rate at which rural communities were categorized as Type B villages speaks to the ambitions of the project to alter the village structure across the country.<sup>57</sup>

The layout of the ideal village was always displayed through planned drawings. Selected villages for the project had a sign post in front of the village, saying “Village Structural Improvement (*Ch’wirak kujo kaesŏn*),” as seen in Figure 8.<sup>58</sup> Generally, the signs were directed to passersby so

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*Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 396-397; “Sasŏl: ‘Ch’wirak kaesŏn’ ūi sŏnhu wan’gŭp [Editorial: Order and speed of ‘community relocation’],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, April 14, 1977.

55 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 234 and 395.

56 Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong 10-yŏnsa (Charyo P’yŏn)* [A 10 Year History of the New Village Movement: Data] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1980), 47-48.

57 Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong 10-yŏnsa (Charyo P’yŏn)* [A 10 Year History of the New Village Movement: Data], 47-48.

58 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 189-190.

that the standing village itself worked naturally as a model village propagating the government's rural policies. Local housing officials exhibited village plan drawings as well, which gave summary of information about the village and its various construction projects.<sup>59</sup> The last illustration in Figure 9 was a plan drawing for the Village Structural Improvement Project at Saraeul village in Ch'unsŏng County.<sup>60</sup> It provided two-tiered information. First, it outlined the present status of the village such as numbers of households (farming households and non-farming households), population (men and women), cultivating area (fields and rice paddies),

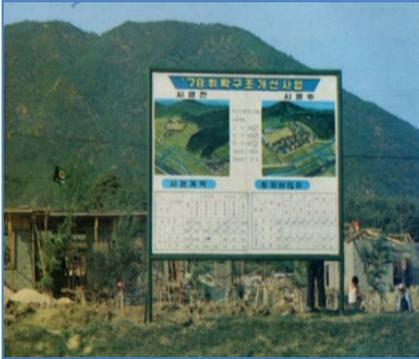


Image from Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), 189.

Fig. 8. The Sign Posts of Village Structural Improvement

59 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 190 and 601.

60 Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 190.



(#9-1)



(#9-2)



(#9-3)

Image from Naemubu chibang haengjǒngguk nongch'on chut'aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyōksa: Nongch'on chut'aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing] (Seoul: Naemubu, 1979), (#9-1)601, (#9-2)190, and (#9-3)190.

Fig. 9. Drawings for the Planned Village Structural Improvement Project

and averaged income and cultivating area per household. Second, it provided a brief summary on the amount of expenses and the villagers' share in the total expenses, along with the details for the construction of each facility. Yet, the plan drawing allocated most of its space to display before and after pictures of the village. The pictures contained mostly intuitive information about the coming change to the village.

In fact, much of the Village Structural Improvement Project was not completely new. Constructing village roads, expanding farm roads, and building public facilities such as village halls, store houses, workshops, and stalls had been carried out since 1970 under the same slogan of the New Village Movement. Nearly all of the major parts of the project overlapped with the Rural Housing Improvement Project. In terms of objective, however, the Village Structural Improvement Project presented a more comprehensive and structured spatial image of the ideal rural village, which had been sporadically expressed in different sites of the New Village construction (*Saemaül kōnsōl*).

The rural housing works focused mainly on how to urbanize traditional rural houses; the construction of common facilities emphasized the efficiency of cooperative production; and the expansion of roads had been understood as an important work project to enable the use of trucks and large agro-machines, respectively.<sup>61</sup> Yet, the whole layout of the town prepared in the Village Structural Improvement Project demonstrated how each section of the works were interconnected with each other to lead to the urbanized lifestyle and industrialized farming methods. In the comprehensive vision of the Village Structural Improvement Project, the urban-style farm house was considered a place where, like urban workers' retreat from the factory, farmers could rest before and after the commute between the fields and village workshops. Similarly, the common workplaces were intended to serve as spaces where they could process and store harvest and keep implements. Finally, the expanded village roads

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61 Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong 10-yōnsa* [A 10 Year History of the New Village Movement], 343-344.

were designed for trucks, power tillers, and tractors to pass through easily from the rice paddies into the village.<sup>62</sup> In this sense, the comprehensive design of new homes and new villages was part of a spatial solution for agricultural productivity, which explicitly demonstrated the norms of 1970s industrial developmentalism.<sup>63</sup>

