

Songdo and Sejong: master-planned cities in South Korea

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▶ **To cite this version:**

Alexandra Lichá. Songdo and Sejong: master-planned cities in South Korea. 2015. halshs-01216229

HAL Id: halshs-01216229
https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01216229

Preprint submitted on 15 Oct 2015

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Songdo and Sejong: master-planned cities in South Korea

by

Alexandra Lichá

This is a working paper issued from my professional dissertation submitted in partial fulfillement of the requirements for the Masters degree in Governing the Large Metropolis (Urban Affairs Department, Sciences Po Paris), 2014.

It was co-supervised by Tommaso Vitale (Sciences Po) and Valérie Gelézeau (EHESS) within the research project "Capitales coréennes" at CRC-EHESS that I joined as intern in 2014 (February-May).

The author would like to thank first her supervisor Tommaso Vitale for the time he dedicated to this paper. Many thanks especially to my internship tutor Valérie Gelézeau for the opportunity to join the Centre for Korean Studies at EHESS and the time and interest she dedicated to my work. Also, thanks to Natacha Aveline and Dominique Boullier for supporting my initial work on Songdo. Last but not least my gratitude to Michal Dudáš for the overall support.

Abstract: This paper studies two new master-planned South Korean cities, Songdo IBD and Sejong Self-Administering City from the angle of master-planned cities as developmental solutions. It identifies four areas of outcomes of such policies: institutional, citizen quality of life and wellbeing, market-related and environmental. Then the paper explains and nuances the outcomes through three variables: competitiveness and nature of the incentive, diffusion of "modern" urban planning solutions and the distance from Seoul. The two case studies serve as a platform for demonstrating the regional rescaling of the Korean developmental state and the challenges of sustainable urban planning solutions on the totality of the new city.

Keywords: South Korea, Sejong City, Songdo, regionalism, decentralisation, new city, master-planned city, green urbanism, ubicomp

Note: If not indicated otherwise, all the links have been last checked on May 5th, 2014.

Table of Contents

Introduction **5**
Songdo 8
Sejong 10

Literature review **12**
Review of used theoretical concepts 12
State-of-the-art research on Sejong and Songdo 19

Methodology and data presentation **21**
Case-study choice and comparability 21
Available souces, types of sources 22
Research time frame and limitations 24
Romanisation 25

Background **26**
Sejong and Songdo in the context of government-led developmental projects 26
Master-planned cities in Korea 27
Decentralisation and regional development 28
Regionalism 30

Policy outcome description **32**
Sejong 32
Institutional 32
Citizens' quality of life and wellbeing 36
Market-related 45
Songdo 47
Institutional 47
Citizens' quality of life and wellbeing 48
Market-related 53
Environmental 55
Summary 56

Policy outcome explanation **57**
Competitiveness and the nature of incentives 57
Diffusion of "modern" urban concepts 63
Distance from Seoul matters 67

Discussion **74**

Conclusion **83**

Bibliography **84**

Annexes **89**

1. Introduction

In South Korea[1], new master-planned cities are "back in town". In this paper, we are going to focus on two such new master-planned cities, Songdo IBD and Sejong Self-Administering City. They are worth particular attention thanks to their several distinctive features that distinguish them from the suburban master-planned communities in the US, Australia or even Europe or the revitalisation projects that lead to new neighbourhoods creation in the European cities (such as Stockholm Hammarby Sjostad or ZACs in Paris etc.).

First, they are incomparable in scale: consider the 250 ha of Hammarby against 1,500 ha in Songdo. Second, most importantly, they aim at a different goal: they are developmental projects aiming to create economic growth, in other words they are supposed to produce wealth and not just embody, personalise a certain well-being standard. In this respect, therefore, they are much more similar to "traditional" business districts and office spaces in general, which, in the end, they are: Songdo IBD stands for "Songdo International Business District" and Sejong Self-Administering City is the new siege of most of the governmental agencies and ministries of the Republic of Korea. However, at the same time, these projects' master plans contain housing units, leisure amenities, schools, small commerce (what in French is elegantly called *commerce de proximité*) etc. This is why for example Valérie Gelézeau, a French social geographer specialised in Korea, calls them a mix between business districts and a ZAC.

Of course, these two new Korean master-planned cities, similarly to the suburban master-planned communities or the so-called "éco-quartiers", they "sell" a certain type of urban dream, a vision of better life. In the recent cases, the "green" cities sell the dream of a sustainable, clean and more environmentally-friendly and eco-responsible living just as the suburbian dream since the 1950s in the United States sold the dream of a place of one's own and a comeback to the countryside, which, in the end, are not that very divergent. To this adds the newer particular

1 In this paper, "Korea" is used interchangeably with South Korea and the Republic of Korea unless otherwise specified.

aspect, heavily present in the marketing of Songdo, the "smart city": a city containing the so-called "ubiquitous technologies" or "ubicomp" for short, a sort of science fiction-like city vision with technology facilitating life on daily basis, the technology being omnipresent. As Germaine Halegoua (2012) says in her thesis, these ubicomp solutions are conveying the ideal of living the future in the present, in other words living a sort of urban dream, a utopia. It is then not surprising that recently, the ubicomp and green aspects of urbanism are blended together to form a planning solution that Shwayri (2013) dubbed "u-eco-city". And this is what we are dealing with in our paper, two cases of an "u-eco-city" made in Korea.

Despite some differences between the projects that will become apparent later in this section when we present the respective cases more in detail, we are going to be interested in Songdo and Sejong as new large scale master-planned cities conceived as developmental solutions. We are going to explore the cases to see what issues they face in these early stages of their creation and what lessons can we draw from their experience mostly in these aspects:

- What can they tell us about the master-planned cities as developmental, economic development fostering solutions?
- What are they mutual similarities and differences and what does it reveal about the issues of master-planned cities and what are the relevant questions for the Korean context?

After the literature review and the data and research presentation, we will dedicate some time to contextualise our projects in the developmental projects and master-planned Korean cities and within the regionalism and decentralisation debate. In the section 5, we will describe the policy outcomes of Sejong and Songdo projects, trying to give a glimpse of how it is to live the new city. We will group our observations into four categories of outcomes: institutional, citizen quality of life and well-being, market-related and environmental.

We will then proceed into a two-step reflection on the new master-planned cities of Sejong and Songdo. In chapter 6, we are going to identify variables influencing the outcomes other than the fact that the implementation of the projects

are still in progess. They are going to be (i) competitiveness and nature of the incentive, (ii) diffusion of "modern" urban concepts, and (iii) distance from Seoul. These three variables will enable us to perceive more clearly the differences and similarities between the cases as well as particularities of the Korean context.

In the last section, chapter 7, we are going to recontextualise the new master-planned cities into fundamental issues of urban planning, public policy-making and public policy analysis. We see a partnership shift towards international sapital within the Korean developmental alliance instead of its simple dismantling at the expense of market oriented economy. We will also discuss the rescaling of the Korean developmental state towards city regions following the argument of Neil Brenner (2004). We will also demonstrate how are our two cities a result of reconciliation attempts between international championship designation and a move towards more balanced regional growth.

Then, we will evoke the importance of incentives and compensations for both firms and future settlers. Last but not least, we demonstrate, based on our case studies, the challenges in implementing some of the state-of-the-art sustainability solutions in a large-scale green-field new master-planned cities, a context different from where these solutions first emerged.

As such, our paper aims in the first place to make an account of the various outcomes of master-planned cities as developmental solutions. In the second place, the case-study based reflection revealed interesting suggestions about the rescaling of Korean statehood and the challenges of master-planned cities in terms of government incentives and public goods provision, and about the sustainability solutions implementation. They, we believe, are especially relevant given the large world-wide policy stream of sustainable urban planning.

As the reader might not be very familiar with the Songdo and Sejong projects, we would like to make a short general introduction of them.

Songdo[2]

Songdo IBD is a master-planned city on 1.500 acres of land reclaimed from the Yellow sea. According to the Harvard Business School case study (Segel, 2005), it has been envisioned by the Korean central government and commissioned in 2001 to an US investor and developer, the Gale International, in a partnership with POSCO, a large industrial *chaebol* that stepped in after Daewoo collapsed during the Asian financial crisis (Shwayri, 2013). The "ubicomp"[3] technologies are designed and implemented by CISCO, a US smart-grid specialised company which in its own words enables the creation of "smart and connected communities"[4].

Songdo, sometimes referred to also as "New Songdo", as a part of the Incheon Free Economic Zone[5] IFEZ (Newman and Matan, 2013), is primarily a business district. Development through FEZs is a rather traditional approach for development of both international business districts and the u-cities (Shwayri, 2013).

However, the first phase of a project of an international business city was envisioned by the president Roh Tae-woo during his first visit to Incheon in 1988 in order to strengthen the economic cooperation with China, hence the location choice. After delays in implementation, the land reclamation became only after 1994 for a project of a "Korean Silicon Valley", the sustainability aspect was added years later, in the 2000s, after POSCO and Gale took over the project in 2001 (Segel, 2005).

Each land reclamation stage since 1994 met with opposition despite which the process continued until 2001. Then the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries achieved downsizing of the land reclamation in the whole country and

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[2] We have taken the liberty to use the case description from our previous paper on Songdo (Lichá, 2014).

[3] Short for "ubiquitous computing": a term used originally by XZ from BZ to refer to a situation where computers would be integrated into the fabric of daily life.

[4] CISCO official website, "Smart+Connected Communities", available http://www.cisco.com/web/strategy/smart_connected_communities.html (Last accessed on May 3rd 2013).

[5] Other two parts of the IFEZ are the Incheon Airport area and the Cheongna International City.

Songdo did not expand any further. Protesting fishermen were given shares in the city so they would not obstruct the proceedings of the project (Shwayri, 2013).

Interestingly, it was planned by the developers as a city for foreigners (Shwayri, 2013; Kuecker, 2013) and their convenience has been repeatedly pointed out[6]. A non-Korean city for non-Koreans with large avenues, Central Park and English street names where they could benefit from subsidised schooling, healthcare and so on, contrarily to their eventual Korean counterparts (thought to be mostly employees of the international companies), with English used as the lingua franca (Kuecker, 2013). However, due to lack of interest of foreign firms and developers, the area is currently developed by domestic companies with large housing complexes that look similar to the rest of the country and where mostly Koreans live (Shwayri, 2013).

In terms of technology, Songdo IBD aims to become an ubiquitous city *par excellence*, including into the smart grid not only utilities but also services networks. This would include, among others, household remote control management through internet devices as well as remote healthcare, tutoring and service delivery requests[7]. This is what Shwayri (2013) calls u-healthcare, u-services etc. Moreover, the ubiquitous nature of Songdo would not mean only built-in computers all over the city but also their networked nature as "all residential, business and government systems will share data" (Halegoua, 2012) created by the ubicomp usage.

Combining the "u-features" with the green aspect of Songdo such as vast green spaces, walkability and sustainable transport (i. e. water taxis on the seawater canals in the city), LED street lighting, automatic collection of trash and water recyclation lead Shwayri (2013) to forge the term "u-eco-city". According to the official "Cisco Smart+Connected Residential Solution Video,"[8] this urbanism solution will help to "achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability"

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6 Sang, Youn-joo. "Songdo touted as green, foreigner-friendly city". *Korea Herald* http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20121017000931. Last accessed 28th April 2013.

7 "Cisco Smart+Connected Residential Solution Video", available online at Cisco's official channel http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTHf_GB8lP4 (Acquired February 25th, 2013).

8 "Cisco Smart+Connected Residential Solution Video", available online at Cisco's official channel http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTHf_GB8lP4 (Acquired February 25th, 2013).

and overall increase the quality of life in terms of convenience, security, luxury and perceived social status (Halegoua, 2012).

Sejong

Sejong Self-Administering City or Multifunctional Administrative City results from the attempts to relocate the capital of South Korea away from Seoul, for both economic and strategic reasons. The Seoul Metro Area comprises currently around 50% of Korean population and makes up for 40% of the GDP, making on one hand a strong imbalance in the redistribution of economic development and on the other weighing heavily in terms of life expenses costs and congestion, the "typical" issues of big metropolises. Which is exactly what President Roh Moo-hyun gave as reasons for his plan to relocate the Korean capital away from Seoul to Chunchgeong province (Lee Daehee, 2011). Another reason for moving the capital city away from the 38th parallel has been, of course, purely strategic, envisaged already by Park Chung-hee[9], to move the power centres away from the range of North Korean missiles[10].

The new capital has been planned to be in the North Chungcheong Province, north of Daejeon and around 120 km south-east of Seoul, regrouping several municipalities with the heart in the Yeongi county. According to the master plan, it is supposed to stretch over 70% of Seoul's territory size with 50% of green spaces and a target population of 500,000 by 2030. Even the outlay reminds of the capital of Seoul, Sejong is articulated in a circular "donut" outlay with a river cutting in the middle. Alongside the administrative complex, the city is to accommodate clusters of education and R&D, high-tech industry, medical services and culture & international exchange (Kang, 2012).

The promise to relocate the capital to the current location was made by Roh during his presidential electoral campaign in 2002. After his election, Roh started to put in process the implementation of his promise to change the capital

9 "An ancient land becomes the site of a new city" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-16 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980530

10 "What Park should do to save Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2013-07-11 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130710000987

from Seoul to what is now Sejong, similarly to the Brasília project in Brazil. Yet his decision has been promptly challenged at the Constitutional court by Lee Myung-bak, at the time Mayor of Seoul. Lee's motion passed and was accepted and subsequently the Constitutional court ruled that changing the capital city would be unconstitutional as Seoul is the traditional historical capital of Korea[11]. Roh's administration had to re-work the plan and the one finally voted in 2005 created the project for the multifunctional administrative city of Sejong, all while keeping Seoul the capital of South Korea and not relocating key political institutions: the Blue House (the presidential office), the National Assembly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance (Lee Daehee, 2011).

The bill on construction of Sejong as special administrative city passed in the Parliament with support of the GNP (the Grand National Party) despite Lee's membership. This plan has been touted as "the Original plan" during the subsequent controversy a couple of years later. The construction of Sejong city as a siege of most of the government administration then started in 2006.

With the arrival of Lee Myng-bak as president in 2008, the Sejong multifunctional administrative city project has been challenged again, with an intense political battle in 2010. Lee, supported by the Prime Minister at the time, Chung Un-chan, proposed an alternative plan for the Yeongi County (Yeongi-gun): the construction of a science and innovation city. It was supposed to be the centre of the so-called "science belt" inspired by the US model, with Daejon and relate several places around Chungcheong area. This is what was then referred to as "the Revised plan" and this time Lee lost his battle so the Sejong City has taken shape as an administrative centre (Lee Dalgon, 2011).

[11] Which in itself in the Korean context is rather funny: in East Asian countries, notably in Korea, in China or in Japan, the capitals have been even more volatile than in Europe. Moving the capital with the change of dynasty or to mark a new era has been common practice. Seoul has become the capital "only" in the 15th century when the first monarch, T'aejo, of Chosŏn dynasty (1399-1910), moved the capital from Kaegyŏng (present-day Kaesŏng) to Hanyang (or Hansŏng – present day Seoul). Therefore Seoul indeed is a historical capital, but far from being the only one.

2. Literature review

Review of used theoretical concepts:

In this section we will review a set for theoretical concepts that are necessary in order to grasp the issue of the two master-planned new cities in Korea. We will begin with the overview of the developmental state, necessary for understanding the logic of Korean policy-making. We will follow with the topic of master-planned cities and comunities and the logic of diffusion of certain public policies. This will open our debate further to the notion of competitiveness. Finally, we will comment upon regionalism and decentralisation that will enable us to see the issue of Songdo and Sejong with more subtlety and nuances.

First, the South Korean state has been classified among the so-called developmental states, which simply put means that "political and economic power [is] closely entwined in Korea." (Hundt, 2009: 2) The developmental state has been theorised by Bruce Cumings to describe the development strategies in East Asia, hence Korea. The Korean developmental state is characterised by a close interaction between the state and the big conglomerates, the *chaebols,* because even during the dictatorial period, the "state has been far from being absolute" (Hundt, 2009: 2). Consequently, according to Charles Lindblom, "the developmental project [is] dependent on the willingness of the large firms to invest" (Hundt, 2009: 8). Because the develpmental state is, according to Chalmers Johnson, a capitalist one, which "via 'conscious and consistent governemental policies' has actively sought to 'improve the outcomes of market forces'" (Hundt, 2009: 4).

As a result, there has been what David Hundt (2009) calls the "developmental alliance" (DA) between "the structural power of capital and the infrastructural power of the state" to "achieve goals of national importance" (Hundt, 2009: 2-5). By stressing the mutual interdependance of the state and the big firms, Hundt (2009) tries to breach the research on the developmental state prioritising one of the respective actors over the another, showing that the power balance between the two shifted over time.

Some authors developed the idea that in the late 1990s, immediately before and after the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the Korean developmental state has been transformed or even dimanteled towards more "regulatory" role (Jayasuryia, 2005) due to globalisation (Kim Yun Tae, 2008) and shift to more market-oriented economy (Pirie, 2005).

We will see in the chapter 4 that the developmental activities of the Korean DA also comprised construction of new master-planned districts, satellite cities and new cities. For this reason, we found useful to comment on the literature studying the master-planned cities and communities in general.

Second, the research on master-planned cities in English can be divided into several categories according to the different typologies of the master-planned cities: master-planned suburban communities with a special sub-category of the private gated communities, the new capital cities and the new master-planned "eco cities" and "smart cities".

The master-planned suburban communities have attracted scholarly attention essentially in the case-based studies on communities in the United Stated and in Australia. They seem to focus especially on the question of "community" sense building and factors that influence and enhance its creation (Gwyther, 2005), across generations and through the usage of the concept of "New Urbanism" (Till, 2001). The study by Pauline M. McGuirk and Robyn Dowling (2007) on the master-planned communities in Australia offers an analytical framework for their analysis on three levels: "(i) the nature of governance mechanisms that produce MPEs [master-planned estate] and govern life within them; (ii) the influence of housing market context on the unfolding of urban social processes; and (iii) the dynamic and lived nature of neighbourhood and community".

