

Research article

The Development of Citizen's Cultural Movement and Applied Theater: Rebuilding and Expanding the Community of Living Culture¹

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Abstracts:

In Korea, citizen's movement has always been deeply related to social, economic, and cultural phenomena. While Korea had seen significant events, including the colonization by Japan and the Korean War, 1994 became the watershed year with the coming of the Asian financial crisis. When local communities started disintegrating, the economic development, subsequent residential reconstruction, and social disparities were singled out as the common primary culprits. The citizen's cultural movement in Korea happened as an effort to promote citizen's mind and their values; the *Saemaoul* (New Village) Movement is one example, an effort to make people live well together, as any human being should.

Meanwhile, the state policy was about the external 'reconstruction,' expediting the deconstruction of communities. They would rather destroy than rebuild communities.

By the 21st century, the cultural industry started using pure arts and culture. If the past citizen's movement usually brought about a change in citizenship, the 21st century saw an 'expansion' of the movement based on citizen participation, in which the community of living culture spreads. This has become a type of citizen's cultural movement, and the introduction and development of the applied theater require a new analysis from the perspective of cultural contents.

1) This study is built on a previous paper titled "The Direction and Meaning of Seoul Metropolitan Government's Policy for the Community of Living Culture" presented at the 2019 Fall Symposium hosted by Human Contents of Association. A part of the previous paper was used for revisions and additions.

Keywords: Applied Theater citizen's cultural movement, community, cultural community, a community of living culture

1. Introduction

In Korea, citizen's movement has always been deeply related to social, economic, and cultural phenomena. While Korea had seen significant events, including the colonization by Japan and the Korean War, 1994 became the watershed year with the coming of the Asian financial crisis. When local communities started disintegrating, the economic development, subsequent residential reconstruction, and social disparities were singled out as the common primary culprits. The citizen's cultural movement in Korea happened as an effort to promote citizen's mind and their values; the *Saemaeul* (New Village) Movement is one example, an effort to make people live well together, as any human being should. Meanwhile, the state policy was about the external 'reconstruction,' expediting the deconstruction of communities. Amid the circumstances, civic groups were formed by a goal, focused on locality and the dimension of mind. Thus the Korean citizen's cultural movement was led by such groups, focusing on citizenship, ethics, participation, and practical actions[1].

While the 1990s saw the movements focus on acting out the changes in citizenship, the 2000s saw the cultural industry using arts and culture to play a role for urban restoration. In the 2000s, programs were developed to foster experts and citizen advocates, 'expanding' to build the community of living culture across the nation. In the case of Seoul, the trend developed into a form of citizen's cultural movement. In this context, it is necessary to analyze the roles and functions of the applied theater in cultural contents as the theater was introduced and developed.

The word 'community' has its origin in the Latin *communitas*, which means that people do something valuable together. To move on to an advanced society in the future, a community should not be constrained by rupture. There should be a possibility of a 'global community[2]' or a community approached by citizen's non-profit groups.

However, in many countries, including the United States, communal instincts are now exercised more to distance or defend local communities than to create diverse cultures or unite them. Today, we tend to use our communities to protect ourselves against different sectors of our country instead of pursuing shared interests of a global community[3]. Such short-sighted actions to protect a country's communities can expedite their destruction in reality. Therefore, we should promote the understanding of community to move away from the closed protectionism. We should move toward an open society, taking advantage of various types of citizen's movement. It is a priority we need to resolve as a global community[4].

It is urgent that the citizen who will dominate the future advanced society, especially the knowledge workers, should be able to make a new community in their individual communities. Not the for-profit society made of individuals and businesses, but the social institutions, including non-profit and non-governmental organizations, should create a community that all the people need[5].

Before 1994, Korea needed a change in cultural citizenship as the country's citizenship had been deeply related to survival. The users of cultural contents at the time had a very different tendency during that period. By the 2000s, cultural citizenship had been established, and the current policies present a direction for further advancement into a citizen's cultural movement based on voluntary participation.