### Epilogue: Abandoned Villages and Empty Houses

In 1998, two Korean newspaper companies, the *Chosŏn ilbo* and *Tonga ilbo*, conducted a public-opinion survey meant to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anni-

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62 “Kigyehwa wihae nongch’on kaejo [Reconstruction of rural villages for mechanization],” *Han’guk ilbo*, January 17, 1978; “Sasŏl: Maül kujo ūi kaesŏn [Editorial: Improvement of village structure],” *Chung’ang ilbo*, April 14, 1977; Naemubu chibang haengjŏngguk nongch’on chut’aek kaeryangkwa [Division of Rural Housing Improvement at the Ministry of Home Affairs], *Minjok ūi taeyŏksa: Nongch’on chut’aeksa* [The Great Construction Project of the Nation: The History of Rural Housing], 361.

63 From the perspective of production, the rice paddy was also an important constituent in this comprehensive spatial reconfiguration. The redesign of rice paddies was understood as a prerequisite condition for the innovated farming methods. The plan to redesign rice paddies was conducted from 1964 to the 1970s in a full scale under the name of the Land Rearrangement Project (*Kyŏngji chŏngri saŏp*). According to a government’s document on the 1972 Land Rearrangement Plan, the main purposes of the project were: first, to make a part of the rice paddy border a roadway so that farmers could convey agricultural machines and products without passing via another’s land; second, to change the size, shape, and structure of fields for more efficient use of agri-machinery; third, to reconstruct irrigation and drainage system in a way to use machines more conveniently; finally, to let farmers exchange lands for developed and collective farming methods in the future. To sum up, the key point of the Land Rearrangement Project was to reshape and exchange rice paddies for machines to work in more productive ways. (Nongnimbu [Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry], “Nongji chŏngni kyehoek: 1972.10” [Land Rearrangement Plan, October 1972] (Seoul: Nongnimbu, 1972).)

versary of the establishment of the Republic of Korea.<sup>64</sup> This survey asked respondents to comment on the following question: “What do you consider to be the greatest achievements of the South Korean government over the past 50 years?” According to the survey results, almost 50% of the general respondents thought of the “Park Chung Hee government’s New Village Movement (*Saemaül Undong*)” as the highest accomplishment in the history of the republic. In the midst of the frustration experienced from the IMF (International Monetary Fund) debt crisis that started in late 1997, the New Village Movement was particularly remembered and acclaimed as the symbol of the swift economic expansion of the 1970s. Transforming rural living spaces was, of course, central to the memories and experiences of such a ‘monumental’ New Village Movement, which includes replacing thatched roofs with colorful slate, rebuilding old shabby houses into urban-style cultural houses, and restructuring traditional agrarian village into something more similar to industrial complexes. Then, what are the legacies of the construction boom?

For the last couple of tumultuous years in the 1970s, a total of 185,782 houses were reconstructed in the name of the Saemaül Rural Housing Improvement.<sup>65</sup> These ‘urban-style’ houses had influence over the subsequent design and construction of new rural houses throughout the 1980s. The houses under construction seemed to demonstrate the promising future of agricultural economy; and many farmers believed that their new houses would be left to their children and again grandchildren for generations.<sup>66</sup> However, today about three decades after the housing boom, the

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64 “Chǒngbu surip 50-yǒn Taehanmin’guk 50-yǒn ūi 20-tae ōpchōk [20 achievements of the ROK governments for the past 50 years],” *Chosǒn ilbo*, July 16, 1998; “Chǒngbu surip 50-chunyǒn t’ūkpyōl yǒron chosa [Special public-opinion survey in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ROK establishment],” *Tonga ilbo*, August 14, 1998.

65 Naemubu [Ministry of Home Affairs], *Saemaül Undong 10-yǒnsa (Charyo P’yǒn) [A 10 Year History of the New Village Movement: Data]*, 44.