The studies of both the new green and smart cities seem to focus mostly on the analysis of the (merits of the) sustainability of these urban planning solutions or offer a general presentation of these projects. Moreover, due to their overall recent implementation, the literature on the new smart and/or green urban policies draws

upon the case-based studies of such plolicies implemented incrementally in already existing urban spaces. As an example of such study, we would like to cite the Newman and Matan (2013) book on green urban planning in Asia. the trend of combining the new master-planned cities with sustainability policies can be explained by the theories of diffusionism which we are going to see next.

Third, "diffusionism" is the collective name for schools and currents explaining why and how ideas circulate, and why some of them become predominant, we could even say "fashionable" in some places and domains. Theories of diffusionism thus stem from various domains such as social anthropology or organisational theory. The paper by Dobbin et al. (2007) excellently summarise the diffusionism theories in sociology that are considered relevant for the public policy analysis domain – in other words theories built upon a lot on organisational theory, sociology of institutions etc., thus omitting the diffusionist anthropological current of late 19th and early 20th century.

Dobbin *et al*. (2007) divide the diffusionist theories into constructivist, coercive, economic competition and learning with several sub-categories, for us, the most relevant one is going to be the notion of normative isomorphism, a sub-category of constructivist diffusion paths.

With the strong role of epistemic advisory international institutions and the increasing exchange of "best-case" practices, especially in the domain of urban planning solutions directly in between municipalities, hence the increased diffusion of certain policies, we found interesting to focus on a case that positions itself as a "best practice" case (Songdo) and one (Sejong) that attempts to emulate the decentralisation policy of Brasília, Brazil, and Putrajaya, Malaysia.

Fourth, market competition is, as we have said, among the reasons for public policies to diffuse. As such, competitiveness is an important aspect driving the policy-making and policy-shaping in the urban context, as it has been identified as a clear asset for cities, enabling their economic growth and symbolical importance – indeed a policy-making solution that was diffused massively along the globe. It

bluntly means that a certain city has developed a comparative advantage that would enable it to attract investment and capital (financial and human) to foster its growth. Of course, the competitiveness debate can be traced to Saskia Sassen (1991) and her concept of a *global city*; which conveys the idea that, cities worldwide are in a hierarchy and in mutual competition, with the leading trio of London, New York and Tokyo. Competitiveness as such has been essentially conceptualised by the OECD (2006), *Competitive cities in the global economy* report, which entailed a whole scope of research in urban planning and regional research on what makes cities competitive and why. Among others, we could cite Musterd and Murie (2010) who focus mainly on human capital attraction and clustering but their book attempts to compare various European cases and summarise the main debates. The competitiveness fostering research also produced the concept of *aerotropolis* by John Kasarda and Greg Lindsay (2011) who identified as sources of growth the combination of cities and busy airports enabling closer proximity and ties within regions and worldwide. We must note that competitiveness is, to a certain extent, relative and is thus subject of political strife, of campaigning, as a motto that can promise better future and more peer recognition.

There has been a scholarly challenge to the idea of global cities and competitiveness. We have to cite Jennifer Robinson (2006) who voiced her opposition to ranking and establishing hierarchy of cities with a net imposition of a modernity catch-up for cities in the developing world. Recently, Antoine Le Blanc *et al*. (2014) challenged the strife for economic competitiveness as the dominant vision (we hesitate with the use of "ideology" though it actually might be appropriate) for city development and improvement, underlying the divide between an economic progress and social justice.

The competitiveness fostering through developmental strategies of neoliberalism has been identified as especially relevant for the East Asian context, hence Korean context, by Bob Jessop (2002) and Park, Hill and Saito (2011). Master-planned cities in Korea are, as we argue, a clear-cut solution for competitiveness, on international (Songdo) or at least on national (Sejong) level because who says competitiveness, says economic growth. We will therefore

interpret the master-planned cities of Songdo and Sejong as manifestations of the Korean developmental state.

These were the main concepts and theories we need to bear in mind while studying the cases of Sejong and Songdo, we would like to now spend some time to precise the distinction between decentralisation and devolution and to comment on various aspects of regionalism as they would enable us to understand some more subtle details and particularities of the cases.

Fifth, the regionalism debate brings us two important terms, the "new regionalism" and "city-regions". Regions are in the interest of scholarly and political debate as units of analysis since the 1980s "as a result of globalization and supranational regionalization" (Agnew, 2013: 130) and he says that the reasons for this are: first, to know "how wealth is distributed and redistributed across places" and second the idea that "global uneven development is operating increasingly in relation to regions and localities rather than states" in other words a state rescaling process. This trend in regionalism is strongly linked with the devolution of the state administrations in the literature. Of course that regionalism = devolution is not complete and some of the regionalism theories can be applied to our case: "The confusion between regionalization, in the sense of the ascription of powers to new regional agencies as a result of central state initiatives, and regionalism, the increased importance of regions of some sort or another in people's political and economic life, may also account for the part of the problem." (Agnew, 2013: 134) Clearly, the case of Sejong is a case of regionalism in the second sense as the Chungcheong region is being ascribed mostly a symbolic role in the national political life as there is no devolution.

We will note in the further sections that Korean politics has been strongly regionalised in the sense of regional "bastion" building among different political parties. Agnew (2013: 135) explains that "in states without major ethnic-geographical divisions, patronage-based distribution of expenditures to support given political parties can be aided by regional mechanisms when votes are geographically concentrated." Regions as sources of political power have been

identified also by Hepburn and Detterback (2013: 77), "Regions have become containers of political attitudes and behaviour, as well as social and political identities, which diverge from other parts of the state even in the absence pf regional political institutions."

City-regions are also identified as motors of developmental opportunity windows: "the concept of the city-region has been rejuvenated as part of a wider 'new regionalist' literature documenting the importance of place-based and site-specific nodes of dense economic, social, and political activity within a globalizing world (Amin & Thrift, 1992; Scott, 2001a). Seen to have a 'deepening role' in the economy as places where globalization crystallises out on the ground (Scott, 2001b), city-regions are trumpeted as 'windows of locational opportunity' for capturing, nurturing, and anchoring wealth creating activity (Scott & Storper, 2003)." (Harrison, 2010: 18)

Sixth, the decentralisation/devolution difference is, we believe, needed to be made clear to grasp the issues of Sejong Self-Administering City, a case of a decentralisation policy. It is even more important because in the English-written texts, decentralisation and devolution are often used interchangeably, as for example in Faguet (2013: 2): "At least in their intention, many decentralizations aim to reconstitute government—from a hierarchical, bureaucratic mechanism of top-down management to a system of nested self-governments characterized by participation and cooperation, where transparency is high and accountability to the governed acts as a binding constraint on public servants' behavior. In pursuit of this, the scope of authority and resources that many countries have devolved to their sub-national governments is impressive." However, for our demonstration on decentralisation on the case of Sejong, this confusion would prove to be catastrophic. We need to mark the difference between territorial decentralisation and functional decentralisation to understand our case. Territorial decentralisation, or what in French political science terminology is called *déconcentration*, refers to the situation where central government agencies are spatially relocated to provincial areas. In the case of France, the *déconcentration* of the state is embodied in the *préfectures* and *sous-préfectures*: a local regional branch of the central government, a sort of proximity

service of the state. We will see this in the case of Sejong City where the central government agencies and bureaus are relocated from the Seoul Metro Area – and in the further not yet materialised plan of "innovative cities" where some lower commissions and agencies of the central government would move to regional cities based on their link with the "stylisation" of the "innovative city". For example, Gangwon as the city of tourism would host the Tourism Commission or the city of Seogwipo in Jeju Korea Foundation, as the newly promoted hub of education and culture. Similarly, Busan, as a major South Korean port, was at stake to host the Maritime Ministry. For this situation, we would use systematically the term *decentralisation* in our paper.

Functional decentralisation is in English known as devolution and as *décentralisation* in French. It refers to the recent trend observed both in Europe and in the Americas and much debated about among scholars as it means the delegation or redistribution of some of the competencies of the central government onto the regional governments for various reasons: economic, political etc. "We follow Faguet and Sánchez (2008) and Manor (1999) in defining decentralization as the devolution by central (i.e., national) government of specific functions, with all of the administrative, political, and economic attributes that these entail, to regional and local (i.e., state/provincial and municipal) governments that are independent of the center within given geographic and functional domains." (Faguet 2013: 3) For this situation, our paper will employ solely the term *devolution*. Despite the extensive scientific research on the effects of fiscal and governmental devolution, we are not going to review it as we consider it of very limited use for our work.

This being said, we have classified Sejong as a decentralisation attempt. However, to classify Songdo along this divide is going to be much more complex. Depending partly on our unit of analysis, we can classify Songdo as a decentralisation of socio-economic functions of Seoul, or as Ducruet (2007) says, of "redistribution of Seoul's global functions into its close environs"[12], most notably in the Incheon area. Or, in the regard of creation of Songdo and by proxy the Incheon Metro Area as a hub on the East Asian, see worldwide scale, as put forward in the

[12] "Redistribution des fonctions globales de Séoul dans son espace proche."

discourse of the developer, and in the logic of more balanced regional development, we could say that there is devolution of the socio-economic functions of Seoul as a central hub. However, as Songdo still lies within the Greater Seoul Metro Area which is customarily delimited as City of Seoul with the whole Gyeonggi province – of which Incheon Metro Area is an important part – we can consider that there is neither decentralisation nor devolution taking place as Songdo is still part of the championship of Seoul both on the national and especially on the international level.

State-of-the-art of research on Sejong and Songdo

Sejong

The attention on Sejong, has been given almost exclusively by Korean scholars or scholars of Korean descent; majorly in Korean, focusing often on the different aspects of the policy-making procedure and the policy co-production during the various controversies. First, general introductions on the Sejong policy (Chun, Young-Pyoung, 2010; Kwon Oh Yeok, 2012; Lee Daehee, 2011); then various aspects of the disputing process: veto player and political rationality (Ha Hye-Su, 2011), legislative conflict (Kim Yong-Chul, 2014), presidential role in the Sejong controversy (Park Myoung-Ho, 2010), policy leadership (Lee Dalgon, 2011) and brokerage (Park Young Sung and Choi Jung Woo, 2011) and political discourse (Hsu et al.)

Sustainability (Kang Jeongmuk, 2012) and environment (Shin Sungwoo et al., 2011) issues, economic impacts of u-eco-cities (Lee Sang-Kyeong, 2010). The relationship between healthy city and regional development as public health issue (Cho Mu-Song, 2013). Administrative concerns: appropriate personnel scale for office of education (Cho Ok-Kyung et al., 2012). Quantitative research on the policy impacts has been done on the following topics: relation between the controversy and public health in the area (Park Kwan Jun et al., 2012), resident's perception of the local educational system and their future expectations (Choi Young-Chool et al., 2012) and push factors for Daejeon citizens to move to Sejong city (Lim, Byung-Ho et al., 2012).

Songdo

Despite the fact that the project has not yet reached its completion, scholarly attention has been given to Songdo in the past few years. In terms of general presentation of the project, Shwayri's (2013) paper *A Model Korean Ubiquitous Eco-City? The Politics of Making Songdo* overviews the evolution of the project from an international business centre into the "u-eco-city" and its progressive "Koreanization" due to limited interest of foreign investors triggered by the economic crisis of 2008. Then, Segel (2005) case for the Harvard Business School, Lee and Oh (2008) analysis of Songdo as a case for mega-project implementation presented as a master thesis for the MIT's Department of Architecture. Comparisons between Songdo and Digital Media City (in Seoul) exist in working paper by IAU-îdF (2011) and in the Halegoua (2012) thesis on New Mediated Spaces dedicating her first chapter to Korean U-cities. Kuecker's (2013) article, published within the BAKS papers, labels Songdo as a boutique-city, as a model for global apartheid that denies the right to the city to everyone (Lefebvre).

This paper's author did present a paper on Songdo at the NAJAKS 2013 conference in Bergen, *"Green" and "Smart" Cities Diffusion: Case of Songdo IBD* (Lichá, 2014) and recently, Valérie Gelézeau presented a conference paper on Songdo at the AAS 2014, *Emergence of a Shadow: Songdo, a Globalized Mega-Project in the Shade of Seoul* (Gelézeau, 2014).

Korean academic sources on Songdo seem to deal with technical aspects of urban planning: waterfront revitalization, soil drainage etc.

3. Methodology and data presentation

1. Choice and comparability of the case studies

Songdo IBD and Sejong Self-Administering city have been selected for several reasons to discuss the lessons and outcomes of new master-planned cities.

First, they enter in the same political momentum of South Korean politics, the democratising period after 1988 - which is why we prioritised Songdo over other satellite cities around Seoul such as Seongnam, established during the period of Park Chung-hee dictatorship, characterised by intense economic planning.

Second, the key observed moments of the project - important plan change and implementation - also have a rather similar time scale with important project revisions in early 2000s for Songdo and the mid to late 2000s for Sejong, resulting in the observable implementation outcomes to be produced more or less between 2011-2014[13]. However, we must acknowledge that this is also one of the limits of this comparison because the implementation of either of the projects has not been completed: the construction in Songdo is due to last at least until 2015 (the new date also seems to be 2020) and 2020 for Sejong when it is supposed to reach a complete self-sufficiency and to reach its peak planned population of 500,000 in 2030. Therefore, we are observing cities that are still in making, a dynamic process that brings methodological anxiety similar to the one scholars who have concentrated their studies on contemporary urban China know very well: the field itself keeps changing at a fast pace, it is a field in a critical situation, unstable, a "city yet to come" to paraphrase AbdouMaliq Simone[14]. However, the slightly different time frame of resident arrival will help us to observe the more subtle "making of the city": the growth and expansion of services etc. or more broadly the private appropriation of city space.

[13] Of course, we do take into account that the Songdo land reclamation started early 1990s and that the first part of the project was delivered already in 2003. Our analytical entry point was, however, the evolution of Songdo after Gale+POSCO took over it. We will come back later in our analysis to the more complex temporality of Songdo project and its impacts on the outcome.

[14] Simone, AbdouMaliq. *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004

Third, they are both master-planned cities that were made to incorporate the principles of sustainable development in their fabric and are presented as state-of-the-art of architecture and urban planning; we hope this will enable us to link current trends in Korean developmental policies to worldwide policy diffusions.

Fourth, they are also projects that evolved a lot in between the original conception, the agenda setting and the final implementation; both were articulated along the concepts of sustainable development, eco-city and competitiveness. And for us the (non) production of a political controversy over the amendments of these projects was an important entry point for this study. However, the another interesting part of our comparison is the difference in between the spatial location of the projects and the fact that the evolution of Sejong project actually entailed two different controversies and the amendment of Songdo IBD project none (to our knowledge).

Fifth, they are both cases of more or less pronounced regional development and illustrate the dichotomy between the attempts for a balanced regional development (Sejong) and designation of a national championship for global competitiveness (Songdo).

2. Available sources, types of sources

For both Sejong and Songdo, the available secondary sources can be classified into five categories: academic, promotional, media, NGO and individual/private.

First, the academic sources contain articles and conference resumés in English, rarely in French, and abundantly in Korean. They usually cover the domains of urban planning and architecture and related issues in logistics and physical geography and public policy analysis. In the case of Sejong, they are more or less distributed along the languages (with the articles in English or in French being very sparse in general) but in the case of Songdo, there is a striking difference between the languages of the respective sources: Korean authors tend toward the domains of

architecture, urban planning etc. whereas the English/French speaking scholars focus on public policy analysis and challenging the project.

Second, the promotional materials contain textual and audio-visual materials (pamphlets, websites, videos) from the developers. Namely, for Songdo the CISCO official Youtube channel[15] and the official Songdo website[16]. For Sejong similarly there is the Happy City Sejong official municipal website[17] and then the one run by its developer, the Multifunctional Administrative City Construction Agency (MACCA)[18] and their promotional videos[19].

Third, the press coverage has been surveyed mainly in English and French both from foreign newspapers as well as English versions of domestic Korean press. The latter featured mainly four sources: Yonhap News Agency, The Korea Herald, The Korea Times and Korea JoongAng Daily. Another big Korean newspaper, the Dong-A Ilbo might be underrepresented due to a human error of the researcher: we might have tended to prioritise other journals in case of thematic overlap of the articles as this paper does not aim to analyse the media portrayal of these two projects *per se* and we recognise any error that might stem from this irregularity. We used Factiva as a research engine with keywords "Songdo", "Sejong city". They cover the Songdo project from late 1990s and Sejong in 2005-2014 and even in English, they account for several hundreds per case creating a rather varied database of press releases and descriptions to private stories coverage. Additionally, KBS-aired debate *Current Affairs in Focus* hosted by Professor Kim Byoun-joo from 22/01/2010 entitled "Controversy over Revised Sejong City Plan" and various Arirang News coverage was used.

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[15] Featuring videos such as "Cities of the Future: Songdo, South Korea - Episode 1" Available http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHO_zkHPTaI Acquired April 17th, 2014.

[16] "Songdo IBD" Available http://www.songdo.com/ Acquired April 17th, 2014.

[17] "Sejong City" Available http://www.sejong.go.kr/global/en/index.jsp Acquired April 17th, 2014.

[18] "Multifunctional Administrative City" Available http://www.happycity.go.kr/english.do Acquired April 17th, 2014.

[19] "Happycity Sejong" youtube channel available http://www.youtube.com/user/happycitySejong Acquired April 17th, 2014.

Fourth, the NGO materials are present mainly in the case of Songdo IBD due to the issue of ecosystem perturbation in the Han estuary tidal wetlands; larger environmental associations interested also in this issue are Save International[20] and Birds Korea[21] who issued reports and blog posts concerning Songdo tidal flats.

Fifth, an extremely precious source have been private (expat) blogs and Twitter posts about living in Korea, understandably more numerous for the case of Songdo, providing insights about everyday life and the actual looks of these places as the media and especially the promotional materials chronically show the architectural models and master-plans.

