



## Becoming Entrepreneurial Seoulite

- Speaker:** **Dr Mihye Cho**  
Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences,  
Singapore University of Technology and Design
- Chair:** **A/P Tracey Skelton**  
Department of Geography, NUS
- Date/Time:** Friday 12 April, 3.30pm
- Place:** Earth Lab (AS2 #02-03), Department of Geography, NUS

### Abstract

What kinds of logic guide individuals in the engagement of new urban realities in rapidly liberalized Seoul - politically, culturally, and economically?

During the 1990's, Hongdae became widely known as a cool place associated with discourses on alternative music, independent labels, and club culture. Today, Hongdae is well known for its youth culture and nightlife, as well as its gentrification. Yet the seminar is about neither subculture nor gentrification in Seoul. Recent research on Korean culture approaches the K-wave phenomenon from the perspectives of cultural consumption, media analysis, and cultural management and policy. Meanwhile, studies on Seoul have centered on its transformation as a global, creative city. Rather than examining the K-wave or the city itself, Mihye Cho explores the experience of living through the city-in-transition. She focuses on the relationship between the "ideology that justifies engagement in capitalism" and "subjectification processes." The seminar aims to understand the project to institutionalize a cultural district in Hongdae as a demonstration of the coevolution of ideologies and citizenship in a society undergoing rapid liberalization—politically, culturally, and economically. Mihye Cho draws on Weber's concept of "the spirit of capitalism" on the formation of a new economic agency focusing on the reconfiguration of meanings, and seeks to capture a transformative moment detailing when and how capitalism requests a different spirit and lifestyle of its participants. By juxtaposing the cultural turn and cultural/creative city-making, she interrogates the formation of new citizen subjectivity, namely the enterprising self, in post-Fordist Seoul.

### About the Speaker



Mihye Cho is an assistant professor at Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Singapore University of Technology and Design.

Cho is interested in the transformative processes in complex institutions. Her current research focuses on the relationship between citizen subjectivity and public policy, including cultural, urban, and aging policies. Her books include *Entrepreneurial Seoulite: Culture and Subjectivity in Hongdae, Seoul* (Michigan University Press, 2019) and *Creative Ageing Cities* (co-edited with Chong, Routledge, 2018).

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