66 “Nongch’on sae p’ungsokto (154): Chugō pyōnhyōk (13), Saem sotnūn ūiyok [New trend in the countryside (154): Housing revolution (13), Morale goes up],”

rural landscape of South Korea tells us a different story. As of 2010, more than 230,000 rural houses, which exceeds the total number of the newly-built houses in the 1970s, sit empty.<sup>67</sup> This is the result of a continuous and steep decrease in the population of farm households, a trend that was unfolding even during the peak of the Saemaül roofing and house-building projects of the 1970s. The percentage of farm household population was close to 50% of the national total in the late 1960s,<sup>68</sup> but it continued to drop to 28.4% (10.83 million) in 1980, 15.5% (6.66 million) in 1990, 8.6% (4.03 million) in 2000, and 6.3% (3.06 million) in 2010.<sup>69</sup>

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*Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, June 3, 1978.

- 67 Yi Ch'ang-u and Chi Nam-sŏk, "Nongch'on chiyŏk hwalsŏnghwa rŭl wihan pinjip hwalyong pangan yŏn'gu: Kwinong, kwich'onja ūi chugŏ anjŏng kwanchŏm esŏ [A Study on the Utilization of Empty House for Rural Activation]," *Nongch'on kyehŏek [Journal of Korean Society of Rural Planning]* 19, no. 3 (September 2013): 174; Kang Mi-na and Kim Chin-bŏm, "Nongch'on chiyŏk pinjip chŏngbi silt'ae wa chŏngch'aek panghyang [Status of Reorganization of Vacant Houses in Rural Areas and Policy Direction]," *Kukt'o chŏngch'aek Brief [National Territory Policy Brief]* 434 (August 2013): 2.
- 68 Nongnimbu [Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry], *Nongnim t'onggye yŏnbo [Statistical Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry]* (Seoul: Nongnimbu, 1970), 25; Han To-hyŏn, "1960-yŏndae nongch'on sahoe ūi kujo wa pyŏnhwa [Structure and Change of Rural Society in 1960s Korea]," in *1960-yŏndae sahoe pyŏnhwa yŏn'gu: 1963-1970 [Studies on Social Changes in 1960s Korea, 1963-1970]*, ed. Han'guk chŏngsin munhwa yŏn'guwŏn [The Academy of Korean Studies] (Seoul: Paeksansŏdang, 1999), 129.
- 69 Sim Min-hŭi, Ch'ae Sang-hyŏn, and Chang To-hwan. *T'onggye ro pon segye sok ūi Han'guk nongŏp [The Position of Korean Agriculture in the World]* (Seoul: Han'guk nongch'on kyŏngje yŏn'guwŏn [Korea Rural Economic Institute], 2013), 131; Kim Kyŏng-dŏk, Kim Chŏng-ho, and Kim Chong-sŏn, *Nongŏp saengsan, kyŏngyŏng kujo ūi pyŏnhwa wa chŏnmang: 2000, 2005, 2010 nongŏp ch'ongjosa [Retrospect and Prospect of Structural Change in Korean Agriculture: An Analysis of Agricultural Census 2000, 2005, 2010]* (Seoul: Han'guk nongch'on kyŏngje yŏn'guwŏn [Korea Rural Economic Institute], 2012), 13; Kim Pyŏng-ryul, Han Sŏk-ho, Kim T'ae-u, and Yang Hyŏn-sŏk, "2012-yŏn nongŏp, nongch'on, mit sikip'um sanŏp chŏnmang [A Prospect for Agriculture, Rural Villages, and Food

According to the 2010 census, the number of farm households was 1.18 million, which was only 6.5% of the total households in South Korea.<sup>70</sup> The exodus of rural youth has been more serious: 31.8% of the farm household population in 2010 was aged 65 or older,<sup>71</sup> whereas the rate was only 9.2% in the cities.<sup>72</sup>

The abandoned rural houses formerly used to visualize colorful prosperity and political legitimacy back in the 1970s evoke a sense of fear now. In 2007, a resident living in Inch'ŏn was shocked to discover his parents' home in Kanghwa County introduced in a television show he was watching as a notorious haunted house (*Hyungga*).<sup>73</sup> The house was actually the place where he spent his childhood and was associated with countless memories. Following his parents' death, the man moved to the

Industry in 2012],” in *Nongŏp chŏnmang 2012* [2012 Agricultural Outlook], ed. Han'guk nongch'on kyŏngje yŏn'guwŏn [Korea Rural Economic Institute] (Seoul: Han'guk nongch'on kyŏngje yŏn'guwŏn, 2012), 31.