3. Research time frame and limits

Despite my previous research interests in Songdo IBD since 2013, the research on Sejong and its comparison with Songdo on the subject of the centralisation and decentralisation dynamics in city development and the role of political controversies has been done in a rather short time. This thesis has been completed in the spring semester 2013/2014 as an additional output of my research internship at the Centre for Korean Studies at EHESS in Paris and thus I could not, unfortunately, confront my conclusions with personal field research. Therefore my main sources were the secondary ones described previously. Additionally, I have been lucky enough to consult some of my observations with my internship tutor Valérie Gelézeau who went on a field research in Songdo in March 2014 and kindly shared her observations and answered my queries, enlarging considerably my insight at least to one of these projects.

The biggest limitation of this paper is the lack of personal field research that would complement the conclusions of this paper. Of course, the parts on Songdo were at least marginally supplemented by the consultations with Valérie Gelézeau but we did not have even a second-hand field experience with Sejong: we consider this setting problematic mainly because of the continuous aspect of the city. As we

[20] "Song Do (Songdo) Tidal Flats" report available http://saveinternational.org/saveinaction/song-do-tidal-flats/ Acquired April 17th, 2014.

[21] "Sond Do Tidal Flats" on Birds Korea website, available http://www.birdskorea.org/Habitats/Wetlands/Songdo/BK-HA-Songdo.shtml Acquired April 17th, 2014.

note in the further sections, the policy outcome description and the impact on the citizens of the new cities can vary already in a very short span of time (around 2 years for Sejong) and without the field experience, it is not easy to grasp and make sense of some events or concerns, let alone contradictory information.

4. Romanisation

Romanisation is the recurrent headache for any researcher working on a Korea-related subject. As Gelézeau, Delissen and De Ceuster (2013) mention in their preface to *De-Bordering Korea*[22], the romanisation choice is never a neutral one. Because we are solely dealing with contemporary South Korean context, it seemed logical (or at least non-controversial) to opt for the revised romanisation devised and propelled by South Korea since 2000, except for the sparse historical references where we opted to use the more politically neutral McCune-Reischauer romanisation.

However, we make the usual exception in the case of personal names that we use in the form most commonly used by the Anglophone Korean and English press and therefore we transcribe 이명박 as Lee Myung-bak and not as I Myeong Bak etc.

In the case of researcher's names in the bibliography, we retained the form of the name as stated on the original paper supposing it translates personal preferences for the transcription of their names.

[22] Gelézeau, Valérie, De Ceuster, Koen and Alain Delissen (eds.). *De-Bordering Korea: Tangible and Intangible Legacies of the Sunshine Policy*. London: Routledge, 2013

4. **Background**

1. Sejong and Songdo in the context of Korean government-lead developmental projects

To understand this point better, let us note that these megaprojects are heavily state-sponsored, either fully (Sejong) or partly (Songdo), then with a substantial amount of money provided by the big Korean conglomerates, the *chaebols*. For Songdo, the public money has been channeled heavily by the local, municipal government from the very beginning; the big conglomerate designated first was Daewoo but it was brought down by the Asian crisis only to be replaced by a different strong player on the rise POSCO. It was originally a steel-making company which partnered in a joint-venture as a result for the forced FDI opening of Korea by the IMF rescue fund. Indeed, even for a big "private" development project, this is a typical South Korean financing model. If we look at the Lee "Revised plan" for Sejong, making it a core of the future "science belt", we see the exact same pattern: the central government would have allocated about 50% of the budget and the remaining half would be split 50:50 in between a *chaebol* (Samsung in this case) and other private investment, in other words Samsung, a single company, supplying 25% of the total budget of a whole master-planned city[23]. With the 50% of the central government, we see 75% of the total budget supplied by only two (types of) actors: and with such a limited scope of initial investors, the capital is necessarily limited. Even more so if we note that all of this is *domestic* capital: even though the projects - and Songdo did so successfully even for the initial investment - aim at foreign capital attraction, the initial investment is majoritarily brought in by domestic actors in the hope that the project would attract outside investment later.

Developmental megaprojects are thus heavily sponsored by the state (central or local government), and backed by a limited amount of *chaebols*, sometimes in the joint-venture with a foreign company.

[23] *Current Affairs in Focus* hosted by Professor Kim Byoun-joo from 22/01/2010 entitled "Controversy over Revised Sejong City Plan".

Moreover, the Incheon FEZ is not the only one in Korea, following the designation of Incheon as FEZ in 2003, there are in total eight Free Economic Zones[24] such as Gwanyang or Pyeogtaek. They all have different specialisation but in general the model remains the same "traditional" FEZ model of clustering (technological, financial etc.) We need to bear this in mind when we will evoke the multiple championships in Korea.

Even other mega-projects seem to be strongly government-lead and government financed, we could cite the iconic Cheonggyecheong stream restoration of 2005 under Seoul Mayor Lee Myung-bak. The city-financed project aimed at restoring the water stream in the Seoul city centre, previously covered by a highway, to make a natural promenade and an iconic landmark to the city.

2. Master-planned cities in Korea[25]

Master-planned cities and districts are far from being new in South Korea. Since the 1960s, there have been projects of large scale apartment complexes, first public and then private (by *chaebols* such as Hyundai). Some of them, such as Chamsil in 1971 would rival in size Songdo with its 1000ha. There has been a development of new districts, new satellite cities (*wiseong tosi*) and new cities (*sin tosi*).

A notable development of a new master-planned district has been the aforementioned Chamsil or the well-known Gangnam, now one of the now Seoul's most luxurious area located south of the Han River, developed in the 1980s for the Olympics. Then, firms and schools have been incentivised to relocate to those areas to alleviate the pressure on the capital city.

The first master-planned satellite city in Korea so far has been Seongnam in the Gyeonggi Province, a satellite city to Seoul, conceived in the Park Chung-hee dictatorial era. Later, the Bundang area of Seongnam was developed in the 1990s. In the 1990s, the demographic prevision plan for the year 2000 comprised a project of

[24] Korean Free Economic Zones official website, available http://www.fez.go.kr/

[25] Mostly in reference to Gelézeau, Valérie. *Séoul, ville géante, cités radieuses*. Paris: CNRS Editions, 2003

several other satellite cities and five new cities. Songdo and Sejong are therefore to be seen as a continuity of massive urban development through new (satellite) cities construction.

As we can see in the paper by Lee Yongkyu and Kye Yongjoon (2011), even the forced relocation of inhabitants for the Sejong city is not unprecedented in Korea. Interestingly, their study shows that economic factors (job change, nature/shape of property and the profit size change) accounted in the largest portion to the life satisfaction among those who have been relocated as a result of government-lead development projects. However, their study refers to the forced relocations of inhabitants displaced for urban revitalisation projects, chronically known for no or little compensation for property loss[26]. However, their results can enable us to show interesting parallels and divergences with the more or less forced population relocation in the case of Sejong city.

3. Songdo and Sejong in the context of decentralisation and regional development

Songdo and especially Sejong are among the initiatives to decentralise from Seoul, which is a recurrent topic in South Korean spatial planning. In the dictatorial period, there have been satellite cities developed around Seoul to expand the capital and alleviate the pressure on the city itself such as Seongnam. These policies had a limited success as these satellite cities still form the Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area (the City of Seoul and the surrounding Gyeonngi province) that currently has a disproportionate weight in both demographics and economic production in Korea. It assembles now around 50% of Korean population and makes up for 40% of the GDP. As a consequence, the area suffers from high congestion and skyrocketing land prices, making Seoul, for many, simply too expensive to live.

This is exactly what president Roh gave as reasons for his plan to relocate the Korean capital away from Seoul to Chungcheong province. Another reason for

[26] Lee Kil-ho "Le militantisme culturel face à la politique de réaménagement urbain en Corée du Sud : vers un nouveau répertoire d'action collective" Conference given at the Maison de l'Asie, Paris, on April 4th, 2014, résumé available online http://korea.hypotheses.org/7852

moving the capital city away from the 38th parallel has been, of course, purely strategic, envisaged already by Park Chung-hee[27]: to move the power centres away from the range of North Korean missiles[28]. So from the very start Sejong has not been a project for political devolution but for functional territorial decentralisation.

Classifying Songdo as a case of regional development might be more dubious as it is part of the Incheon FEZ, in other words part of the Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area. And even though we can qualify it as a functional redistribution of Seoul's economic functions (Ducruet, 2007), we have argued in the previous section on conceptual review that we would apprehend Songdo still as a part of Seoul Metro Area championship. Of course, Songdo is also a way for Seoul to stop expanding into the mountains and land reclamation is actually much more affordable (Kuecker, 2013) and it also has been a common strategy for Incheon to reclaim land and then commercialise: the city area has actually grown over the years.

Songdo is also marketed as an alternative to some of the problems resulting from inner Seoul's great clustering: most notably cleaner non congested environment with greater proximity. Yet, to support our argument of Songdo as an increase of Seoul's championship, we must note that it is meant to incentivise new institutions and investors to settle there and create an additional/new hub rather than incentivising international institutions and firms already settled in Seoul to relocate, therefore not identifying Songdo as a clear rival to the capital[29]. Also, the FEZ status offers the "traditional" incentives in terms of favourable conditions for office price with improved facilities. Songdo is therefore designed more as a satellite cluster for finance and research with residential space.

The spatial redistribution of administrative functions, without devolution, is not limited to the Sejong City move. As we will discuss later, a substantial part of central government administration has been relocated in the 1980s to Gwacheon, a

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27 "An ancient land becomes the site of a new city" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-16 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980530

28 "What Park should do to save Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2013-07-11 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130710000987

29 Which is exactly the opposite of what Osaka does vis-à-vis Tokyo through its revitalisation plan: the city clearly incetivises company headquaters to relocate to Kansai.

satellite city just at the southern edge of Seoul, yet administratively forming a separate city in the Gyeonggi province. Also, some agencies are located in the city of Daejeon, the capital of North Chungcheong province.

Moreover, this decentralisation attempt is not supposed to stop even after the Sejong City move. Cities and city-regions have been identified as motors for the wider regional development schemes, the so-called "innovation cities"[30]. It is a project selecting a city in each region and deciding for a new theme branding and stylisation of the city that would a) foster economic growth while b) not putting the respective regions into that much concurrence. This project is to be accompanied by the move of theme corresponding governemental commissions and agencies. This way Gangwon will become the centre for tourism and health or Seogwipo in Jeju a hub for international education and exchange (Korea Foundation office is supposed to move there[31]).

4. Regionalism

This whole section has been written in accordance with the The Korea Herald and The Korean Political Science Association (eds.) *Political Change in Korea* (TKH-TKPSA, 2008).

The Korean politics has been traditionally articulated along a regional divide and understanding this divide would help us to make sense of the Sejong City placement and symbolical importance. The nature of post-dictatorial Korean 6th republic is marked by more personality-driven politics than well established political parties: indeed the secessions and new parties creations are quite common even during the electoral campaigns. As such the electorate is making its choice more in terms of personality and regional linkages, according to studies of Korean political scientists. Korea thus falls completely in the view of regionalism in terms of regions as bastions of political power as we have seen with Agnew (2013): the voters cast

30 "Innocity" official website, available http://innocity.mltm.go.kr/submain.jsp?sidx=100&stype=2 Acquired April 17th, 2014.

31 "Public Diplomacy and the Korea Foundation: Past, Present and Future" Korea Foundation Newsletter, Nov. 2006 http://newsletter.kf.or.kr/english/contents.asp?vol=67&lang=English&no=726 Acquired April 17th, 2014.

their ballot for "their" candidate, in other words the candidate of the party based in their respective region.

In Korea, the two major bastions of political leverage are "Yeongnam" (South and North Gyeongsang provinces: south-eastern part of Korea around Busan or Daegu) and "Honam" (South and North Jeolla provinces: south-western part of Korea around Gwangju or Jeonju), provinces that have been considered as rival since a long time. These bastions existed already in the dictatorial period. For example, respective presidents have been known to then prioritise civil servants from their own camp alongside the Yeongnam/Honam divide so regimes from Park Chung-hee to Roh Tae-woo were known as "Yeongnam regime", Kim Young-sam's as "PK regime" = officials from Busan and Gyeongsan (another Yeongnam-based regime), or Kim Dae-jung's as "MK regime" = officials from Mokpo and Gwangju (Honam cities) etc.

In trenching the results for election, another region plays traditionally a pivotal role: Chungcheong (central Korean provinces)[32]. Therefore both Yeongsan and Honan based politicians try to win the support of Chungcheong voters. This important role for Chungcheong regions (North and South) is going to recurrently show up in our paper in relation to the revisions of Sejong city plan. In 2002 the presidential candidate Roh Moo-hyun devised the capital city relocation plan to the current location in Yeongi-gun, to promote balanced regional development focusing on Chungcheong region (Lee Daehee, 2011). He won the elections by a 3% margin thanks to Chungcheong support[33]. Similarly, Lee Myung-bak has been able to win his presidency term also thanks to the Chungcheong support. Taken to the extreme, Andy Jackson said: "Chungcheong people see themselves as those who deliver the decisive votes and then are forgotten."

[32] It is very interesting to note that despite the fact that Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area comprises around a half of Korean population, it does not play a decisive role in the voting processes – very likely due to the fact that Seoul has the lowest turnout and/or that many people retain their residence in their hometowns in the province.

[33] "What Park should do to save Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2013-07-11 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130710000987

5. Policy outcome description

Our research led us to identify four broader categories of impacts and outcomes of the Sejong and Songdo policies. During the case-based description, we are going to regroup the outcomes according to our established categories for better comparability. They are: institutional outcomes, citizens' quality of life and wellbeing, market-related and environment-related outcomes respectively. Of course, some of the categories might be missing or of different degree of importance across the cases.

Also, as we repeatedly point out, both of the projects are still in implementation progress, as of mid-2014 the projects are still far from being complete, let alone "settled/stabilised". As a consequence, many of the outcomes relate to this particular and unstable situation and that this category of policy outcomes described below as of now would considerably vary if this study was done in a five years time or later as descriptions of the everyday life varied even from 2012 to 2014 in the case of Sejong.

1. Sejong

Institutional outcomes

The construction of Sejong City started following the Roh's proposal amendment in 2005 (Lee Daehee, 2011), the adoption of the "Original plan", and continued through the second controversy of Lee's proposal to change Sejong into the core of the science belt. Following the retained "Original plan" to relocate the government agencies and ministries, the move-in ceremony was held in December 2011[34], after which some of the would-to-be relocated officials and other citizens moved into Sejong[35]. However, the official institutional transfer started in the second half of 2012. It has been planned in phases over several years and the first agency to

[34] "Open for occupancy" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2011-12-26 http://mengnews.joins.com/view.aspx?gCat=999&aId=2946190

[35] "In Sejong City, a few families are making it work" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-06-02 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2953866

move was PM's office in September 2012[36]. Then followed 6 Ministries and 6 agencies up to December 2012 (about 5,556 officials)[37] and 6 Ministries and 10 agencies in December 2013 (about 4,888 civil servants)[38], with the gradual population change up to 10,000.

The agencies are relocated from Seoul itself as well as from the government complex in Gwacheon in the Seoul outskirts. The governmental agencies that have been previously located in Daejeon are not to be transferred to Sejong. Some key commissions and ministries related to finance and defence, such as the Financial Services Commission[39], are to stay in Seoul with the National Assembly and the Blue House. And the newly established ministry on future planning and science will likely move to the now emptying Gwacheon complex[40]. As a result, the government staff and civil servants are now scattered in between four different locations:

- Seoul, Yeouido: The National Assembly, Blue House, key ministries
- Gwacheon: Ministry on Future Planning and Science (planned)
- Daejon
- Sejong: Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Strategy and Finance, Fair Trade Commission, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Ministry of Environment, Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Employment and Labor, Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs[41]

The Ministry of Government Legislation, Anti-corruption and Civil Rights Commission, National Tax Service and National Emergency Management

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36 "The beginning of relocation to Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2012-09-13 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/yhedit/2012/09/13/75/5100000000AEN20120913007500315F.HTML

37 "Sejong ready for role as new administrative hub" Yonhap News Agency, 2012-12-24 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/12/24/49/0301000000AEN20121224007300315F.HTML

38 "Ministries to start Sejong City move", Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-12-14 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2981924

39 "Civil servants seek to avoid Sejong City move" The Korea Herald, 2011-11-21 http://www.koreaherald.com/common_prog/newsprint.php?ud=20111120000172&dt=2

40 "Busan loses maritime ministry" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-02-22 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2967536

41 "Functions of MAC" MACCA official website http://www.happycity.go.kr/eng_function.do?menu_id=eng_function

Agency are to move to Sejong in the third relocation phase planned later in 2014[42].

This situation is to become even more complex if the "innovation cities" initiative is carried out with relocation of tourism to Gangwon, culture-related agencies to Jeju Island etc. as described in the section 4.

Some of the new Sejong inhabitants have reported loss of government efficiency due to their own personal loss of working efficiency. This issue has several levels and aspects.

First, the top ranking officials from the respective Ministries tend to stay in Seoul to keep up with their schedules: *"According to government data, the heads of the five ministries and agencies currently operating here have had a combined 164 public and official schedules since their inauguration. Of the total, 141 cases or 86 percent occurred outside Sejong, with 110 schedules being carried out in Seoul, the data showed. Just 23 schedules or 14 percent took place in the administrative city."*[43] Other officials are required to commute to Seoul from Sejong for work purposes as well, especially to meet with their colleagues who were not relocated from the capital or with the lawmakers from the National Assembly[44] depending on the cases from "five to six business trips to Seoul every month"[45] to "at least twice a week"[46].

Recently, in February 2014, President Park Gyeun-hye held a cabinet meeting through video-conference from Sejong[47] symbolically inciting for more technology uses that would reduce the necessity for office workers to commute for meetings to the capital, a crucial move if the civil service is to further disperse regionally with the "innovative cities" project. Also, the conference meetings (cabinets, vice-ministers etc.) have been very sparse in the first half of the 2013

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42 *Ibid.*

43 "Relocated ministers face work inefficiency in Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2013-05-13
http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/business/2013/05/13/0502000000AEN20130513002200320.HTML

44 "Sejong City marks 1st year amid growing concerns" The Korea Herald, 2013-06-30
http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130630000215

45 "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

46 "Sejong City marks 1st year amid growing concerns" The Korea Herald, 2013-06-30
http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130630000215

47 "Cabinet holds first meeting via video conference" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2014-02-12
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2984814

while the budget on business trips (special commuter buses, hotel reimbursements etc.) skyrocketed to an estimated 130 B KRW in 2013 only[48]. Yet, the work meetings in Seoul seem to be popular among the civil servants, especially those on Friday afternoon as they mean a prolonged week-end in the capital[49].