2. Rebuilding and Expanding the Community Through the Arts and Culture Education

1) 20th Century: Making of the Sense of Community by Citizen's Cultural Movement

The citizen's movement in Korea has been deeply associated with social, economic, and cultural phenomena, including the colonization by Japan, the Korean War, and the Asian financial crisis. There were national policies to cope with those events, but they commonly went together with economic goals, focusing on external 'reconstruction' without any distinct cultural characteristics. They would rather destroy than rebuild communities. In particular, the disintegration of community was particularly evident in Seoul and other big cities where populations and buildings were dense than in rural villages[6]. Individuals in the city were intent on their survival than the issues of their community. Community is a concept that indicates the units of an organism connected to a locality, and it is a group of people residing in a particular area trying to satisfy social and psychological needs[7].

The primary reason for the disintegration is the economic development based on urban construction and the residential form based on apartment complexes, which entails no exchanges or participation among citizens. Thus it must have facilitated the destruction of the traditional way of life[8].

As the urban development of the 20th century led to the disintegration of the community, it became necessary to 'restore the sense of community[9]' to implement the citizen's cultural movement. Since a community is a social group with a vertical and a horizontal axis of locality and spiritual dimension, the activities of a social organization should differ according to the community's goal (such as learning, environment, religion, and life). Citizens are asked to cultivate their competences and play a decisive role and function for their region. In this context, a social (collective) group means an organization of people gathered for a specific purpose, such as religion, leisure, study, friendship, politics, profit, civic goals, and local interests[10]. These groups must have had a significant impact on the growth of local organizations as they gradually developed expertise. The model of citizen groups in the 20th century was limited to restoring the traditional way in relative sectors and subjects. One example is a conference titled *Creation of Community Culture and Citizenship*. The goal of the conference was a citizenship education organized by the Department of Social Studies Education at Seoul National University. On this occasion, Ko Sun-cheol, in "The Need and Significance of the Movement for Community Culture (1994)," emphasized a differential approach by a locality for selecting the subject and implementing the movement for community culture. Ko limited the subject of the movement to people faced with challenges due to a disability, aging, illness, accident, unemployment, and other reasons—that is, only to help people who cannot resolve the challenges on their own.

Around 1994, the citizen's movement groups in Korea were proposing specific alternatives, to live well together and as a human being should, focusing on the awareness, ethics, participation, and practical actions of citizens. The *Saemaeul* Movement was one example[11]. The following show some of the programs proposed for the implementation: "Development of a Model for Subjects in Community Culture Movement (Lee Mi-na, 1994); "An Implementation Model for Community Culture Movement (Lee Seung-jong, 1994)"; "Creating a Sense of Community and Citizenship Education (Jo Yeong-dal, 1994)." As the examples show, the suggested programs aimed to induce a change in cultural citizenship.

The trend seems to have been driven by the economic challenges at the time, as well as a need to shift the overall atmosphere in Korean society. It was necessary to change the national perception or culture regarding living well, which was deeply connected to the political scene. The policy trend of the times prioritized the functions of social control and integration among the people and developed relevant programs to maintain and improve such functions accordingly.

Peter Drucker suggested six types of participation to create an ideal community, which can be summarized as the following: First, build a web of relations; second, get engaged in a social movement; third, be a volunteer; fourth, spend one-tenth of your time for volunteer works; fifth, set a goal; sixth, put into actions what you have learned. Also, ideal communities show some common elements: one standard, principle-centered goodness; vision and direction; purpose, mission, and unity; and diversity and economic equality, or a community without the poor[12]. Having the elements in mind, we can see how the citizen's movement in Korea before the new millennium focused on changing citizenship in program development. Moving on to the 2000s, people-focused participation began building on the results of the previous citizen's movement. The new tendency started off as the exchanges among people (or groups). Today, we discuss the community based on its disintegration just as we did in the 20th century. However, application and usage are different. As local authorities in charge of cultural promotion apply the ideas and implement programs for the community of living culture, village-making, or various clubs[13], the support is increasingly given to individuals as well as to groups. In this context, the meaning of the community has gone through a big shift.