70 Sim Min-hŭi, Ch'ae Sang-hyŏn, and Chang To-hwan, *T'onggye ro pon segye sok ũi Han'guk nongŏp* [The Position of Korean Agriculture in the World], 131; Kim Kyŏng-dŏk, Kim Chŏng-ho, and Kim Chong-sŏn, *Nongŏp saengsan, kyŏngyŏng kujo ũi pyŏnhwa wa chŏnmang: 2000, 2005, 2010 nongŏp ch'ongjosa* [Retrospect and Prospect of Structural Change in Korean Agriculture: An Analysis of Agricultural Census 2000, 2005, 2010], 13.

71 Kim Kyŏng-dŏk, Kim Chŏng-ho, and Kim Chong-sŏn, *Nongŏp saengsan, kyŏngyŏng kujo ũi pyŏnhwa wa chŏnmang: 2000, 2005, 2010 nongŏp ch'ongjosa* [Retrospect and Prospect of Structural Change in Korean Agriculture: An Analysis of Agricultural Census 2000, 2005, 2010], 13; Kim Pyŏng-ryul, Han Sŏk-ho, Kim T'ae-u, and Yang Hyŏn-sŏk, “2012-yŏn nongŏp, nongch'on, mit sŏk'um sanŏp chŏnmang [A Prospect for Agriculture, Rural Villages, and Food Industry in 2012],” in *Nongŏp chŏnmang 2012* [2012 Agricultural Outlook], ed. Han'guk nongch'on kyŏngje yŏn'guwŏn [Korea Rural Economic Institute], 31.

72 Yi Ch'ang-u and Chi Nam-sŏk, “Nongch'on chiyŏk hwalsŏnghwa rŭl wihan pinjip hwalyong pangan yŏn'gu: Kwinong, kwich'onja ũi chugŏ anjŏng kwanchŏm esŏ [A Study on the Utilization of Empty House for Rural Activation],” 172.

73 “TV e naon 'kongp'o ũi hyungga'... algo poni nae chip? [‘A haunted house of fear’ appeared on a television show... it turns out to be my house?],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, November 17, 2012.

city without selling it. The uninhabited residence soon fell into disrepair, and dreadful rumors came to be associated with the ruined house (*P'yega*): “The family who had lived in the house committed suicide,” “A girl in convalescence was murdered in the house,” “A child ghost stays around the sofa,” and “Sounds of a woman’s sobbing come from the house.” Commercial media indiscreetly reported on the many rumors, while making use of camera angles reminiscent of a fake-documentary horror film, stimulating the viewers’ sense of fear. This anecdote speaks to the way that ruined rural houses continue to be revitalized and consumed again after the completion of their old task of ‘standing for development.’

Well aware of the history of the empty house, village neighbors were troubled by the absurd rumors and prying eyes of outsiders. However, even for those who remained in the countryside, ruined houses that their neighbors had left behind can also at times be a cause for fear. The unoccupied houses were likely to draw trespassing strangers, who often interrupted the villagers’ daily life.<sup>74</sup> The elderly inhabitants worried about squatters, fire, crime, and the like that might be drawn to the ruined houses.<sup>75</sup> In the situation that about two out of ten rural houses are vacant and damaged as of 2010,<sup>76</sup> the residents sometimes felt “lackluster” from the

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74 “TV e naon ‘kongp’o ūi hyungga’... algo poni nae chip? [‘A haunted house of fear’ appeared on a television show... it turns out to be my house?],” *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, November 17, 2012; “Nŭlŏman kanŭn nongch’on p’yega [Increasingly ruined rural houses],” *Sin’a ilbo*, June 14, 2008.

75 “Nŭlŏman kanŭn nongch’on p’yega [Increasingly ruined rural houses],” *Sin’a ilbo*, June 14, 2008.