Many of the top ranking officials, with the PM at the forefront, prefer to go at length to pay themselves extra office space in Seoul, preferably close to the National Assembly and the Blue House. Why? Because the video conference cannot substitute *couloirs'* politics. As one civil servant pointed out, many meetings and deals continue beyond the official part of the meeting into the lunch or dinner or on other informal occasions[50]. Moreover, other important interest groups are clustered around the power centre in Gwanghwamun and if the civil service is to move away from the Blue House and the National Assembly, so the top officials stay in Seoul not to be cut off[51].

In short, we witness the PM office, 12 ministries and 16 agencies to move to Sejong in between 2012-2013, amounting for about 10,000 workers. However, high and higher ranking officials still need to attend personally meetings in Seoul despite the attempts to introduce video-conferencing; top-ranking officials tend to rent other office space in Seoul to stay close to their professional networks.

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48 "For some, Sejong is just too far away" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-04-08 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2969779

49 "Why officials in Sejong love Friday afternoon meetings in Seoul" Dong-A Ilbo Daily, 2013-03-22

50 "For some, Sejong is just too far away" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-04-08 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2969779

51 "Sejong City isn't working yet" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-01-15 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2965496

Citizens' quality of life and wellbeing

Second, the individuals who had been transferred to Sejong show a sharp decrease in (perceived) working efficiency as a result of degrading health status and lack of sleep. Due to the nature of Sejong as a city still in construction and permanent transformation and delays in schedules, the first inhabitants arrived in the city while the construction works even on their homes and offices are far from being finished[52]; if we look beyond the dashing visualisations of the master plan, the pictures of Sejong still look much like a construction site.



Source: Yonhap News Agency[53], published on January 18th, 2013, after the 1st phase of the relocation completed, the government complex at the front, behind apartment blocks construction.

Consequently, the very first arriving officials were reported to complain about unsuitable living and working conditions and degrading health status: developing of skin ailments, headaches etc. Indeed, the offices they moved in were reported by the Korea Institute of Construction Technology to have impermissible levels of total volatile organic compounds (TVOC), ranging 4-10 times the

52 "In Sejong City, a few families are making it work" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-06-02 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2953866

53 "New administrative city suffers teething problems" Yonhap News Agency, 2013-01-18 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/01/17/49/0302000000AEN20130117007300320F.HTML

recommended levels. *"The institute said the officials there got such health problems because the government pushed ahead with the moving plan according to its original schedule even though the construction was not finished and ventilation was insufficient."*[54] Moreover, the affected civil servants reporting this issue moved into Sejong City during the winter which can be rather cold in Korea, so they could not properly open the windows and kept breathing the air filled with pollutants. The subsequently developed skin irritation problems and severe headaches were classified by The Korea Times as "sick building syndrome" and thus point at the fact that Sejong city could be apprehended as a serious public health issue.

The lack of sleep many have been reported to complain about has a different source that the declining health status described above: it concerns those who decided to commute to and from Seoul to their office in Sejong, especially those commuting on a daily basis. We have already talked about the commutes for business purpose and we will dedicate more space to the daily commute in the following sections. For instance, we need to note that there is a substantial number of people working in Sejong and living in Seoul. Depending on the estimates and relocation phase, their number averages around 2,000[55] or 44%[56] for the first phase and 1,400 or 23%[57] for the second one. This decrease might be due to the fact that in the first stage of the relocation, many were simply obliged to commute as the house they bought was not ready yet[58]. They did not want to go into the additional expense of renting another temporary accommodation in Sejong[59], especially as the contracts are usually over 2 years period and the construction was supposed to be completed within a year. Depending on where they live in Seoul, the average commute time can reach 5h/day[60] on the round-trip: from their home in Seoul to the station, then Seoul-

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54 "Officials suffer sick building syndrome" The Korea Times, 2013-01-14
http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2013/08/113_128837.html

55 "Sejong City in limbo" The Korea Times 2013-01-07
http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinon/2013/01/202_128433.html

56 "Ministries to start Sejong City move", Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-12-14
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2981924

57 "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

58 "Sejong City isn't working yet" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-01-15
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2965496

59 "In Sejong City, a few families are making it work" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-06-02
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2953866

60 "Sejong City isn't working yet" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-01-15
http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2965496

Osong on KTX (the bullet train) or on the special commuter bus and then to the government complex by BRT or taxi from the station. Some people doing the commute said that they moved in Seoul in order to be closer to the station to at least reduce the commute time in the capital.

The affliction of such a commute is triple: first, the civil servants have to leave the office in Sejong rather early to catch the train. This goes against usual practice in a Korean workplace especially for younger workers who are supposed to leave the office only after their superior – however, we might expect the younger workers to be the ones doing the commute as families with schoolchildren and working spouses are those likely to refuse the move to Sejong. As a consequence, the younger and consequently lower ranking civil servants are the ones to cut short their overtimes.

Second, the ones commuting do not gain an increase in family and/or social life by commuting to and from the capital on daily basis as they arrive rather late and have to leave early again to start work[61].

Third, they do catch on partially on the sleeping hours during the commute, so an inflatable cushion and probably a sleeping mask is a must. But anyway the workers reported that they were increasingly tired from the long distance commute to the extent that it jeopardised their working capacity[62]. However, we must note that these ones were the ones less suffering from the available "food shortage" reported in the beginning of the Sejong relocation, as they brought pre-packed lunch from their Seoul home.

Another important dimension of the evolving nature of Sejong City and the unsuitable living conditions there is the limited scope of even basic services. There have been stories reported of people bringing over from Seoul with them instant noodles and pre-packed food and snacks as there were no nearby shops open in Sejong by the time their office moved over. The only close available eating facility was an office canteen which, however, usually did not manage to meet the amounts of demand and if they came late there was no more food left: as a result even though

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61 *Ibid.*

62 "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

the lunch break was supposed to start by 12, people started to line up around 11 to be sure to get their lunch[63]. Some entrepreneurial locals from nearby villages – even though most of Sejong city is constructed from scratch, there was an existing network of towns and villages in the Yeongi-gun – started to sell home-made *kimpap*[64] to the civil servants.

Also, some of the relocated workers reported a lack of available leisure activities (apart from biking around the city): for example, in Seoul they used to go to the gym for a workout and yoga classes, but without some much more basic amenities, leisure services seem to be a dream in Sejong at this stage of development.

A civil servant who moved to Sejong without his family reported late November 2013 that he just stays in his office to work late in the night as *"there's nowhere to go after work here"*[65]. The same FT article points that the *"streets around are conspicuously light on commercial activity"*[66] with no hotels, supermarkets or cinemas around two years after the official move-in ceremony. We need to precise that the extremely light commercial activity seems to be afflicting mostly the areas around the new government complex[67] and less so the First Village[68]: therefore the most inconvenience falls on the day meals and socialisation with colleagues over lunch or coffee, which remains a substantial part of working culture in Korea. We consider this episode very important for our later discussion on the capitalist approach to city development and the cities in critical situation: the two-year advance of the Songdo project over Sejong would allow us to see some parallels.

However, we already see that past-time "soft" infrastructure develops gradually in Sejong city. The Sejong branch of the national library, aiming to be a

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63 "Sejong City isn't working yet" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-01-15 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2965496

64 Traditional Korean dish : a rice-roll wrapped in seaweed filled with pickled vegetables and minced meat or tuna, usually eaten as a snack or quick lunch (a sort of equivalent to a sandwich).

65 "South Korea's $21bn alternative to Seoul lacks transport and soul" Financial Times, 2013-11-20 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ba9646f6-4dc6-11e3-8fa5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2z2nKZr1j

66 *Ibid.*

67 "What Park should do to save Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2013-07-11 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130710000987
"Sejong City marks 1st year amid growing concerns" The Korea Herald, 2013-06-30 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130630000215

68 "Seoul's controversial new counterpart" The Washington Post, 2012-08-18 http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-33486355.html

specialised library on public administration, opened in December 2013[69]. It offers of course other topics than administrative materials as well as other "user-friendly" convenience services: proximity service through 22 kiosks scattered around the city where readers could pick up the books they reserved or a sort of parental care where *"young users will be given an RFID tag so that the parents will be able to trace their whereabouts while they go off to explore and read on their own."*[70]

Also, the theatres are staging their first performances, such as *The Three Musketeers* musical staged in March 2014 in the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts[71].

Outdoor tourism facilities are also being constructed around Sejong alongside the pre-existing points of interest: The History Park of the Ancient Tombs of Baekje Kingdom (18 BC – 600 AD) is now part of the First Village after builders came across historical tombs. They will complement the Unju Fortress also said to be from Paekche period (18 BC-660 AD; the last Paekche king supposedly fell there).

More interestingly, there are sitings reinforcing the symbolical link between Sejong city and King Sejong: Jeonuichosu, a spring that cured the king from an eye disease, the tomb of Kim Jong-seo, an official from Sejong's reign, or Sejong-ni, an old rustic village bearing the king's name the would be developed into a theme park[72]. To which extent they play an important role in Sejong city's legitimization – similarly to the image-building politics of Gyeongju – would necessitate a separate study.

Other complaints included the state of physical and public service infrastructure levels: public transport, healthcare and schooling. The first civil servants to move in complained about the lack of hospitals and suitable schools and in 2014, the situation is likely not to improve as the government cut the infrastructure budget for Sejong by 17% to channel the money into nation-wide

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69 "National library opens in Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2013-12-12 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/culturesports/2013/12/12/50/0701000000AEN20131212005000315F.html

70 "National library to open in Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2013-12-06 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131205000755

71 "'The Three Musketeers' playing at Sejong Center in March" Visit Korea, 2014-03-21 http://asiaenglish.visitkorea.or.kr/ena/FU/FU_EN_15.jsp?cid=1907096

72 "An ancient land becomes the site of a new city" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-16 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980530

welfare programs[73]. The lack of high-quality schooling is not to be underestimated in South Korean context as social status and job prospects are closely linked to the quality of education received. Good quality schooling for children was therefore among top priorities for many of the moving civil servants and their families. It was listed as a principal reason for either splitting the family residence (see further in this chapter) or for regretting the move to Sejong and reconsideration to move back to Seoul. However, we must note that the "smart" Cheotmaeul elementary school opened for the move-in: it is a modern establishment equipped with sophisticated e-learning and interactive gadgets; the same as other four schools (from kindergarten to high school) that opened in Sejong in the first half of 2012[74]. However, complaints about inefficiency of these high-tech lessons as well as lack of after school programs have been reported by Korea JoongAng Daily[75]. Also, other alternative, "cross-disciplinary" secondary schools were declared to open in Sejong soon[76]. This issue is likely to evolve as on the university level as Sejong is the location of a delocalised campus of Korea University; one of the three top tertiary education establishments in Korea.

Closely related to the issue of perceived unsuitable schooling conditions is the lack in public transport, especially in terms of connectivity to the rest of the region. Diana Balmori who made the blueprint for the government complex bluntly said to Financial Times*: "The transport is a serious piece missing."*[77] Problems occur mostly for the people who travel daily in between Seoul and Sejong: the connection between the cities goes from the Seoul station to Osong KTX station and then there is a commute between the Osong station and Sejong by BRT which takes approximatively 15 minutes. There is no direct rail connection because *"the government opted to forgo the expense of connecting Sejong to the rail network"*[78] so

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73 "Sejong City marks 1st year amid growing concerns" The Korea Herald, 2013-06-30 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130630000215

74 "First schools open in Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2012-03-24 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20120323000789&mod=skb

75 "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

76 "Ministry to open two new 'cross-disciplinary' schools" The Korea herald, 2012-11-26 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20121125000201

77 "South Korea's $21bn alternative to Seoul lacks transport and soul" Financial Times, 2013-11-20 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ba9646f6-4dc6-11e3-8fa5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2z2nKZr1j

78 "South Korea's $21bn alternative to Seoul lacks transport and soul" Financial Times, 2013-11-20 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ba9646f6-4dc6-11e3-8fa5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2z2nKZr1j

the officials use the Seoul-Osong line or the commuter buses or, among the high ranking officials, just limit the time they spend in Sejong because they have many duties in Seoul anyway as we mention previously. The major problem is that these buses run once per hour. So the people have a tendency to take taxis for the Osong-Sejong trip, similar to people living in Sejong who take taxis to get to work as the BRT system is underused in terms of passengers (not enough inhabitants) even at the already operating ours that however have really big intervals so it is better to catch a taxi to get to work than wait for a bus. The city is therefore prone to big traffic jams because the designers wanted to be a green and sustainable transport city so the big main roads are for BRT (which is underused to the point of no return of investment) and bikes only and the cars can use only the narrow side streets[79]. Conversely, there are limited parking spots around the city so to park a car is already almost impossible. However, the city does not have a design that would invite for pedestrian/cycling transport: it is 70% of the size of Seoul designed for 500,000 inhabitants with more than 50% green spaces; so it is everything but compact and the distances might be too long even for cycling.

As we have suggested, the Sejong city relocation project lead to introduction of new migratory patterns at least for a part of the population. Other face a divided family pattern (the government employee moved to Sejong while the rest of the family stayed in Seoul and he/she visits over during the week-ends) as similarly with the previous group, the rest of the family refused to move to Sejong mostly due to better educational[80] and employment opportunities back in the capital – we must note that with limited development of Sejong and a "provincial" nature of the pre-existing Yeongi-gun, relocating the career for the civil servant's spouse is likely to be anything but a piece of cake. *"I have no choice but to leave my family for the time being. My wife is working in Seoul, and my 18-year-old daughter, who is taking the university entrance exam next year, doesn't want to change her living*

[79] "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

[80] "Life in Sejong is a bowl of hassles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-11-18 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2980594

environment,"[81] said Seo Jang-seok, a director of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy to The Korea Herald.

Also, moving to Sejong is a drastic blow to any personal network maintenance and people might for long commute to Seoul over the week-ends just to meet friends. Of course, those with family originally from the nearby Daejeon reported that they were considering moving to their original hometown rather than to Sejong, as also schooling and working options for the spouses might be better, not counting the fact that they are likely to have parents to share flat with.

The singles who moved to Sejong report perceived jeopardised opportunities to find spouses both before and after the Sejong relocation and this episode reveals more about Korean society that we might suspect at the first glance. Of course, a partner who would soon relocate 120 km away is not very attractive even though government officials are usually considered as a "good catch" in the Korean society thanks to the stability of the employment and the good pay[82]. Not surprisingly, government officials are in demand among local women in the Sejong area: the matchmaking services[83] are free for the relocated male officials and very costly (1M KRW or 950 USD) for local females[84]. However, they do not seem to be that popular in their turn as the government officials seem to prefer to go back to Seoul on the week-ends to look for a partner. Kim Mi-yeon, a matchmaking official, explained to The Korea Herald: *"You can think of it (in the same way) as (you think about) a Korean worker who's been sent abroad. They were dispatched to a really nice place because they have a really good job, but they hope to get married to a Korean."*[85] This statement does not seem to makes sense: the women in Sejong are still Korean women so why the metaphor? This anecdote refers to one of the basic traits of Korean society: (social class) endogamy (that makes Korean overseas prefer Korean partners) and push for improving one's social status through marriage (especially relevant for women). As a result, Sejong women are keen to seek highly

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81 "The government's new nest" The Korea Herald, 2013-12-14 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131213000860

82 "Sejong move splits families, hits marriage prospects" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-01-17 http://mengnews.joins.com/view.aspx?gCat=030&aId=2947181

83 They are a very common practice, together with speed-dating, in Korea and do not bear the negative connotations they might in Europe.

84 "Relocation to Sejong sparks dating woes for single officials" The Korea Herald, 2013-12-14 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131213000840

85 *Ibid.*

educated central government officials as spouses and the government officials of both sexes might be inclined to look for a Seoul partner as someone of a more equivalent social standing – if other factors, such as Chungcheong family background[86] do not intervene. Together with the *kkirogi appa*-style immigration patterns (that we discuss further in this paper), this anecdote is extremely symbolic in understanding the clash between the balanced regional development and embedded social values in contemporary South Korea.

Coming back to the problem of Sejong as a public health issue, the "sick building syndrome" and exhaustion from long commutes are not the only stakes in the matter, Korea Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that Sejong City topped the national list in smoking and drinking rates[87], out of boredom and loneliness[88].

There is another issue that has been raised in relation to the constant construction nature of Sejong city, the foreigner crime. The reports mentioned about two assaults/burglaries per month on Sejong citizens from the foreigners working as construction workers – supposedly being the main source of crime in Sejong city. These would be mostly South-East Asian citizens (Philippines etc.) who come to Korea more and more for low-skilled jobs and are reported to be up to 2,600 foreigners currently working in Sejong city: however, the estimates are likely to be lower than the actual number due to illicit foreign workers[89].

In short, in terms of quality of life and well-being, we see downgrading health status and sleep deprivation, complaints about lack of services and amenities, missing or unsatisfactory public goods infrastructure (schools, transport, healthcare) and afflicted private life (split residence, loss of networks, long commutes etc.).

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86 *Ibid.*

87 "Sejong has highest rate of heavy drinkers, smokers" The Korea Herald, 2013-04-04 http://www.koreaherald.com/common_prog/newsprint.php?ud=20130403000724&dt=2

88 "Unhappy "Happy City"" Dong-A Ilbo, 2013-04-04 http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2013040484158

89 "Sejong City groans due to foreigner crime menace" The Marmot's Hole, 2013-01-31 http://www.rjkoehler.com/2013/01/31/sejong-city-groans-due-to-foreigner-crime-menace/

Market-related outcomes

Even though the Sejong City project is to boost regional development, it is also not surprisingly a cause of structural regional economic downturn, in Gwacheon. The shop and restaurant owners in the vicinity of the big suburban government complex have been reported to complain about a sharp decrease in clientele and fears of bankruptcy as for many, their businesses were living off the civil servants[90]: if the empty offices are not to accommodate other white-collar workers soon, local service entrepreneurs might not survive a systemic change in office reallocation over several years. However, we find it very unlikely that they would be incentivised enough to move their businesses over to Sejong. Similarly, temporary employees are likely to be forced to look for new jobs[91].