Ko Sun-cheol notes that the word 'community' is frequently mentioned when the society is insecure, and the values among its members are chaotic. In particular, as the sense of community vanishes together with the disintegration of traditional communities[14], the national values get so distorted in the process that people consider their and their family's survival as the only priority. The survival-first idea diversifies hierarchy further and makes jobs intensely specialized. With such change, people put their own life first before any public life, ultimately moving into collective egoism. Korea's economic growth entails the disharmony among classes, disproportionate development among (or within) different regions, the rich-and-poor gap, increase in crime, corruption and other social disparities, and spreading sense of relative deprivation[15]. While the concentration of the population in the city is a global tendency, regional productivity tends to decrease. According to *The Power of Place*, there are many discussions on regional or spatial allocation of resources with its social and cultural influences in mind. The discussions and local policies aim to reallocate the resources to disperse power and spread the citizen's movement[16]. Today's contents-planning is happening in the context of urban restoration, in which citizens can have the roles and functions with the power to grow naturally.

2) 21st Century: Citizen's Cultural Movement as Everyday Life and the Community of Living Culture

In the 21st century, a Korean citizen's cultural movement has expanded the scope of application as cultural contents. The development of the movement itself is based on process-based citizen's participation. The growing trend at present is not just about the individual participation of local residents but about the multilateral exchanges among individuals or groups.

Then the community of living culture has evolved to become a citizen's cultural movement, suggesting a new possibility. There is one case that shows such evolution: in 2016, the Living Culture Community Agency was

established, but it later changed its name to the Regional Culture & Development Agency (RCDA). While the earlier focus was on the development of arts and culture education programs, it became consequently about the change in citizenship to restore the disintegrated traditional communities.

The policy implementation was similar to what was applied to existing communities, but there were improvements. The results can be found in the initiation of various clubs through arts and culture education in the city and in rural villages as well as village-making. In producing cultural contents, the model for the traditional community materialized as the community's restoration rather than a change in cultural citizenship. However, today's form of cultural content is a process-based output produced by local residents rather than a change in citizenship; the contents and forms are 'expanding' in the city and rural villages.

At the early stage, civic groups played a central role in leading the cultural movement in the holistic and everyday life of citizens. They focused on promoting cultural communities in arts and culture education in the citizen's everyday life. More recently, there are various applications in many areas other than pure arts and culture. For instance, the applied theater appeared as learning programs at an institution at first, but it has evolved to the dimension of 'job creation,' connecting the programs with field professionals (artists). From the perspective of productivity, people started to look at the applied theater as belonging to leisure. The applied theater then kept producing the civilian cultural activities and contents, which, in turn, became deeply connected to festivals and led to spontaneous cultural activities and production by local citizens.

While the cultural industry had to struggle to obtain consents for pure artworks from the artists to use and apply in the past, there came civilian cultural activities and productivity to the scene based on citizen's survival and labor. Besides, artists and citizens participate in building a global cultural city these days, Seoul being one example of such a growing trend[17]. All the changes promote citizen's competences while playing a central role and function in rebuilding the city.

The following explains the concept of the world of everyday life:

The world of everyday life means a world both fragmented and aggregate: it is fragmented into leisure, production, family, population, neighborhood, relationship, and many other elements, but at the same time is a sum total of them. The world of everyday life is where both production and consumption take place, a place of labor and leisure at once. The world of everyday life is where the interactions among countless people take place. While there are direct face-to-face relations among families, neighbors, colleagues, there are indirect ones through mass media and other means, too. A myriad of social interactions happens here...[18]

Habitus is a term referring to a system of structure that makes and reproduces socially constituted perceptions and behaviors in such a manner[19]. It can be found in everyday activities reproduced in various regions.

The Regional Culture & Development Agency (RCDA) defines the community of living culture as follows: It is a community in which residents use voluntary activities of living culture in their everyday life, using culture as the medium. The residents take the initiative to enjoy a cultural life and promote the style of life and the extent of happiness on their own[20]. A community is an organization of people who gather in various areas of society to do something valuable together. Individuals under a shared goal use their leisure to make diverse approaches to a happy life.

Meanwhile, Lim Fan talks about the sense of belonging and separate spaces in defining a community. According to Lim, first, there is a community of family that shares a sense of belonging and solidarity. Second, there is a community of blood relations. Third, there is a local community (such as city, rural village, hamlet, and small town). Besides, a local community is a unit of the group of residents; it is where mutual trust and solidarity arise in a specific space, based on which individual and group interactions take place. In detail, they can be classified by the type of city (urban or rural) and by the driving force (the public or the private)[21].