76 Yi Ch’ang-u and Chi Nam-sŏk, “Nongch’on chiyŏk hwalsŏnghwa rŭl wihan pinjip hwalyong pangan yŏn’gu: Kwinong, kwich’onja ūi chugŏ anjŏng kwanchŏm esŏ [A Study on the Utilization of Empty House for Rural Activation],” 174; Kang Mina and Kim Chin-bŏm, “Nongch’on chiyŏk pinjip chŏngbi silt’ae wa chŏngch’aek panghyang [Status of Reorganization of Vacant Houses in Rural Areas and Policy Direction],” 2.

bleak landscape of their village.<sup>77</sup> Through more desperate rhetoric, those communities with many ruined houses have been described as “dead villages.”<sup>78</sup> In a sense, such images of rural ruins as bleak, precarious, and lifeless spaces can be associated with the fundamental conditions of an ailing agricultural economy in South Korea, especially under the global market system regulated by the WTO (World Trade Organization) and FTAs (Free Trade Agreement) after the spectacular illusion of ‘rural modernization.’

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78 Kim Yu-rim, “Cheju p’yega salligi hyŏptong chohap taep’yo Kim Yŏng-min [Kim Yŏng-min, Leader of the ‘Save Cheju Ruined Houses’ Cooperative],” *Sindonga* 651 (December 2013): 74.

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<Abstract>

## Urbanizing the Countryside: The Developmentalist Designs of the New Village and Farmhouse in 1970s Rural Korea

*Kim, Sungjo*

This article delves into the relationships between the renovated farmhouse, restructured village layout, and agricultural production in the New Village Movement of the 1970s. The new rural houses under construction in the 1970s were often called “urban style houses (*Tosihyŏng chut’aek*)” or “cultural houses (*Munhwa chut’aek*),” representing a kind of spatial unification or homogenization between domiciles in the countryside and the city. The government’s standardized designs of the urban-style cultural farmhouse paid particular attention to ways of dividing living spaces from workplaces, which were often integrated in earlier designs for farmhouse buildings. This planning was based on a prospect that agricultural production would and should be mechanized and collaborative, as in manufacturing production. The urbanization of rural housing was interconnected with the so-called Village Structural Improvement Project that visualized the whole layout of the rural village and demonstrated how the construction works led to the urbanized lifestyle and industrialized farming methods. However, farmers often complained that the new urban-style farmhouse and village was not optimal for the patterns of life in the countryside, and that the common warehouses under construction were too distant from each farmhouse.

**Keywords:** 1970s, South Korea, New Village Movement, Urban style house, Cultural house, Village Structural Improvement Project

〈국문초록〉

## 농촌을 도시화하기: 1970년대 농촌 주택과 마을 설계에 표현된 개발주의 이데올로기

김성조 (연세대학교 미래캠퍼스 역사문화학과)

이 연구는 1970년대 농촌 새마을운동 과정에서 보이는 농가주택 및 농촌마을 디자인의 변화와 당시 농업 생산을 바라보는 산업개발주의적 이데올로기 사이의 관계를 분석한다. 1970년대 새로 건축된 농촌 주택은 “도시형 주택” 또는 “문화 주택”으로 불리면서, 도시와 농촌 공간의 통일과 균질화를 선전·재현하고 있었다. “도시형 문화주택”을 표방하며 배포한 정부의 농촌 표준주택 설계도면들은 전통 농가주택에서는 흔히 흔재해 있던 생활주거공간과 작업공간의 분리를 특히 강조했다. 장차 농업 생산 역시 당시의 제조업 대단지에서처럼 기계화·단지화될 것이며 또 그래야만 한다는 전망과 이상을 표현한 디자인이었다. 이와 같은 농촌의 도시화 프로젝트는 소위 “취락구조개선사업”과도 연결되고 있었다. 정부는 취락구조개선사업 속에서 농촌 마을의 재배치 기획을 구체적으로 시각화하여 보여주고, 이러한 건설이 어떻게 농촌에 도시형 생활양식과 산업화된 영농 방식을 가져오는지에 대해 선전했다. 하지만 다른 한편에서 농민들은 새로운 도시형 주택과 마을이 실제 그들 삶의 모습에 맞지 않아 불편을 호소하기도 하고, 공동 창고와 같은 작업공간이 집에서 너무 멀다며 불만을 표출하기도 했다.

**주제어:** 1970년대, 농촌, 새마을운동, 도시형 주택, 문화 주택, 취락구조개선사업