A very different aspect of the story shows that there might have been some belief in the Sejong city project: there has been a reported outbreak of apartment speculation among the civil servants, especially from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. Following the relocation plan, the civil servants were given preferential rates and preferential purchase right for the newly constructed apartments in Sejong[92]. Some of them, being familiar with land and real estate laws and regulations, made a handsome profit by re-selling their never occupied Sejong homes after the end of one-year resale restriction[93]. The government responded to this situation by proposing an amendment to the housing act so as to prolong the resale restriction to three years and so as *"the portion of housing supply for public officials moving to Sejong city will be down from 70 percent or below to 50 percent or below and for innovative cities from 70-100 percent to 50-70 percent*"[94].

Cheap housing in Sejong compared to Daejeon even if land price goes up[95] not to mention in comparison to Seoul Metro Area: a family of a certain official Park

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90 "Gwacheon hit by Sejong City move" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-02-07 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2966801

91 "Sighs among the cheers in Sejong City" The Korea Herald, 2012-12-19 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20121218000823

92 "Ministry officials hit for speculative property deals" The Korea Times, 2013-10-09 https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2013/10/116_144015.html

93 "Special housing supply rate for public servant migrants to be slashed" MK Business News, 2013-10-29 http://news.mk.co.kr/english/newsRead.php?rss=Y&sc=30800011&year=2013&no=1054354

94 *Ibid.*

95 "Sejong City boosts area's land prices" The Korea Herlad, 2012-07-02 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20120701000271&mod=skb

moved to Sejong in advance as the purchase price of the Sejong apartment (224 M KRW or 190,000 USD) was lower than the rent deposit in Anyang, Gyeonggi-do, where they lived previously[96]. In the period between the official move-in and the beginning of the relocation, almost 75% of the roughly 2,000 households who moved into First Village were locals from Chungcheong[97].

However, the situation of the real estate market is more than uncertain with the very recent reports from March 2014 concerning the jeopardised quality of the constructed housing in Sejong City: some of the apartment blocks have been apparently built using fewer steel reinforcement due to subcontracting and budget costs and raises questions about the stability and lifespan, not to mention immediate risk of collapse, of these buildings. Those who already bought the apartments are asking for compensation[98].

Interestingly, these were not the first protests against the quality of the buildings, flaws in heating, insulation and ventilation have been reported and contested by the inhabitants of the First Village already in early 2013[99].

96 "In Sejong City, a few families are making it work" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-06-02 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2953866

97 "In Sejong City, a few families are making it work" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-06-02 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2953866

98 "Sejong-si 'cheolgeuneomneun' moamiraedo apateu tto ita? ... naeju josa bangchim" News 1, 2014-03-21 http://news1.kr/articles/1596294

99 "Sejong struggles" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-01-29 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2966272

2. Songdo

Institutional outcomes

Despite the slight advance the Songdo project has on Sejong City, it is neither finished, with the official completion scheduled for 2020. Therefore, even though more evolved, it faces a similar situation of city-in-making, an uncertain state. The inhabitants of the newly built areas started to move in around 2010-2011, with establishments such as Chadwick International school establishment in 2010, expats move to Songdo. However, the older blocks are there since around 2003, shortly after the project was taken over by POSCO+Gale and they look much more like other Korean apartment blocks; so there is a palimpsest of urban creation already in a rather new master-planned city.

Some researchers, most notably Shwayri (2013) note that the city turned out to be less international than planned, with more Koreans settling in and Korean firms moving to the offices that originally aimed at attracting foreign and/or multinational firms. We have to note that this process coincides also with the economic downturn after 2008 and since the project has been judged strategic, the Korean firms were incited to move in. From this transformation might also stem the gradual installation of non-luxury super markets such as 7eleven or Dunkin Donuts.

Also, this process might have been temporary or might actually evolve back towards more internationalisation of Songdo. We must note that some notable international institutions decided to relocate to Songdo, the UN Green Climate Fund and it indeed might incite more others to come.

We would like to note than in the case of the two new cities, there is a presence of delocalised campuses of the top prestigious local universities: Yonsei University in Songdo and Korea University in Sejong. Whereas there are not the only ones in those respective projects – as there is also Incheon University in Songdo and Hongik University in Sejong – these two in a sense illustrate the strategic linkage (or different network ties) of (behind) the projects. These being at the same time among the best universities in Korea (usually ranked both 2nd after Seoul National University) and known for their chronic mutual rivalry (a bit like

Oxford/Cambridge), it would be interesting to see how they chose to go in the respective location or if this setting stems from a pure coincidence.

Moreover, Songdo is hosting delocalised campuses of overseas universities, assembled in the Songdo Global University. State University of New York at Stony Brook (United States) opened its undergraduate programs in 2012 and the graduate curriculum in 2013 in selected disciplines at the SGU. In 2014, George Mason University (United States), University of Utah (United States) and Ghent University (Belgium) are to follow. Further expansion includes Saint Petersburg State University (Russia) and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (United States)[100].

Citizens' quality of life and wellbeing

Through the expat blogs about their overseas life, we can trace some of the evolutions of the city, most notably in terms of services infrastructure. We can guess that by 2009 Songdo does not report to have such a striking problem with lack of hospitals or super-markets: the author of the "Songdo for Rookies" expat blog reports having got a dental care in Songdo on the Songdo Dream Dental Clinic, being both satisfactory in terms of staff English proficiency and service quality[101]. The same blog also reviews bars and cafés, similarly to the blog of the Willes family "The Willes move to Korea"[102] where they list nearby supermarkets reachable by public transport.

Judging from the GoogleMaps, small supermarkets such as Family Mart of 7eleven do not seem to lack, though not approaching a normal looking density in a Korean city - also, using the Google maps to verify the actual implementation of these projects is slightly complicated as for example for Songdo, they already show the areas that have been reclaimed but are not developed, so the actual implementation of these supermarkets could be challenged by actual field observation.

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100 "Ongoing Attraction of International Leading Universities" SGU official website http://www.sgu.or.kr/sgu/eng/inuniv/01_current.htm

101 "Dental Care (Songdo Dream Dental Clinic)" Songdo for Rookies, 2009-12-29 http://songdo4rookies.blogspot.fr/2009/12/dental-care-songdo-dream-dental-clinic.html

102 "Survival Guide Songdo" The Willes move to Korea, undated in 2011 http://willekorea.blogspot.fr/p/survival-guide-songdo.html

However, the gradual move in of the entrepreneurs, at least to the second block area around the Canal Walk, can be seen through various blog posts mentioning a new mall or a new restaurant, the fact that a second Starbucks coffee recently opened etc[103]. Also interesting is that some of the entrepreneurs clearly consider Songdo also to be the well-off city it has been claimed in the press and criticised by the scholars (especially Kuecker, 2013): the blogger reports that a bar sold a beer pint for about 13,000 KRW (about 13 USD, at the time about a triple of the usual price in Seoul and an almost sixfold price for a beer bought at a supermarket) and they also voiced their appal and dissatisfaction, hinting that not all Songdo residents might be as well-off as the bar owners expected[104].

The older settlement has a shopping street around the Central Plaza and the new sprouting chic cafés and expat restaurants we can read about in the blogs are more located in the area around the "Canal Walk" area also known as NC Cube.

The city has boasted its walkable neighbourhoods and cycling routes: apparently, the residents/bloggers declared that it was definitely too vast to walk the whole area so cycling or simply driving is the option as insufficient public transport and connectivity seem to be still the problem in Songdo. Valérie Gelézeau reported that also the bicycle renting system works mainly in the Central Park for those who want to cycle within the park area and that you are technically not supposed to exit the area on the rented vehicle. Smilarly, the water taxis are also confined to the Central Park area. In this case, it seems that residents who want to move around the city in a non-motorised way have to have their own bikes.

Other bloggers also reported an inconvenient bike crossing with the car routes[105] and another one that she is scared for her kids not to wear helmets on the bike due to increased traffic accidents caused by "people still driving erratically"[106]. Interestingly, none of the blog reports on living or visiting Songdo has reported using or even mentioning the water taxis to be in place, despite them being

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103 "Still There?" Love International Living, 2013-09-27
http://loveinternationalliving.com/2013/09/27/still-there/

104 "Beer Rant" Songdo for Rookies, 2010-03-05
http://songdo4rookies.blogspot.fr/2010/03/beer-rant.html

105 "A Visit to Songdo" Kojects: Transport-Urban planning-Projects around Korea, 2013-02-12
http://kojects.com/2013/02/18/a-visit-to-songdo/

106 "Still There?" Love International Living, 2013-09-27
http://loveinternationalliving.com/2013/09/27/still-there/

advertised in the official developer website as an integral part of the sustainable infrastructure in Songdo.

Another very much put forward aspect of Songdo has been the green, clean and safe environment, especially in contrast to the bustling polluted Seoul. McNeill (2009)[107] reported Songdo's publicity claiming that "Asian business capitals are "racked" by environmental damage, undereducated workforces and a lack of available space. 'It would seem a city that enjoys clean air... and a superior quality of life just doesn't exist anymore.'" And some of the residents apparently welcome this aspect of the city[108]; meaning it has been fulfilled. They were especially happy about the "park living" – the clean environment and also the proximity to their friends as they can just get out and have a picnic in the park without a long commute like back in the capital[109]. Other bloggers also mention the so much promulgated non-Korean looks of the Songdo design, especially in the Central park area. Though he clearly states that it has nothing to do with its inspiration, the New York Central park, it is a rather nice urban park where you can go for a picnic with friends on a sunny day especially when you fell homesick/are fed up with Asia as it gives a tiny hint of a Western atmosphere[110].

Interestingly, among the things that have not been reported at length in the blogs so far is the also so much talked about omnipresent ubicomp and smart technologies that have caused both a newspaper uproar: from articles claiming Songdo to be the frontier of urban innovation to the ones talking about the fulfilment of George Orwell's 1984. Valérie Gelézeau reported a striking difference between the imaginary of Songdo and the lived Songdo – as people interviewed there said they do not have any or much experience with the ubicomp, that it is handy for parking or that they gave back the gadget for medical checks because it was paid – so it is not perceived as a revolutionary part of their lives. It suggests that there is a

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107 McNeill, D. (2009). *New Songdo City: Atlantis of the Far East* . Available: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/new-songdo-city-atlantis-of-the-far-east-1712252.html. Last accessed 3rd May 2013.

108 "Foreign residents talk about Songdo" Korean Society, 2012-10-17 http://societyinkorea.blogspot.fr/2012/10/foreign-residents-talk-about-songdo.html

109 "Tomorrow's cities: Just how smart is Songdo?" BBC News Technology, 2013-09-02 http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-23757738

110 "Songdo and the Central Park of South Korea" Another Damn Travel Blog, 2012-09-26 http://anotherdamntravelblog.blogspot.fr/2012/09/songdo-and-central-park-of-south-korea.html

clear dichotomy between the journalistic and indeed scholarly attention given to the project's aspects in contrast to the scope of their actual implementation – of course there is a functionning smart grid for traffic regulation in place; but this is not a revolutionary solution, similar product is offered by the IBM. However, at this point, we must still bear in mind that Songdo is also a city still in progress and that the ubicomp might become more marquant in the upcoming years. Or if not, Songdo seems not to be that much more "wired" than any other bigger Korean city. However, she reported a general satisfaction with the housing conditions among the residents.

The ongoing construction work means a decreased comfort of living in the area due to the noise pollution. Also, despite the fact that we do not know about any claims on adverse health effects of air pollution in the buildings and such comparable to the reports from Sejong City, a blogger from Kojects had documented a rather striking level of discontent with the conditions in the offices in three of the buildings. There were big red attached slogans on top of the buildings covering the whole length of one wall and placed on the very top of the building – so quite visible from afar – that incited POSCO to treat better the people occupying the offices.



Source: "A Visit to Songdo" on Kojects[111] *"The first one says: "악덕기업 포스코 건설! 참는데도 한계가 있다!"* [Akdeokkieop posko geonseol! Chamneundedo hangyega ita!] *and it means "Vicious enterprise Posco Constructions! We've endured a lot, but there is a limit!". The second poster says: "추워서 못살겠다! 포스코 건설은 이중창을 설치하라!"* [Chuwoseo motsalgetta! Posko geonseoreun ijeungchangeul seolchihara!"], *the translation would be "It's so cold that we can't live here. Build double windows, Posco Construction!". The third poster adds: "입주민을 무시하는 포스코 건설은 각성하라!"* [Ipjumineul musihaneun posko geonseoreun gakseonghara!], *it says in English: "Posco Construction, which ignores the residents, wake up (=start to act)!"."*[112]

In short, in Songdo, we observe spatial stratification due to long distances and insufficient public transport, asset in the "park living", rather low ubicomp presence, services slowly flowing in, and contradictory reports on satisfaction with housing and office conditions.

111 "A Visit to Songdo" Kojects: Transport-Urban planning-Projects around Korea, 2013-02-12 http://kojects.com/2013/02/18/a-visit-to-songdo/

112 "A Visit to Songdo" Kojects: Transport-Urban planning-Projects around Korea, 2013-02-12 http://kojects.com/2013/02/18/a-visit-to-songdo/

Market-related outcomes

Furthermore, based on the observations by Valérie Gelézeau from March 2014, there are two different sides of the city: the first block delimited by the university campus and the Convensia Street and the second block in between Convensia Street and "Canal walk" area with the NC Cube shopping mall as a landmark. The first block dates back to the 2003 and the second block opened recently around 2010 with additions still being built to this area. She notes that there is a dynamics of stratification by creating a different perceived demand/incetivising different offer as the first block was built before the project was taken over by Gale.

The areas around Convensia Street and adjacent Central Plaza are, being there for almost 10 years already, according to Gelézeau, more bustling with commerce, with main meeting landmark point in the Lotteria burger. The areas around NC Cube are seemingly more frequented by the workers from the business center (such as Green Climate Fund employees) or the expats - the Chadwick international school is located in the second block, there, we see more cafés and Western-style restaurants (held by expats) or bars. These are the cafés we have seen reviewed in the "Songdo for Rookies" blog when the author ventured to find a good cappuccino in Songdo[113].

Valérie Gelézeau adds that the residents of the first block usually do not go to these newer districts not because of money issues but because of the sheer physical distance between the two places. If you live in the first block, going all the way to "Canal walk" is simply too far – we would come back this later in the section 6.2.

She also says that there is a discontinuity in the Songdo development: it happens more in leaps than in a gradual process. In other words that the life of the citizens suddenly improves with opportunity windows. As an example, we could quote the finishing of the NC Cube district for the Chadwick School opening and the Green Fund relocation for which the G-Tower was also finalised. Similarly, hotel infrastructure is in progress in the vision of the upcoming 2014 Asian Games in Incheon and more improvements are to be expected in order to showcase the new model city for international audience. In this respect, these occasions (Green Fund installation) and sometimes even mega-events (Asian Games) are playing the

[113] "A Good Cappuccino" Songdo for Rookies, 2009-07-20 http://songdo4rookies.blogspot.fr/2009/07/good-cappuccino.html

catalysing role as a window of opportunity/enabling environment – same we have seen with the 2008 Beijing Olympics. But in our case, it is not urban revitalisation but actual city building: there will be more arriving customers so first the cafés seized the opportunity and now the hotel industry sees an opportunity to kick-in. Indeed, for them, the Songdo is a long-term bet surpassing the punctual 2014 Asian Games event. The second block area is already rather developed and they are also rather close to the Central Park, it is easily imaginable that they will later target the people transferring at Incheon Airport to attract them for a stop-over as they are very conveniently close to the airport, especially for early morning flights.

The Wall Street Journal reports that the developers are struggling with Songdo because of the underused office space due to the weak incentives offered to domestic firms in comparison to international ones. *"That has made it difficult for Songdo to attract law firms, accounting firms and other service companies that the foreign companies need. 'If you don't have a thriving domestic economy in that area, it's going to be more difficult to attract international investors,' says Tom Murcott, a Gale executive vice president."*[114] Consequently, the project has had low profitability so far. The NGO concerned with wildlife preservation, Korea Birds, also claimed that the land reclamation construction is continuing despite the already standing office buildings remaining empty[115]. On the contrary, the apartments have seemed to sell relatively well in comparison.

[114] "South Korea's $35 Billion 'Labor of Love'; Developer Struggles to Build a City From Scratch" The Wall Street Journal Online, 2013-12-06 http://on.wsj.com/1c9JWyz

[115] "Song Do's Financial Problems in the Wall Street Journal" Birds Korea, 2014-01-06 http://www.birdskorea.org/Habitats/Wetlands/Songdo/BK-HA-Songdo-Financial-problems-WSJ.shtml

Environmental outcomes

One of the potentially most controversial outcomes of Songdo implementation is the perturbed ecosystem in the Han estuary, problem pointed out mostly by environmentally-oriented organisations, the Save International and the already mentioned Birds Korea. The latter angrily challenge the WSJ article saying that before the construction, the area of current Songdo was a barren wasteland. Indeed, Birds Korea, in accordance with the reports by Save International and Ko (2009) claim that the area has been an important part of the so-called tidal wetlands in Han estuary: in other words an ecosystem of shallow waters where salt and sweet water mixed, an important nesting environment for migratory birds. As such, the project does not impact only Korean birds but also a larger scope of fauna all across the East Asian region. Both of the organisations stress the fact that some of the bird species deprived of their nesting habitat were endangered and consequently face extinction and some others thus passed under the endangered status due to their declining numbers resulting from part of their habitat destruction.

In our two cases, we have identified similar categories of outcomes: institutional, quality of life and wellbeing, market-related and environmental. They sometimes have rather different (institutional relocation versus new institutions installation; weekend ghost town versus satisfaction with living environment) and sometimes strikingly similar manifestations (chronic lack of services and infrastructure, difficult walkablility etc.) as we can see in the summary table below. In order to make better sense of them, we will try to re-contextualise them in the following section based on several general dynamics in urban planning.

