

CULTURE-LED URBAN REGENERATION IN SOUTH KOREA

by

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The University of Sheffield

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Abbreviations

CCEA	Culture City of East Asia
CCIPF	Cheongju Culture Industry Promotion Foundation
CURTC	Cheongju Urban Regeneration Trust Centre
ECOC	European Capital of Culture
JURC	Jungang Urban Regeneration Committee
KRIHS	Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements
KURC	Korea Urban Regeneration Centre
LCP	Liveable Community Projects
MOLIT	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport
NURIOs	National Urban Regeneration Intermediary Organisations
SAUR	Special Act on Urban Regeneration
UKCOC	UK City of Culture
URC	Urban Regeneration Centre

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Over the last 30 years, as awareness of urban development has shifted from merely using land sites to deeper spheres such as local economies, social, and environmental priorities, there has been a growing interest in the use of culture and the arts for urban regeneration. A number of positive impacts have emanated from the culture and arts-based approach. For instance, it can increase the consumption of arts and culture in society, be a source of jobs and investment, boost cities' images, build the confidence and skills of local residents, tackle social exclusion, and help community cohesion. In this sense, culture-led urban regeneration schemes have been an important part of tackling urban decline planning in South Korea. A number of local government authorities have invested in cultural infrastructures and programmes to encourage culture-led urban regeneration. Therefore, this book explores the role of culture and arts in regeneration schemes with explanations of the urban regeneration history, recent policies, and practices. To prove the contributions of culture and arts to urban regeneration, social aspects including community development, changes of living or working environment, and personal improvement (e.g. mental health, cultural perspective, and personal skills) – these aspects are regarded as social regeneration in this book – are emphasised. Particularly, it seeks to examine how a year-long cultural event can play an influential role in aspects of social regeneration within declining areas to identify the specific contributions of culture and arts to regeneration. It focuses on the 2015 Culture City of East Asia (hereafter, CCEA) event as a case-study – which commenced in 2014 as a year-long event in small and medium-sized towns of South Korea, China and Japan, and initially followed the aims of the European Capital of Culture event. On the basis of these aims, the key questions of this book are 'how culture-based initiatives support urban regeneration scheme?', and 'have culture-led approaches created social regeneration opportunities?'. To answer those questions, this book comments on the relationships between culture-led urban regeneration initiatives in South Korea and uses a number of local communities' opinions to prove the contribution of culture-led approach to social regeneration impacts. This book is inspired by Landry, Greene, Matarasso and Bianchini, 1996; Matarasso, 1997; Evans and Shaw, 2004; Garcia, Melville and Cox, 2010; and Ennis and Douglass, 2011 and is based on the PhD thesis of the author submitted in 2018 to the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom.

1.1 Debates about Culture and Arts in Urban Regeneration Initiatives

In recent years, the role of culture has been considered to be of unprecedented significance to urban development and has proved to be a means by which to resolve political and socio-economic problems within urban areas (Yudice, 2003). Culture-led regeneration has the distinctive characteristic of integrating cultural elements within urban strategies as culture and embraces design, artworks, cultural activity, music and architecture (Vickery, 2007). As a catalyst of regeneration, the culture-led approach has positively influenced numerous sectors by, for instance, as boosting local economies, improving environmental quality, enhancing community development, and conserving traditional sources of community and local sustainability. This book focuses especially deeply on social regeneration opportunities in which the use of arts and culture “can be a primary empowerment tool utilised by regeneration and neighbourhood renewal practitioners in order to achieve wider regeneration aims based on educational attainment, health, crime and social cohesion” (Northall, n.d., p.3.). Additionally, various art classes or performances such as music, craft, dance, drawing programmes, and so on can play a tacit role in enhancing an individual’s literacy and social communication skills, as well as facilitating community cohesion between ages and different cultural backgrounds.

Amongst various approaches within culture-led urban regeneration initiatives, the role of cultural events has attracted growing attention from academics and policymakers over the last 30 years. As cultural event strategies have become key motivations for urban regeneration, their significance has contributed to cultural, economic and social regeneration. As an example, the successful transition of Glasgow in the United Kingdom from a declining industrial city to the European City of Culture (hereafter ECOC) in a YEAR has inspired many local authorities and central governments to utilise cultural events as key drivers of culture-led regeneration. The award of ECOC creates substantial economic and social benefits. Specifically, it is believed that cultural events can stimulate citizen participation to improve cultural provision and create collaborative networks between people within other cultural sectors. Moreover, the positive contributions of cultural events to regeneration may include place promotion, tourism, the creation of new physical and social infrastructure, enhanced employment and training opportunities, increased property values, greater community cohesion, the re-use of redundant buildings, and the use of arts and culture to enhance and improve personal or community well-being.

There are, however, a wide range of tensions between the priorities in culture-led urban regeneration approaches. One notable argument is that many cultural elements within urban regeneration processes have become commercialised, with attention focusing significantly on economic and physical results which bring limited benefits to disadvantaged groups and communities. Overt focus on

commercial and private sponsors which can attract large audiences and inward investments may spoil indigenous identities and generate inequality amongst local people and businesses. Some large-sized cultural events enthusiastically pursue selling cities as places for inward investment rather than seeing such events as celebrations of local culture and the life experiences of local citizens. Economic factors are prioritised over unique cultural strategies tailored to local characteristics.

Furthermore, an overtly economic-focused approach can neglect the need for explicit area-based social interventions. The welfare and economic well-being of residents and small businesses, as well as the cohesion of communities, can be excluded. Further controversies over culture-led urban regeneration are discussed in Chapters 2 and 4.

Despite the complicated features of culture-led regeneration initiatives, the use of arts and culture within urban regeneration policies is becoming more important in South Korea. From the 1990s onwards, arts and culture have acted as a catalyst for city marketing policies through the hosting of various local festivals, cultural activities, and the creation of grand-scale cultural facilities. The use of cultural policy and planning has become a key tool of urban development in the metropolitan cities of South Korea. In the early 2000s, the use of culture within urban regeneration started to be expanded and was associated with shifts away from large-scale projects at national or city level to medium and small-sized cultural attempts within local communities. Numerous programmes including festivals, education programmes, and art projects were officially institutionalised by the South Korean central government in 2005, as a means by which to tackle the social problems of declining areas pertaining to dwelling, welfare, work, environment, health, safety, culture, landscape and transportation. This represented an attempt to broaden the impacts of cultural interventions, rather than such programmes merely focusing on economics. In addition, as the top-down approach has significantly proliferated the cultural context of South Korea, bottom-up strategies and the promotion of residents' participation has been actively implemented as a further mechanism by which to address the urban and social problems of disadvantaged areas; discussed in subsequent chapters.

However, there are still ongoing controversies regarding economic-centred cultural interventions such as the contention that they merely build up colossal cultural infrastructures, meaningless mural painting for attracting tourists, inappropriate establishment of a Korea-pop and drama centre in the local areas. These actions focused on economic development, have been criticised for creating result-oriented bureaucracy management with significant tax leakage, the interruption of building construction, the destruction of local characteristics and significant commercialization of culture. Also, the social outcomes including community development, conservation of local historical culture, cultural

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