While the early applied theater was mostly led by the public or non-profit groups, the driving force gradually became the private as they spread. While the applied theater is led both by the public and the citizen's theater companies in urban cities, the applied theater companies in rural cities are primarily made by the public. The latter will be covered later, but the work of the private will not be included in this study.

In rural and urban cities, different policy approaches have been used to integrate the industrial, humanities, and human resources based on local cultural tourism, while striving to develop local stories. There should be a virtuous circle that combines the cultural movement and practical experiences for citizens. The RCDA is now a part of such effort as the policy spreads to build a nationwide citizen's cultural movement.

3. The Applied Theater: Pursuing a Community of Living Culture

1) Concept and Development of the Applied Theater

Today, the Applied Theatre refers to educational and social efforts in the theater, which is about meeting diverse objects in different spaces[22].

The birth of the applied theater was an essential part of the history of the European theater. It began as the French Revolution successfully broke down the traditional hierarchical society, and a new class of bourgeoisie emerged. The new citizen-class society of France saw the growing participation of the citizen in economic and political sectors. The importance of the cultural movement by citizens was heightened in these circumstances[23]. Thus the applied theater has been connected deeply to the citizen's movement from the beginning.

The applied theater first appeared as a reaction to the traditional theater. Today, it is established as a new paradigm in the theatrical scene. Some of the academic institutions and journals in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have changed the name of the relevant discipline. With the need for a change in citizenship, the genre gradually built a deeper connection with education.

Meanwhile, in the Korean theatrical scenes and universities, the applied theater moved away from simple appreciation and grew with multifaceted approaches (theatrical works on social, educational, participatory, and therapeutic levels)[24].

The applied theater includes all theatrical activities in various educational theaters. They are defined as the activities of non-profit organizations, creating the values for a community. Their various cultural activities and contents production is meaningful as we review the direction of the community.

In addition to Seoul, other cities such as Incheon, Chuncheon, Daejeon, and Daegu ran the applied theater classes, in some instances recruiting citizen-actors and enabling a theater production. While the job creation by those programs was limited to professionals (artists) at the early stage, by 2019, the scope was expanded to local residents, as evidenced by the 2019 Sooner or Later Project in Gangjin-gun (*gun* is a Korean administrative

division), Jeollabuk-do (*do* is a Korean province). While the previous programs were about using the education to change the mindset of local residents, Gangjin's program was more about connecting the applied theater to the urban regeneration of Jeolla-do, ultimately creating jobs for profit[25]. Such production of the applied theater enables professionals and citizens to use local resources and experience something valuable together.

While the citizen's cultural movement in the past called for a change in citizenship, the more recent movement is closely related to the rebuilding of communities through resident participation, which is closely associated with everyday life. In the 20th century, programs using arts and culture education focused on those who were relatively weak, unable to participate in the society, uneducated, or unable to enjoy arts and culture in general. However, in the 21st century, the applied theater not only can promote the local economic and cultural competences but also can make use of pure arts as cultural contents. The cultural industry is using the theater by citizen's participation based on communication, exchanges, and collaboration.

The cities around the world are making efforts in the cultural industry to use arts, culture, and education so that they can connect them to the urban regeneration of their regions. In this light, the allocation of resources has become increasingly important. Human, physical, ecological, cultural, and other resources are currently concentrated in the city. In each locality, the primary goal today is the subjective participation by citizens as well as consequent cultural activities and production. However, as long as the theater remained in the scope of pure arts, the cultural industry had difficulty in applying it through resident participation.

According to Mun Byeong-ho, the application to the cultural industry has been belated because pure arts and culture tended to stand aloof from anything of commercial and consumptive nature. For the industrial application, it is necessary to overcome such a concept. Also, Mun argues that the scope of arts and culture should include other elements such as design and festival[26]. It is necessary because the theatrical works of a smaller scale, as opposed to the conventional theater, must take root, grow, and spread systematically[27].

Meanwhile, the term 'applied theater' has not been fully discussed to cover diverse phenomena, as the discussions seem to have focused only on the concept[28]. Although academia has raised issues consistently regarding the misuse of the term, the introduction and development of the applied theater in Korea continued. Meanwhile, in 'making the theater everyday life' in various venues (places), an increasing number of groups started to participate. On the surface, it is difficult to tell certain cultural activities and contents productions from commercial activities. On the other hand, there are positive results focusing on the therapeutic aspect as well as the enjoyment of culture. It will be discussed in more detail in the later section.