	Sejong	**Songdo**
Institutional	Partial government relocation.	New institutions and organisations settle there.
Quality of life and wellbeing	<u>Negative perception:</u> Degrading health status, sleep deprivation. Lack of transportation and services (leisure, health etc.) Schooling level dissatisfaction. Splitting residence/long daily commute. Perceived hampered marriage prospects.	<u>Negative perception:</u> Lack of transportation, long distances. Few services. Lower ubicomp presence than expected. <u>Positive perception:</u> Asset in "park living".
Market-related	<u>Positive perception:</u> Chungcheong residents moving in for cheaper rent. Market speculation for subsidised government office apartments. <u>Negative perception:</u> Complaints about low quality housing due to cost cutting. Systemic economic downturn generated in Gwacheon.	<u>Positive perception:</u> Perceived good apartment standard. Hotel industry on the rise for the 2014 Incheon Asian Games. <u>Negative perception:</u> Discontinuous development.
Environmental		<u>Negative perception:</u> Songdo tidal wetlands ecosystems perturbed if not destroyed.

6. **Policy outcome explanation**

In this section, we are going to discuss the outcomes described above and we have decided to group our explanation in three categories in an attempt for decreasing order of importance. We must note that all of them influence do the projects so the decreasing order tried to reflect the scope and scale, or eventually the temporality of the influence upon the outcomes. The three respective groups of outcome explanations have been established as follows:

- Competitiveness, nature of the incentives: this category shows we believe the most clearly the challenges of master-planned cities as developmental solutions. In this section, we will try to underpin the importance of the issue of development by incentive and the multiple national championships.
- Diffusion of "modern" urban concepts: in this section, we will discuss mostly the paradoxical outcomes stemming from the diffusionism of some trends in urban planning and how they relate to problems of public good provision
- Distance from Seoul matters: in the last section, we will discuss the signs of a still persisting Seoul's hegemony on the economic, political and socio-cultural levels, findings especially relevant for Korean balanced regional development attempts

1. Competitiveness, nature of the incentives

Incentives versus provision

The most pressing issue for the everyday life in the new master-planned cities we have studied is the chronic lack of services; or at least a substantial lack of variety. As a Songdo resident jokingly told Valérie Gelézeau: "Here, it is countryside." [In comparison to Seoul]. We explain this outcome by the very nature of approach to city development within the master-planned city as a developmental solution – as much as it might seem paradoxical. The CIO of Gale said in the case of Songdo that: "It's the occupants who make the city."[116] And we can broaden this to several dimensions of life and of course outside the limits of Songdo, to Sejong for

[116] "Tomorrow's cities: Just how smart is Songdo?" BBC News Technology, 2013-09-02 http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-23757738

instance. Of course, the quote could make us immediately think about the exchange and social production of the place first; but this vision might also apply to the entrepreneurial activities and some services provided in Songdo or Sejong. Let us see both the cases separately.

Sejong is, in addition to decentralizing the central government, also meant to be a source of employment and growth opportunities in the Chungcheong region and the Korean economy works more or less on capitalist principles. As a result, the government initiated a creation of an incentive. And on a very micro-level we see that it worked with the farmers selling home-made *kimpap* snacks to the hungry office workers. Shop-owners such as the enterprising lady who sells home decoration and previously operated in other newly-built areas such as Bundang, Seongnam-si, moved-in already in 2012[117].

Of course, this model can be criticised as showing limited interest in the employee welfare and quality of life. Because at the same time, there is a purely market-oriented model with creating an incentive for entrepreneurship through the establishment of a place of aggregated demand for services with civil servants who are forced to relocate *en masse* to a different area that lacks heavily in living standards. Therefore we could argue that in this respect, Sejong has the inconveniences of both a planned, government-lead megaproject almost in a socialist style with those of a capitalist profit-oriented developer projects.

Similar market-oriented observations can be made for Songdo. It is no doubt a commercial developer project, aimed at future profit for the developing company even though in the case of a project on the Songdo scale, the developers apparently do not count with returns on the huge investment within the next 12-15 years[118]. The city is straightforward presented as investment opportunity, so they might expect the firms to settle there and sprout organically as the Gale CIO suggests.

Simply put, the services are treated as incentives, the same way high-tech industrial clusters or RD facilities are invited to settle in the projects, attracted by tax

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117 "Sejong City is almost, but not quite, finished" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012-01-16 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2947130

118 "South Korea's $35 Billion 'Labor of Love'; Developer Struggles to Build a City From Scratch" The Wall Street Journal Online, 2013-12-06 http://on.wsj.com/1c9JWyz

breaks. We can clearly relate this approach to one of the defining traits of the Korean developmental state as presented by David Hundt (2009: 3) who mentions that in the developmentalist setting, the "state creates an incentive structure that is conductive to capitalist development." Our two cities can be thus viewed as micro-universes of incentives structure that hope to motivate capital inflow.

Even populating the city follows similar outline, settlers are incentivized by cheaper rents to move in. And as we have seen, it works fairly well in inciting Chungcheon intra-regional migration from Daejeon to Sejong and similarly from Gyeonggi Province to Songdo where we are likely to find also more inter-regional migrants due to general attraction of the Gyeonggi area which maintains a net immigration balance[119]. Since services are (and can be) only incentivized to relocate, these projects can be paralleled to the internal colonization in medieval Europe or British colonization of America; there is a set of incentives to create aggregate demand but how the supply side turns out and when remains extremely volatile. We find this important for several reasons:

First, the time delay in between the aggregate demand creation and the supply side stepping in impacts both the settlers' immediate life satisfaction and increases the likelihood of ghost-town creation. Let us remember the civil servants in Sejong struggling to find food over lunch and then entertainment after work and their spouses refusing to join them because of the fear of relocating their own job. We need to remember that job change as a factor of life satisfaction ranked top in the list in the Lee and Kye (2011) study on forced relocation. And then, as we said, those same civil servants consequently leaving back home over the week-end or even daily after work. In the case of Songdo, the volatility of the supply side nicely shows in the discontinuous development of the city, the sudden improvements when a new opportunity window for additional profit arises (such as the 2014 Asian Games).

Second, the size of the projects considerably increases the settlers' inconvenience: of course, both Sejong and Songdo are built in a more (Incheon) or less (Yeongi-gun) urbanized areas where basic services such as food stores are present. In Sejong, even the First Village reportedly had supermarkets during the

[119] "Internal Migration in January 2014" Statistics Korea official portal, available http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/news/1/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=312936

citizens' move-in in early 2012; however, the civil servants had to either bring their pre-packed lunch or to walk for 20-30 minutes to find food over the lunch break at the vicinity of the government complex.

Inspiring us from the Lee and Kye (2011) study, we would say that there is a clear issue of whether and to what extent are the new master-planned cities settlers adequately compensated for the inconvenience of their living environment, especially in the case of the more or less forced relocation among the civil servants to Sejong city.

Multiple championships

Bluntly said, the couple Sejong-Songdo illustrates the traditional dichotomy between decentralisation and recentralisation implemented at the same time; in other words Sejong as the decentralising pattern and Songdo as a hub creation. The "usual" way of this policy is that there is an institutional devolution accompanied by the economic clustering and prioritising of national champions for the sake of national competitiveness on the global market. Indeed, as we have argued previously, Songdo is such a competitiveness boosting attempt to benefit the Great Seoul Metro Area's image. Songdo project, and by extent the whole Incheon FEZ, is accompanied by a strong propagation discourse of Songdo as a new hub in East Asia – clearly channelling the idea of generating a national championship for worldwide (or at least Asia Pacific regional) competition.

However, in the Korean context, this dichotomy is even more interesting in the couple Sejong-Songdo because they represent an attempt to decentralise and recentralise only the economic development at the same time. As such, they illustrate in a very clear and large-scale manner the problems of incremental political decision-making and the garbage ban theory. Their seeming mutual contradiction stems from the simultaneous attempts to fulfill both the national domestic - in other words the more balanced regional - economic development goals and the increase of global competitiveness.

Let us repeat again that the Sejong city project is not a one for devolution (*décentralisation*) but a mere spatial, functional decentralisation (*déconcentration*): the central government workers are physically relocated outside the capital but there

is not an increase in power transfer to the local authority level. Therefore, the Sejong relocation brings, even in the kept Roh "Original plan" a strong economic function, supposedly being a tool for more balanced regional development. At the same time, the Songdo project aims at becoming the financial hub in East Asia – aiming at international competitiveness.

Of course, we could argue that the capital attraction and the envisioned job creation might not be necessarily the same for both of the projects - international and finance institutions for Songdo and SMEs and technology for Sejong - and that in the end they do not really rival each other.

On the contrary, we might conclude that these projects actually rival Seoul: as we have previously argued, Songdo creates a new adjacent hub that incites new firms to settle there and not explicitly the relocation of existing companies from Seoul even though some of them might be tempted to do so by cheaper office space. Also, we cannot conclude if the firms settled in Songdo would have otherwise settled in the capital or in a different country and the Songdo project was specifically the reason for them to settle in Korea in the first place: we are very much inclined to believe to be so in the case of the Green Climate Fund where other Asian "green" cities such as Singapore might have been at stake. Sejong concurs, or least attempts to, Seoul in the respect of attracting firms closer to the decision-making centers and diverges the capital and GDP production from the Seoul Metro Area (which Songdo does not) and on the political level simply takes off some of the symbolical importance (though not completely).

Yet from the very same reason, the Songdo and Sejong projects concur each other as well as there is only a limited amount of capital and political resources the government can reallocate to support several local "championships". *Nota bene* if they, after all, might have partly diverging profiles that we have evoked previously for the sake of comparison to Seoul, yet, they are still underlined by the idea of talent attraction and university RD (remember the rivaling SKY universities settling in of the projects each!) and medical and high-tech clustering. In other words, they follow both a rather common pattern for creating a competitive city, according to the research by Musterd and Murie (2010). Tangible shortcomings of this approach are already seen in Sejong with the non-implementation of the bullet train service all the

way down to Sejong but only to Osong or the lowered quality of delivered housing due to budget cuts of the project in order to re-channel the government money to other nation-wide projects (see section 5.1, *market-related outcomes*). Of course, coming back to the concurrence issue, Seoul Metro Region is important internationally and is unlikely that its economic primacy over other domestic regions is to be surpassed by Songdo as a hub. The Chungcheong region is important domestically for the local politics so the relocation is not only keeping the electoral promise but on a symbolic level really acknowledging this importance. So the projects embody on one side the international market-related preferences and on the other the domestic political preferences on economic development even though put together, they seem to be extremely illogical and self-contradictory.

When it comes to Songdo championship designation, we have said that the Green Climate Fund relocated to Songdo, but we need to also note that it was in 2014, 11 years after the first settlers moved in and about 4 years later the second block around the Central Park marked its inhabitants' arrival. We could translate this as a rather slow process in institutional attraction.

However, the issue of championships multiplication becomes even more pronounced when put in the context of the "innovative cities" initiative: combines with the already existing different FEZs (Pyeongtaek, Gwanyang etc.), we could be tempted to conclude that the Korean government might simply be trying to designate too many champions at the same time, both in terms of the limited capital the Korean government can spend and the foreign investment they can attract. This brings us to the competitiveness critique laid out by Le Blanc et al. (2014) in the sense that not only there are existing cities carried away by the competitiveness vision, the current trends in urban planning even create new such cities from scratch, creating an "inflation in competitive cities". We will come back to this issue from a different standpoint in the following section.

2. Diffusion of "modern" urban concepts

As we argue already in our paper on the logic of "green" and "smart" cities concepts translation into the Songdo project (Lichá, 2014), both Songdo and Sejong can be interpreted as the result of normative isomorphism in urban planning. We say that since "new policy norms advocated by the expert communities can be formed in any 'epistemic community of policy experts' (Dobbin et al., 2007), in our case [Songdo], sustainable development/green growth strategies are seen as a norm recently established in urban planning, theorised by international organisations such as the OECD or The World Bank, clearly positioning themselves as policy expert groups[120]." We believe that building upon the political consensus since Rio Conference and thanks to the aforementioned international organisations' theorisation, a worldwide policy imitation stream in green and sustainable urban policies developed. Because the organisations, in their position of expert groups, provide clear-cut guidance of policy recommendations and "best practice" cases identification and thus "they articulate a clear trend, a standard to adhere to, and a manual for 'ritualistic copying of policies (...) to mimic the success of leading states' (Dobbin et al., 2007)" (Lichá, 2014).

We further build upon our argument saying that the adoption of these "fashionable" concepts is underlined by the global competitiveness enhancing struggle. This second point is more obvious in the case of the ubicomp technology implementation into the urban fabric. As Germaine Halegoua (2012) reminds us in her thesis, South Korea development since the 1980s has been much fuelled by focus on electronics and later IT-technologies and related innovation and indeed, Korean brands such as Samsung compete quite successfully on the global electronics market. Experimenting with ubicomp in urban planning is then to be seen as another ramification of South Korean specialisation in this field. Indeed, Songdo is not the only attempt – even though one of the most marketed ones – we could cite the Digital Media City in Seoul or even the Seoul City itself as 4G coverage and urban

[120] We must not forget that the official OECD motto is "Better policies for a better world."

life facilitation applications (such as Smartphone based real-time bus schedules[121]) are pretty much the norm.

The ubicomp presence has been extensively stressed in the propagation materials and often also in the literature in the case of Songdo (Halegoua, 2012; Kuecker, 2013; Shwayri, 2013). We have also noted the scope of actual implementation and perceived importance of the ubicomp technologies by the inhabitants seems disproportionate to the attention it received, as suggested by the fieldwork of Valérie Gelézeau. However, we must not underestimate the symbolic competitiveness importance of this image-building, as underlined by Halegoua (2012): it is a way for Korea to identify itself globally as a leader in IT innovation, not to mention its logic in the domestic policy stream. We can interpret similarly the first government meeting broadcasted from Sejong which was presided by Park Geun-hye herself.

As we further demonstrate in our separate paper on Songdo (Lichá, 2014), the incremental adoption of green features in Songdo led to paradoxical, even schizophrenic outcomes defying its underlying principles even at the project conception stage. To describe this situation, we used the notion of "sustainable schizophrenia" by Krueger and Agyeman (2005); concretely, the perturbation see destruction of the Han river estuary tidal wetlands ecosystem and the pitfalls of a energy and production hinterland dependent urban model prone to limited social inclusiveness.

On the same note of paradoxical outcomes, we would like to come back to the issue of public transport provision and walkability which clearly appeared in both the Songdo and Sejong projects. We have to note that it is linked to the adoption of low density urban solutions in both of the cities: they are articulated around a big Central Park with large amounts of green spaces and pedestrian zones, a model that we see in the European "éco-quartiers" as well, such as ZAC Clichy-Batignolles[122] in the 17th district of Paris, for instance. Of course, walkability is a much employed concept for new greener urbanism, identified for example by

[121] Not only these exist in other big Korean cities such as Gwangju, they function in European cities as well, in Paris for instance.

[122] We chose this example thanks to author's familiarity with the project thanks to a qualitative research on citizen participation in the policy co-production process of the ZAC Clichy Batignolles led in autumn 2012.

Newman and Matan (2013) or as a key asset among some of the OECD flagship best case practices, the Hammarby Sjostad neighbourhood in Stockholm. It simply means that a neighbourhood should invite people to move around on foot – by pedestrian zones, clean environment etc. However, as easily imagined, this concept works well only on a rather small and compact area: it is already not working in Songdo, so unlikely in Sejong with its vast spaces.

Why is this so? Because the cities are at the same time following another strong trend, the vertical densification with horizontal dilution and introduction of vast green spaces in contrast with the former/older cramped environment – which is why Sejong has been designed to be composed of 50% of its spatial territory of green spaces and not built environment. Moreover, the planner of Sejong went even further in alternative transport positive discrimination by reserving the main routes for BRT and letting the cars only into the narrow side streets (along with parking lot number limitations).

This being said, we can clearly imagine the importance of the public transport provision if the environmental-friendly goals are to be maintained. However, as we have mentioned in the section 5, citizens complained about the lack of transportation and transport connectedness of the city to other places in both Songdo and Sejong. We find it important to note that thus the public transport provision becomes an issue in both a government-sponsored and government-developed project (Sejong) and a government-initiated project developed by a private developer (Songdo). However, entering into details of specific modalities of public transport provision in master-planned cities would merit a separate study.

Also, the implementation scope of the much trumpeted "alternative" types of transportation, the bike rentals and water taxis, in Songdo, are limited to the Central park area and are thus not a substitute to a regular public transport. Interestingly enough, at the same time, there is an abandoned existing express bus terminal, the "Technopark" close to the Central park – it has been built but never used. In Sejong, the BRT implementation has been reported as to be unsatisfactory due to the long intervals in between the bus passages and therefore taking a taxi seems to be a faster

option for moving around the city. The long intervals in between the passages are likely due to the fact that even now the system is underused and far from returns even on the operating cost. However, this setting, especially in the starting years characterised by lower levels of population, is more than anything reinforcing a vicious circle: buses run on long intervals to save money, citizens opt for car transport, hence the BRT becomes even less profitable and the environmentally friendly city concept becomes compromised.

Kang Jeongmuk (2012) studied the future sustainability of the transit-oriented development network of Sejong in view of its further expansion on the benchmark of the problems Putrajaya faces with transit. He points out that the delays in public transport implementation in Malaysia lead to increased use of private vehicles and traffic jams (Kang, 2012: 21-22) and concludes that the BRT network in Sejong should eliminate this issue. However, we already observe signs from the field that this might be a bit of wishful thinking because the regularity of the intervals seem to be equally important as the sole existence of the service in order to meet the – even though currently seemingly meagre – transportation demand in Sejong city.

3. Distance from Seoul matters

In this section, we are going to attempt to demonstrate how distance from Soul matters, especially for the early stages of our master-planned projects. We will be focusing on the still persistent hegemony on of course political and economic but also on the socio-cultural level, mapping the diffrenent ramifications of the predominance of Seoul which illustrate clearly the depth any decentralisation attempts in Korea need to breach.

partial decentralisation

Among the first and most debated issues both in press and in the scientific literature about Sejong city is the government inefficiency stemming from the move (Deahee Lee, 2011; Chun, Young-Pyoung, 2010). Of course, there have been opponents of the change of the capital saying that it would be too costly but that would have been anyway if the capital moved with all the institutions including the National Assembly and the Blue House. However, the Original plan passed by Roh has been criticised by Korean scholars in opposition to the Revised plan to bring in excessive cost and inefficiency due to relocation of only part of the executive and spatial division between the executive and the legislative (Deahee Lee, 2011; Chun, Young-Pyoung, 2010).

We have mentioned some of these inefficiencies as really happening in the reality of the policy implementation, however on a much more individual and personal level that the reports aggregating cost analysis data predicted. Of course, there is the skyrocketing cost of the Sejong-Seoul shuttle buses and other expenditures related to civil servants travelling back and forth between the two cities, but there is more to the story. On one hand, there are higher officials increasing the expenditures through having additional office space rented in Seoul despite their allocated offices in Sejong for the reasons of couloir politics and unofficial lunch/dinner meetings and proximity of media, we have evoked. The media proximity in general is also an important question – on purpose, some of the press conferences were held in Sejong but the civil servants voiced that the media coverage gets mostly to the organs that stayed in Seoul and that the top officials contact the press while being in the capital or that the presidential aide announces

again what has already been announced in Sejong and gets most of the media attention[123].

On the other hand, we have mentioned the individual dimension of work inefficiency stemming from the perceived decreasing working performance of the relocated civil servants themselves. In the previous sections, we have evoked degrading health conditions linked to the permanent construction of the city (headaches, skin irritation, and respiration troubles), solitude and depression and increased fatigue for those who decided to commute daily to and from Seoul to their office for family reasons.

The first part of the inefficiency is definitely resulting from the formatting nature of the controversy that produced around the "Original plan": Roh's first plan counted with relocation of the entire functions of the capital but was amended due to Lee's intervention into a multifunctional administrative city, what then became to be referred to as the "Original plan". We need to remeber that Lee Myung-bak was, at the time he first challenged the Sejong project, a Mayor of Seoul, clearly protecting the interests of his constiutency on the national level. His motion was successful and the Constitutional court ruled that Seoul is to stay the national capital based on the historic legacy. Consequently, the emblematic institutions of statecraft were to remain there. The prospects for balanced regional development has been doubted based on this: *"It is too early to tell if Sejong City will lead to balanced regional development, but it seems to be difficult for Sejong to evolve into an administration-driven self-sufficient city if the National Assembly and the Blue House continue to stay in Seoul," said a professor from Sejong University under the condition of anonymity."*[124]

In this sense, despite Sejong being often compared to the experience in Brasília, Ankara or Putrajaya (Kang Jeongmuk, 2012), we must note that these are actually far from being comparable. All the previously mentioned are all capital cities or at least administrative capital cities where actually all the state functions

[123] "For some, Sejong is just too far away" Korea JoongAng Daily, 2013-04-08 http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2969779

[124] "The government's new nest" The Korea Herald, 2013-12-14 http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131213000860

have been transferred. In the case of Putrajaya which is still only the administrative capital while Kuala Lumpur remains the official capital of the country, so a setting which is the closest to the Sejong-Seoul case, we must note that Putrajaya is around 35km from the original capital. Hence Putrajaya is more of a satellite city to Kuala Lumpur than a complete relocation. So it is more comparable to a situation when South Korea's capital moved not even to Songdo but to Seongnam – or indeed all to the current Gwacheon government complex.

migration and labour market

The partial relocation to Sejong produced internal migration and revealed important topics related to Korean labour market and socio-cultural importance of the capital city.

We have talked in the section 5.1 and later in this paper about people regularly commuting in between Seoul and Sejong or splitting the family residence, majoritarily for reasons of spouse's work and educational possibilities for their offspring. But in Songdo, no such complaints, or not at least *en masse*, produced. We explain this by the fact that those who moved over from Seoul to Songdo did so voluntarily (at least majoritarily[125]) and we should compare them to Daejeon or other Chungcheong citizens who decided to move to Sejong due to lower apartment costs than to the relocated civil servants. Similarly for those two latter categories, the spouse work seems to be less of an issue as the Sejong-Daejeon or even the Songdo-Seoul commute seems acceptable. Moreover, especially in the latter case, the fact that Songdo is part of Seoul Metro Area equals much easier labour mobility for both of the partners.

But in the case of the civil service, we expect the labour market mobility to be rather low. There are some aspects that might lead people to think twice before leaving a civil service job: they are stable, relatively well paid and socially prestigious. Overall, a civil servant is traditionally considered as a good catch for a spouse as we have mentioned. Therefore, there have been stories about people trying

[125] We know that POSCO created a branch office in Songdo and that some employees were moved there and despite lacking data, we are inclined to believe that the scale of this relocation has been incomparable to the Sejong government move.

to evade the relocation by other means than actually quitting or not applying for a civil service job. First, the young graduates seeking their first employment applied mainly to finance divisions[126] not planned for relocation. Similarly, already working employees tried to get transferred to the organs staying in Seoul or Gwacheon or to be downgraded and transferred to Seoul municipal administration[127]. Second, other tried to delay their move: the Yonhap News Agency reported a story about a young woman who was employed in an agency that was announced to move so she hurried on purpose to get pregnant and go on maternity leave when her office was moving[128]. She said that she wanted to stay in Seoul and that she got pregnant deliberately earlier than she planned after her marriage – she originally wanted to enjoy "honeymoon years"[129] with her husband but avoiding the relocation was more important as she did not want to quit her job either as both her and her husband had to work to support their family. Of course, come people like her might reconsider when in a couple of years Sejong might improve or she might actually quit her job and find another one, become a housewife etc.

We found this episode extremely intriguing in one aspect: the changing unwillingness for personal life sacrifice. It would be interesting to survey if mostly the younger employees seeked to avoid the relocation and if it was correlated with the fact that Korean society is likely to abandon the personal sacrificial spirit it maintained after the Korean war and also after the 1997 Asian financial crisis – that there is more consciousness about private satisfaction and not only national welfare, a changing pattern of the pyramid of needs towards a configuration where personal happiness and convenience matters. So that the overall willingness to support unfavourable working conditions might be lower among the younger employees. Because a 46-year-old official said: *"Many of my colleagues, particularly mid-age*

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126 "South Korea's $21bn alternative to Seoul lacks transport and soul" Financial Times, 2013-11-20 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ba9646f6-4dc6-11e3-8fa5-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2z2nKZr1j

127 "Family separation haunts civil servants moving to Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2012-09-20 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/09/18/95/0301000000AEN20120918011500315F.HTML

128 "Family separation haunts civil servants moving to Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2012-09-20 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/09/18/95/0301000000AEN20120918011500315F.HTML

129 In comparison to Europeans, Koreans tend to marry much earlier after they start to date, usually around a year later, as partners living together before marriage are still considered socially unacceptable, according to my personal observations from 2011/2012.

male officials, made the same choice as mine [live a separated family life]. For a father in this country, sacrificing oneself is the only option."[130]

Of course, still majority of the people relocated and very few apparently did so altogether with their families: so either commuting everyday to the capital or supporting two households and coming back home over week-ends. This introduces a domestic version of the phenomenon that sprouted in Korea in the past two decades under the name *kkirogi appa*, literally the "goose-father", which translates as a "self-sacrificing father". Generally, the husbands stayed in Korea and were making money that they sent to their wives who lived abroad with their children: this usually included English-speaking countries, mostly the US, but on occasions Paris could be on the list too. Moving the children into an English-speaking schooling system at a young age was perceived as a desirable solution to improve their college-entrance and future employment prospects. Consequently, the children put in the English establishments were too young to go live abroad by themselves so the mother followed with them. Interestingly, the husbands usually did not follow but stayed in Korea – supposing they had a decently-paying job, likely in a big conglomerate – and lived alone in very small apartments to be able to send most of their revenues to sustain the rest of the family abroad. This is in a sense the exact opposite of the usual economic migration patterns where the family sustained stays at home.

And with the Sejong relocation, this exact same pattern is reproduced domestically. We have already mentioned on several occasions that in Korea, education is very important. Let us explain a bit more in detail: the three most prestigious schools (Seoul National University, Yonsei University and Korea University) form a literal "glass ceiling" at least for some jobs, most notably in big conglomerates, civil service and in politics (most of the Parliamentarians are in fact Seoul National graduates). The college entrance exam being very selective and demanding, children are actually preparing for it even during primary education, always trying to attend the best level of the schools and cram schools (*hagwon*) to improve their chances to get the best possible school. It has not been uncommon for

130 "Family separation haunts civil servants moving to Sejong City" Yonhap News Agency, 2012-09-20 http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/09/18/95/0301000000AEN20120918011500315F.HTML

families to move to Gangnam (Southern district in Seoul) when it has been developed around the Olympics when good schools (elementary, high schools) from the Northern part of the city were incentivised to relocate there.

We have mentioned the story of the mother who followed her husband to Sejong and then was so dissatisfied with the high school's level that she wanted to at least make her son transfer to a one in the nearby Daejeon and when this did not work, she might have considered moving back to Seoul in order not to hamper her son's educational attainment chances.

Also, there is the aspect of spouses not willing to relocate to Sejong because they would need to leave their own job and finding another one in Daejeon or not to mention the Yeongi-gun area might be difficult. Similarly to the critique raised in the program on "Current Affairs in Focus" when the Revised plan was criticised on the account of not actually offering employment opportunities for the locals as changing from being a farmer into a mid-level manager is close to impossible, similarly the current government relocation projects creates, at least on the short-term, employment opportunities for service workers and entrepreneurs, and in a limited scale to teachers. Of course, on the mid-term, more firms might seek to relocate to the new area attracted by the presence of the government, and then new high-skilled positions would open. Yet, on the short-term, the design of Sejong city with the location far from the capital means that because of personal concerns such as the care for child education and the careers for the spouses, the city is bound to be a week-end ghost town, especially until leisure infrastructure develops.

The hesitation between keeping a good job and hampering one's family life prospects has been important also among the single office workers who were relocated to Sejong. Some of them reported that after their relocation has been announced, their dating chances rapidly decreased – they though it was difficult to start a relationship if in a 6 month time they were to move in a different province. After relocation, some still kept going to Seoul over the week-end to maintain their friends' network as well as to look for a prospective partner - we have suggested Others, both married or not expressed increasing solitude – for the singles, there

actually have been dating events organised in the Sejong city due to the lack of more natural settings where the single employees could meet a date.

We must also remind the reader of the episode we mentioned in the section 5.1 when discussing the impacts of the Sejong project on citizen living standards and well-being: the fact that the single government officials tend to go back to the capital over the week-ends in search for a potential partner or to attend government-organised dating events for single employees in Sejong rather than to marry local women who are, nevertheless, apparently very keen to find a match among their ranks. We have suggested a tendency to social class endogamy of the Korean society as a likely explanation for this phenomenon; this behaviour being articulated along the educational attainment levels as determinants of one's social status. This hypothesis is strenghtened by the results of the study of Park Mee-Hee (1991) on "educational mating" who showed an increasing trend in college homogamy among young couples in the marriage since the 1970s. Based on our experience with the field from 2011/2012, we are likely to believe that this trend might have strengthened ever since - and a seprate empirical study would have been needed to confirm our suggestion that not only this trend persists but might have developed, with the increased overall college attendance in Korea, even towards selectiviness concerning a specific establishement enrollment according the clearly stratified perceived prestige Korean colleges detain.

Overall, we have suggested that there is a multi-faceted hegemony of the Seoul metropolitain Area. Of course, in terms of the political and decision-making power the capital managed to retain with the only partial decentralisation of its government functions which seems to have turned Sejong more into an incovenience than power redistribution as key institutions still remain in Seoul. On the economic aspect, since the SMA also exerces a significant economic weight in the country, moving further also entails concerns about job relocation/change, found to be a key concern for relocated population. Similarly, concerns about the educational possibilities in the new master-planned cities, mostly among future Sejong citizens, suggest that the socio-economic importance of Seoul is likely to entail, at least short-term "ghost-townisation" for any master-planned city in the "province".

7. **Discussion**

In our paper, we have developed the example of two new cities in South Korea, Songdo IBD and Sejong City. And we have evoked the possible explanations through the competitiveness and incentives nature, diffusionism of sustainable urban planning solutions and the distance from the capital. We would like to come back to them on an even more abstract level to see how they relate to some very fundamental questions in city governance and public policy-making. We will namely address the question of developmental state transformation, balance between national and international policy line, the "conquest" of national territory and the issue of sustainability of the new cities.

We have said in the very beginning that South Korea has pursued the path of a developmental state. And very similarly to Japan, the developmental alliance of the state and the conglomerates has targeted mostly one designated domestic champion, the capital city region. As a consequence, there has been a strong capital accumulation around the Seoul Metropolitan Area. The developmental alliance manifests itself in the rapid economic development: in promotion and protection of key industries but also transformed the domain of urban planning and urban development with the sprawl of massive construction of apartment blocks and urban renewal since the 1960s[131].

The dictatorial state took the progress as means of its power legitimization: "East Asian state elites are also required to observe and respond to public expectations, and have thus emphasized the legitimacy of their leadership in social life, including economy." (Hundt, 2009: 26). David Hundt (2009) thus reminds us of the importance of public expectations, a variable which he denotes as "social pressures" that would play, among others, an important role in the changing relationship between the state and the *chaebols* within the developmental alliance.

Some other authors even claim that after the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the IMF intervention, hence more globalisation of the Korean economy, the Korean developmental state has been dismantled. Kim Yun Tae (2008: 217) says that: "The

[131] For a detailed account of this phenomenon, see Valérie Gelézeau. *Séoul, ville géante, cités radieuses*

Korean economy has been transformed from a traditional developmental state model characterised by a hierarchical and authoritative relationship between the government and conglomerates into the market-oriented economic model." He further adds that: "While the developmental state made a feature of strong government that controls market with regulations, the new post-developmental state attempts to protect market and reduce regulations." (Kim, 2008: 232) On the contrary, David Hundt (2009: 124) suggests that the IMF intervention "just" lead to a strengthening of the state's position within the developmental alliance on the detriment of the big conglomerates, in a reshaping of the power relation in the partnership.

So how do our cases relate to the developmental state and to what extent can we consider it as still present? First, the infrastructural power of the state manifests itself through the special legislation dedicated to these projects: the establishment of the IFEZ and the Special Act on Establishment of Sejong Special Self-governing City.

The original financing model of the two projects, we could see that the usual model can be also detected, especially in the case of Songdo where one of the biggest Korean conglomerates, POSCO, plays a major role. The implemented Sejong city plan is, first of all, a government-financed project to accommodate the relocation of the central government functions and to incentivize - to create an incentive structure - industries to cluster in. Because, after all, as Charles Lindblom says, "the developmental project [is] dependent on the large firms to invest." (Hundt, 2009: 8)

However, following the IMF bailout, the international capital stepped in, embodied within the Songdo project by CISCO and Gale International, thus shattering what has been perceived as the classical partnership characterizing the developmental state. David Hundt (2009) even suggested that even though the IMF intervention favored the state in the power relation of the developmental alliance, it has not, as such, served it: "While foreign capital has become a vital component of the Korean economy in the post-crisis period, it has not as yet been fully incorporated in the Korean economy. This may not be possible, given the divergent interests between the national focus of economic development and the

developmental alliance on one hand, and the global capital on the other." (Hundt, 2009: 132) We would like to suggest that the example of Songdo and Sejong, consequently with the other FEZs in Korea, defy this assumption. We would like to suggest that the arrival of the international capital only marked a different reconfiguration of the developmental alliance towards choosing a different partner for the state. Because the state still holds a strong grip over the infrastructural power to channel the capital towards its project of economic growth through establishment of new cities and/or designation of particular FEZs. The developmental state can thus be interpreted as forging a new developmental alliance with the foreign capital to substitute for the strongly socially discredited *chaebol* hegemony around the Asian crisis.

The important permutation of the developmental state, however, comes with the changing focus from designation of one national championship towards a more balanced regional growth. The balanced regional growth is embodied in our case by the example of Sejong city. In opposition to Songdo which we have identified as a continuity of the championship of the Seoul Metropolitan Area, they represent a classic dilemma of policy-making: the reconciliation between international competition and regional growth, or, national competition.

According to the OECD competitiveness report, the states stand a bigger chance on the international level for competition for capital flows, both human and financial, through designation of a limited number of champions of capital accumulation. This model has been followed even in the case of the Asian developmental states, more concretely in Korea through the designation of Seoul Metro Area as such champion. We have noted that Songdo follows this trend in the attempt of "hub" creation around the combination of two logistics centers, the Incheon port and the Incheon airport. And according to the port typology established by Merk et al. (2011), Incheon has a shor-range corridor towards Seoul, thus the activity in Incheon (with all the negative externalities of the logistic hub) benefits directly the capital.

Yet, we must come back to the social pressure variable of Hundt (2009), that social pressure can affect the power balance within the developmental alliance and therefore if the state wants to maintain its dominance, the interests of the voting public are not to be neglected. Or, more in general, in a democratising regime, the national interests in the sense of interest of the constituting parts of the nation are to be taken into account. It is even more true in a country such as Korea where the regions are traditional bastions of political affinities and some regions hold the decisional capacity to cast a decisive role in the elections. We have seen that the Chungcheong region detains such power in South Korea, which is why the project for the new administrative capital has been placed there.

Moreover, the importance of regions as the focus of politcal program has been noted in the literature, mostly in the context of European states and devolution of central government power. Some of these theories have lead to conclude that the post-Fordian national states are dismantling. An important addition to this literature has been made by Neil Brenner (2004) who argues that the state is not disappearing in detriment to the capital and ecnomic forces, but that there is a process of recsaling of the state towards city-regions. We would like to suggest that an interesting example of this is happening in Korea with the creation of new cities such as Sejong and in prolongation with the regional FEZs designation and the project of "innovatieve cities" towards more balanced regional growth.