Amid the division in phenomena, the GyeongGi Cultural Foundation (GGCF) and the Korea Arts & Culture Education Service invited Philip Taylor, professor of NYU Steinhardt in 2013, who emphasized the needs to move away from the conceptual restraint of the applied theater and to foster cultural activists in a local community of living culture. Such direction of the applied theater asked cultural contents to promote local job creation as well as the expansion beyond club- or village-making. It now had to be something on the national agenda. In 2015, Korea became a member of the World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) to resolve urgent issues of the cities were facing. In this effort, the resolution of urban problems focuses on urban regeneration, in which arts and culture professionals work together with citizens. The starting point was likely the WCCF, which enabled the exchange of information and cooperation in cultural policies. Launched in 2012 in the United Kingdom, the WCCF has 35 cities from 25 countries around the world in its membership[29].

At present, the research results on the applied theater are only in policy reports. The prior studies are all by this author (Kim Kum-mi), who is subsidized by the National Research Foundation of Korea for three years of July 2018 and June 2020. My studies include: “Sustainable Cultural Activities and Contents Production by Citizens: A Case of Seoul Citizen’s Theater Festival (2018)”;

“Thinking How the Citizen’s Participation in the Applied Theater Has Changed: A Case of the Applied Theater Class by the Seoul Metropolitan Theater (2019)”;

“Sustainable Cultural Activities and Contents Production by Citizens: The Case of the Citizen’s Theater Festival by the Seoul Metropolitan Theater (2019)”;

“Sustainability of the Citizen’s Theater Festival by the Seoul Metropolitan Theater: Based on the Cultural Storytelling Methods of Canada’s Stratford Festival (2019)”;

“The Direction and Meaning of Seoul Metropolitan Government’s Policy on the Community of Living Culture: A Case of Applied Theater (2019).” However, aside from this author’s works, not many so studies are published on this subject. In addition, there is the difficulty of securing relevant materials and data as the persons in charge change each year. Therefore this study has its limitations in that it only describes the differences between the past and the present. Taking a step further is a task for future research.

2)Seoul Metropolitan Government: Meaning of Citizen’s Cultural Movement and a Case of Expanded Applied Theater

Compared to other regions, Seoul was relatively late in implementing a policy for the applied theater program. Since 2009, the Seoul Metropolitan Theater has been running relevant programs. The topics vary, including community, arts education, creativeness, philosophy, participation, experience, change, theater, and theatrical production. The various results were made possible only because there were supports for citizen’s arts and cultural activities. In that context., this study will examine how the applied theater has expanded to the private through different support policies for citizen’s arts and cultural activities. As mentioned earlier, a community is about doing something valuable together. It is an indispensable part of the future advanced society. It is suggested that there will be active community activities by non-profit organizations in the future[30].

Lim Fan uses a sense of belonging and space to define a community. According to Lim, for the applied theater to spread further, what is needed the elements of the community as a social group that shares a sense of belonging and solidarity. As a space, it should be a local community (city, rural village, hamlet, or small town). Here a regional and cultural community indicates a unit of the resident population in which individual and group interactions occur, as well as mutual trust and solidarity. In detail, they can be classified as by the type of city (urban or rural) and by the driving force (the public or the private)[31].

A specific case in this section is the applied theater in Seoul. The first aspect is the support for citizen’s arts and cultural activities. In the theatrical arena, the Arts Council Korea (ARKO) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (MCST) are leading the expansion of citizen’s movement. The ARKO focuses on the arts and culture policy and non-profit experiments of the cultural industry. Its programs are about building an infrastructure of a virtuous cycle that enables the creation, mediation, and enjoyment of arts and culture. Many of the ARKO projects are residency programs[32].

The MCST implements different policies in many sectors, including culture, arts, sports, tourism, religion, media, and publicity. The goal is to make a life with culture a reality. The detailed implementation is the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture (SFAC). The SFAC’s mission is to “create a happy city with culture and arts,”

a city where happy citizens and artists meet each other. The Foundation supports the arts creation, distribution, and education as well as arts and cultural activities of the citizens[33].