Despite the fact that there is no substantial devolution of the central government power towards the regional or municipal governments[132], the focus of national politics shifted towards regional development. As such, we would like to suggest that there is indeed a rescaling of the developmental state towards increased regionalism. Because the shift towards regional development manages to maintain the variable of social pressures in favour of the state. Also, shifting towards designation of new championships outside the Seoul Metro Area seems to enhance the possibility of maintaining the developmental alliance between the state and either the conglomerates (who have not completely ceased to be the state partners for its

[132] We must not forget that some of the big Korean cities have a special self-administering status: Seoul, Busan, Daejeon, Daegu, Gwangju and now Sejong. But this means that they are not dependent on their respective provincial governments but directly to the central state, so they are considered as regions in themselves, a clear exmple of city-regions in Korea.

projetcs) or the international capital: other regions can offer the comparative advantage of cheaper land and labour costs, therefore creating a better incentive for the firms to invest which is, as we have noted, the core prerequisite of the developmental state functionning. The identification of several championships nationwaide still, however, means that there is a single championship designated within each region, so the same international competitiveness model is repeated on the national scale in between regions. We therefore see a developmental regional national governace by mega-projects which is rather symptomatic of a developmental state. There are, therefore, not only a developmental state, but a developmental city-regions, with the rescaling suggested by Brenner (2004). The designation of cities, and thus actually new cities creation as means of developmentalist solutions translates the perception of cities as motors of economic growth through captial accumulation and thus source of competitivenes.

The issue of new (satellite) cities is, in a sense, a "colonisation" of the national territory, of an internal colonisation, and they reveal important notions of the processes and instruments that are engaged in the creation of these new "colonies". The term (social) geography uses for this phenomenon is the "last frontier" or the *front pionnier* (we see much more usage if this term in French) and in the contemporary world, it is linked to agricultural land expansion into the tropical forests of South America and Africa. And even though the parallel between building new cities in Korea and taming the "savage" jungles might seem far-fetched, they are both examples of "conquest" of the national territory for its (more intensive) economic exploitation. And as such, they present crucial questions on the creation of new inhabited spaces.

The first important aspect that we could have easily grasped from our case studies description is the problem of timing. Not withstanding the possible presence of the private developer, the new cities are an issue of public goods and public services provision and implementation. So there are two important interrelated questions: the scope of infrastructure and when to which extent the infrastructure should be put in place. Again, we see that the new cities present an important challenge in terms of their temporality. We have seen in our cases the problems of

public transport provision (intervals, connectedness), the importance of housing (perceived quality, if implemented for the move-in or not), hospitals and schooling (perceived quality of teaching, eventually after-school activities etc.) And the question was not only whether to implement such and such infrastructure but also when and to what extent: in the Sejong case, the issue of whether can be related to the non-implementation of the bullet train all the way down to the city. Consequently, the issue of when and to what extent relates to the BRT: how many lines and in which intervals considering the still low occupancy and thus ridership, having to subsidise the BRT.

Because the conquest of the national territory is done, as any other colonisation process, through incentives and compensations to recompense for the eventual hardships of participation in the *front pionnier*. And this not only for the firms – we have evoked the importance of the firms to invest for the success of the developmental state earlier in this section – but also for the new "settlers".

This is one of the oldest issues in the politics and policy-making; we can find flourishing examples of the national territory colonisation through new cities already in the European Middle-Ages. We can trace both examples of green-field master planning of either new satellite cities (New Town in Prague founded in 1348) or completely new cities (ex. České Budějovice – Czech Budweiss – in the south of Bohemia founded in 1265) and villages.

Moreover, the medieval state already detained the power of local championship designation, the so-called "privileges" such as the right to brew beer (very important one, granted for example to the previously mentioned Czech Budweiss), to organise a market at a certain day etc. These championships enabled the medieval cities, especially the newly founded or newly expanded ones to divert the merchant routes through them and to attract the capital flows[133] - a situation that seems to reproduce with looking for comparative advantage in creating a champion dedicated to a specific domain cluster creation (high tech industry, construction, medical R&D etc.) as we see with the new cities of Sejong and Songdo in Korea.

[133] We would like to be cautious with the positive spillovers because the rural-urban migration was a much more delicate matter with the existence of serfdom.

And there is this question on the incentives and compensations not only for the firms but also for the settlers. If we come back to our Middle Age example, the usual instruments were free land and a period of tax exemption in exchange for a completion of the new city within a certain delay. It was then similar with pushing the West frontier in the conquest for colonising the Indian territories in North America. For the new Korean cities, the issue remains still the same: how to make them attractive enough so firms, institutions and people would want to settle in?

In the previous parts, we have identified the cleaner environment and cheaper rents as clear pull factors of these new cities for the future residents. We have then noted mixed, more subjective stance towards the satisfaction with services and leisure possibilities. Last, we have observed the importance of personal networks and the likelihood of family separation due to perceived low quality schooling and fear for job relocation in the case of Sejong. This has played a major role of dissatisfaction and regrets among a part of the inhabitants, the civil servants whose jobs were relocated there – a case which we have decided to consider as a forced relocation, and we have suggested that this part of the inhabitants might not feel compensated enough for their participation in the balanced regional growth.

Clearly, the problem for the state is also simply what to provide not only when and to which extent to provide as a state and what should remain only in the form of incentive: we have evoked this issue in relation to our cases in the previous sections. This is the issue of the scope of the "city" the inhabitants make as the Gale CIO said, which margin to leave to the social production of the space, in other words the new cities raise important questions in policy co-production not only in the agenda setting, but also in the implementation process. It is important for the Korean new cities as within the rather top-down type of governance in Korea, the public consultation for agenda setting does not seem to be present (even though public contestation is).

The last but not least big issue stemming from our case studies is the sustainability of the respective new cities. We have noted that both Songdo and Sejong have been designed to incorporate some principles of sustainable development: alternative transportation, large green spaces, carbon efficient

buildings and the ubicomp technologies. In other words, they are presented by the developers as embodying the state-of-the-art of modern, sustainable planning. We could even say that they are attempting to be the *front pionnier* not only spatially, bur also in terms of technology.

Despite possible criticisms to the conception of sustainable development and green growth as they are currently accepted and implemented, we must note that the sustainability is a true political issue. Consequently, with the international acceptance of the importance of sustainability (Rio Conference etc.) and rising public awareness, the application of state-of-the-art instruments for achieving sustainability remains an important tool for peer recognition and state legitimization. Bluntly said, the policy-makers have to be seen *trying*.

As we have noted, the implemented principles of sustainable development have, however, produced mixed, paradoxically looking outcomes. It is most strikingly visible in relation to public transport in three points:

- First, some of the alternative infrastructure has been implemented only partially, in a restricted area of the city: the water taxis and bike rentals confined to the Songdo Central Park, thus not offering a full-fledge transport option.
- Second, the size of the projects directly clashes with the principle of walkable neighbourhoods they try to put in place. Despite the pedestrian infrastructure, the citizens have reported the distances to be simply too big for them to walk around the city.
- Third, the combination of impossible walkability and perceived insufficient public transport provision increased the car use and traffic jams despite a meticulous design of separate BRT routes in Sejong.

We would like to explain these outcomes by the fact that the sustainable policies are still in a phase of intense experimentation. And if we look at the so-called best-case practices, we can identify two different types of places:

First, there are big cities who, by various urban renewal and revitalization policies implement some elements recognised as sustainable. If we take the example of Paris for more simplicity, these would be the introduction of bike-sharing scheme (*Vélib'*), building retrofitting, transformation of some lines into a BRT, and brownfield redevelopment both *intra muros* and in the close suburbs. Similarly, the City of Seoul engaged in BRT implementation, building retrofitting loans, intensified solar panel installation etc. These are cases of incremental changes to existing infrastructure, with a time horizon for achieving the sustainability goals that do never comprise the totality of the city.

Second, we see more comprehensive sustainability schemes, attempts to grasp the totality of the area with the aforementioned green neighbourhoods, the "éco-quartiers" such as ZAC Clichy-Batignolles in Paris of the Hammarby Sjostad in Stockholm. They tend to boast the whole "package" of sustainable solutions implemented simultaneously: truck-free garbage collection, large green spaces, walkability and "zero-carbon" buildings; a package that strikingly resembles Songdo and Sejong. However, what differentiates our case studies from the "green neighbourhoods" is the scale. The new Korean cities are trying to implement on the scale of the city policies that have previously been tested on the neighbourhood scale, with a limited space and a hinterland dependency on the rest of the city they partake in.

So, the new sustainable cities in Korea – and consequently elsewhere – face a double challenge: how to adapt and innovate policies that have been tested either in isolation (as incremental changes in big cities) or on a smaller urban unit. Moreover, the adaptation challenge lies also in the question of scope and scale, but in the form itself: we see that some of the sustainable policies are adapted to certain topography of the city. For instance walkability or bike-sharing work well on smaller scale and/or in mostly flat areas, characteristics which some cities desiring for more sustainability do not share, Istanbul, to quote one striking example.

8. **Conclusion**

In this paper, we have focused on two new master-planned cities in South Korea, Songdo IBD and Sejong Self-Administering City. We have studied them from a bottom-up approach using secondary sources, mostly newspaper coverage and expat blogs, in order to identify the outcomes and lessons from these new cities as developmental solutions.

Ous study has identified four types of outcomes: institutional, citizen quality of life and wellbeing, market-related and environmental. We have then explained the main trends through three variables: the competitiveness struggle and the nature of these cities as economic incentives, the diffusion of sustainable urban planning solutions and the importance of their distance from the capital.

In the discussion, we have related our case studies to fundamental issues of urban planning, public policy-making and public policy analysis. We have shown that the Korean developmental alliance might be shifting towards a partnership with the international capital instead of its simple dismantling at the expense of market oriented economy. Moreover, we have suggested a rescaling of the Korean developmental state towards city regions following the argument of Neil Brenner (2004) on the European statehood rescaling. We have argued that our two cities are a result of reconciliation attempts between international championship designation (Songdo) and a move towards more balanced regional growth (Sejong).

Then, we have paralleled our case studies of master-planned cities to the *front pionnier* colonisation of national territory and have evoked the importance of incentives and compensations for not only the firms but also for future settlers, most notably in the Sejong "forced" relocation of civil servants. Last but not least, we have used our case studies to demonstrate the challenges in implementing some of the state-of-the-art sustainability solutions in a large-scale green-field new master-planned cities, a context different from where these solutions first emerged.

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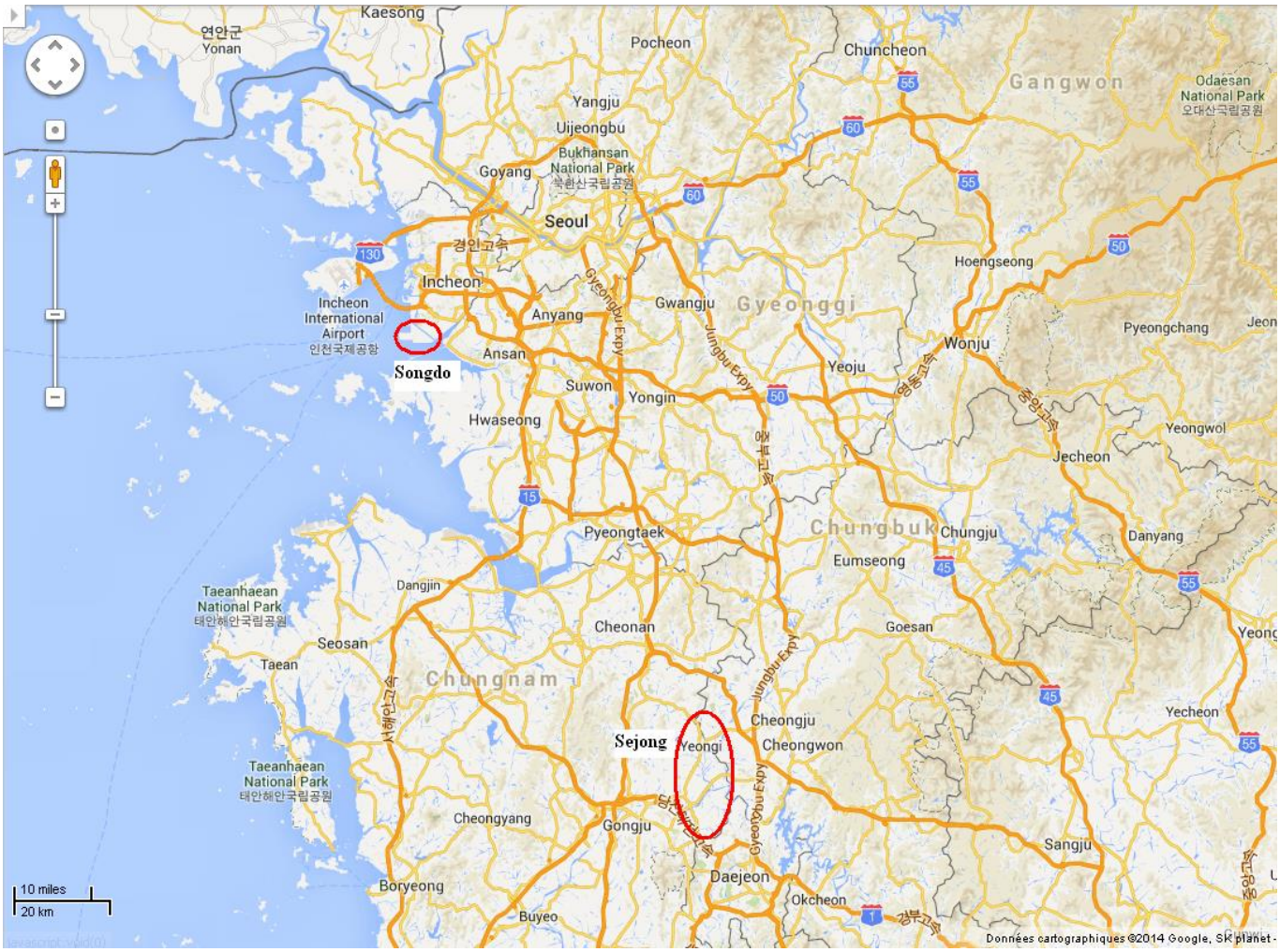
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Annexes

Sejong and Songdo in Korea



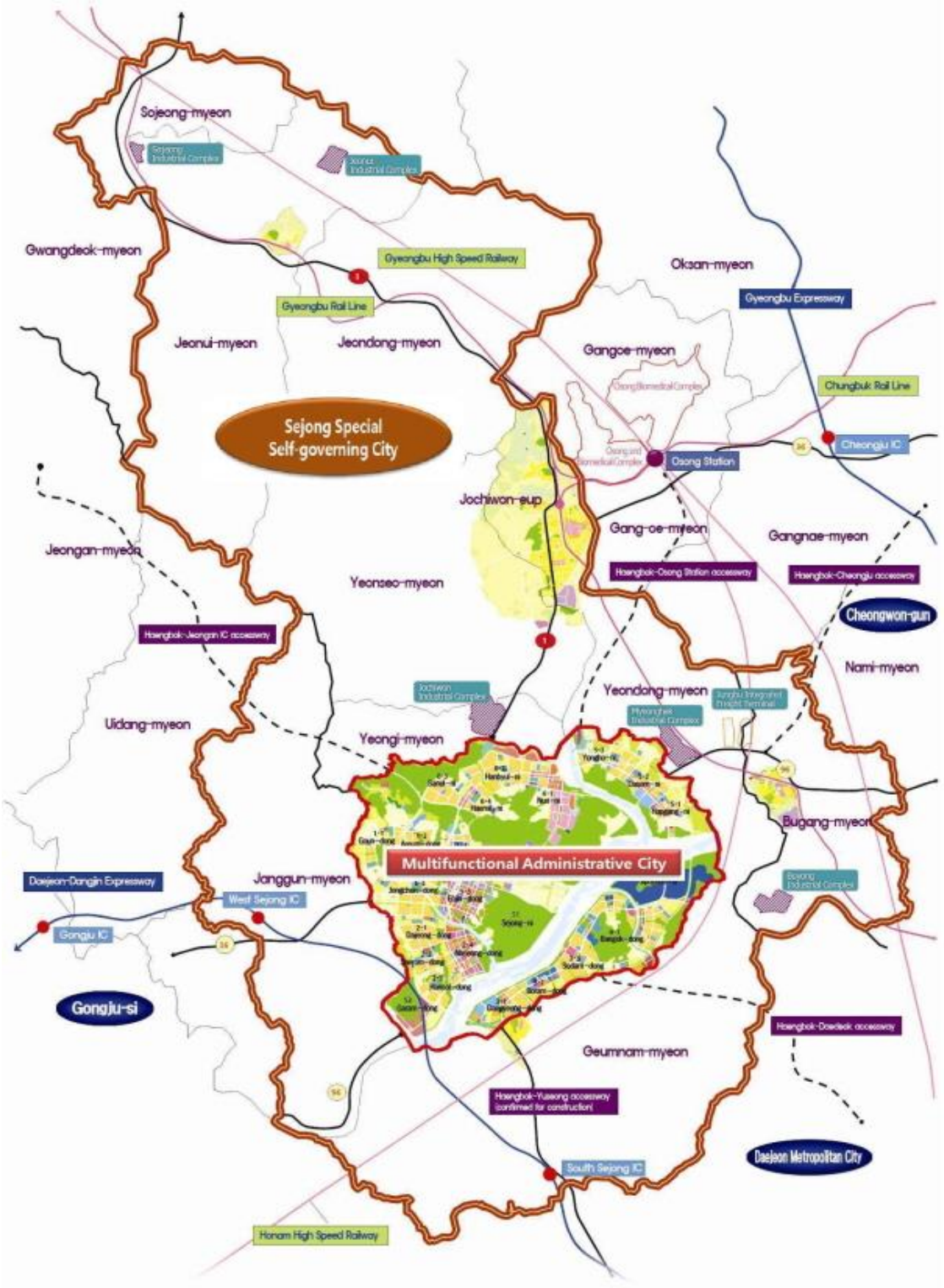
Source: GoogleMaps, Songdo and Sejong added by the author

Songdo Tour Map



Source: KORCOS (October 26, 2012)

Sejong City Map



Source: MAACA