According to the 2013 Seoul Comprehensive Plan for Theatre Development, the SFAC's 2013 projects to support the applied theatre were all transformed into We Love It: The Clubs projects by 2014. While the 2013 programs were about promoting harmony among the people, the 2014 programs were more about preparing a field of exchange, with individual participation divided into more detail. At its center was the applied theater as the citizen's theater. Seoul changed its policy direction from supporting local professionals to helping amateur clubs in 2014. The Seoul Citizen's Theater Festival (SCTF) hosted by the Seoul Theater Association (STA) is one example, and other citizen's theater festivals are organized by many different groups. The Seoul Metropolitan Government has two policy approaches: one is the SCTF, and the other is various festivals by the communities of living culture. The SCTF started in 2015, with a view to "provide citizens with arts programs so that they can discover their hidden need for artistic expression[34]." It has a job creation program that dispatches arts instructors to where needed. The SCTF also sponsors citizen's festivals to 'improve and uphold the creative theatrical environment.'

There are traveling theater companies to offer a secure creative environment and promote the competences of existing professionals. In 2019, Seoul managed a traveling theater company, supported arts performance for the people with disabilities, and sponsored theater festivals with different themes. Seoul has been expanding overall theater programs to enhance the poor creative environment and boost the theatrical contents to have the power to grow naturally.

There are three distinct aspects of Seoul's programs. The first is policy. In the city's 2013 General Implementation Plan for Arts and Culture Education, 'Seoul Citizen's School for Arts and Culture' planned to foster citizen artists (cultural activists). Various programs for arts and culture education were in progress. They mostly focused on supporting a creative space for education, for instance, by leasing small theaters. The Seoul Metropolitan Government also offered Citizen's Drama Class: Arts Plus Job[35]. The program generally dispatched arts instructors, trained citizen activists, and promoted job creation.

The second aspect involves the use of space. According to the 2013 Seoul Comprehensive Plan to Develop the Theater, the city was going to launch a new program and support artistic activities using local theater companies in 2014 by designated areas. The purpose of this new program is to use locally-based theater companies and to "provide citizens with arts programs so that they can discover their hidden need for artistic expression[36]." It promoted a program to 'run creative studios by using small private theaters,' whose targets were private groups that managed small theaters or locally-based theater companies. In addition to the existing schemes to foster the competitiveness of theatrical groups, operating expenses were subsidized for the performance venue, for the production and operation of affiliate programs, and for the management of arts organizations. While previously, most of the subsidies had gone to sizeable public performance halls, the new program tried to expand the grants to small and medium-sized private performance venues. Since 2009, the support for the applied theater was given mainly to locally-based theater companies so that they could use a space. Between 2013 and 2015, resident groups became eligible for using small and medium-sized performance venues. The resource allocation, namely, the use of space, was thoroughly reviewed, and a total of twenty-five *gus* became eligible for the support[37]. Up to this stage, the applied theater was primarily led by non-profit organizations that offered educational programs to experience theatrical production. Afterward, some citizen actors who had completed those programs started to launch theater companies. Thus non-profit organizations

broadened the scope toward the private. That is, in using space, Seoul either let locally-based theaters use the public performance venues or ran the applied theater programs using arts and culture spaces in the city. In likewise examples, a local small theater association outside Seoul organized a support program for leasing small theaters to encourage creative efforts and boost the local economy.

In the SCTF hosted by the STA, twenty-five *gus* of Seoul offer the spaces in their districts as local education centers. In other similar festivals, the cases vary: some use the regional performance venues, and others use the festival venues.

The third aspect involves therapeutic effects. One similar example found in the United States is the Center for Applied Theater Arts. Although formed relatively recently, it has been building the applied theater techniques systematically by phase. The Center examines the issues of the local community and emphasizes communication among individuals as well as between individuals and groups. The ultimate goal is to understand and heal one's pain, as well as that of others. The Center develops individual competences in citizen participation and encourages collaboration across genres[38]. A Korean counterpart may be Praxis, the Institute for Drama/Theatre in Education pursuing participatory theater productions.

By 2013, many organizations, including the Seoul Metropolitan Theater, the Seoul Metropolitan Government, and the Dongdaemun Solidarity to Share Culture (DSSC), liaised citizens with professionals to promote civil rights to enjoy the culture. In particular, the DSSC launched a project based on cultural villages, offering the applied theater as a program for therapy and healing.

4. Seoul Metropolitan Government: The Direction of Applied Theater and the Community of Living Culture

1) Policy for the Community of Living Culture and the Applied Theater

In "A Study on the Effects of Social Capital Based on the Local Activities of Arts and Cultural Communities," Lim Fan points out that it is difficult to define a local community because it tends to have multiple layers of meaning[39]. In the meantime, regarding the people's leisure, community policies focus on citizen's programs in diverse fields based on social capital (as opposed to human or physical capital. The concept is about values that come into being through social relations, which include social web of networks, norms, and trust)[40]. Under the K-Indicator (Korean indicator systems), regarding the people's leisure, the indicators of citizen groups, namely, the social engagement by families and communities has risen since 1999, but the trend has been in a plateau between 2013 and 2017.

The RCDA makes citizen's festivals that offer cultural activities and contents production based on citizen participation. The purpose is to regenerate the disintegrated communities, promoting spiritual values. The RCDA encourages individual participation in a manner that is adequate for this era of the nuclear family or one-person household. The 2017 name change to the RDCA since its inauguration as the Living Culture Community Agency explains how the scope of the agency's work is applicable across the country. In a nationwide project, the RDCA hosted the National Living Arts Festival in 2016 and 2017. The 2017 event was mostly for human resources, and the first group of local correspondents for living culture was produced. The RDCA's community-making for a living has been quite close to the village-making.

The RDCA strove to set the direction of the living culture community between 2015 and 2018. In line with village-making, the efforts were subjective and continued activities based on people and their participation. The Agency also strove to find a role model in offering public supports from such perspective[41]. As a new citizen's cultural movement for a community finding its place, the RCDA aimed to use arts and cultural activities in everyday life and remove the cultural and social divide in each region. At the same time, it aimed to restore the community and create a sound local culture. If the efforts for the community had been about economic and social actions in the past, now the efforts were more about cultural actions, with a new perception of economic and social urban regeneration.

Thus with citizen's cultural movements, communities of living culture have appeared, which enables citizen's participation in diverse fields. The supports are given twofold. One is general support (to create a village community) to revitalize the community of a village with its residents. The other is network support for regional cooperation, in which an experienced village helps out a neighboring village to develop and expand the latter's village community. The applied theater has become one of these efforts and frequently appears as an example of a village's cultural community.

In the program, there are skill-up and networking support for the community of living culture. Based on the village resources and the characteristics of the residents, workshops, consulting services, exchanges across the region for community liaisons take place. They all aim to make a village community through the activities of living culture, creating a sound local culture, and an opportunity to communicate among the regions[42]. To that end, clubs and festivals for citizens in all fields, and any other event that citizens can experience in everyday life are the targets of development.

In this sense, the applied theater is an approach not for a specific locality but for a whole cultural community. Hence the particular actions include the making of clubs and villages.

The applied theater is positive as it guides and encourages people to form local and cultural communities as the subjective and active participants of a region[43]. In a regional policy, it can be applied in various ways to promote cultural communities using human resources and local spaces.

Outside Korea, the applied theater is all about a community of communication among individuals or between individuals and groups. The purpose is to heal the pain inside oneself and others. The applied theater techniques do not only offer an essential framework but also make people learn together. The relevant programs are gradually moving away from teaching to learning, therefore emphasizing the creation of a new body of knowledge and communication rather than the acquisition of knowledge. What matters now is to make a community of living culture[44]. In this context, the GyeongGi Cultural Foundation (GGCF) did a lot of work from 2011 for policy research from multiple perspectives. The Foundation organized discussions on how to overcome the problems in introducing the overseas applied theater to Korea and how to adapt the overseas practices for the Korean citizens and their issues.

If the previous applied theater was critical as a matter of productivity and an indicator of cultural activities emphasizing the competencies of a cultural community, the later applied theater progressively evolved citizen's participation as a process in the making of a city, without distinguishing the community's role as consumer or producer.

2) Urban Regeneration: Cultural Activities and Contents Production

As Seoul started using small and medium-sized theaters for the applied theater, professionals were brought in to create jobs, while citizen actors and cultural activists were fostered, promoting the cultural competencies of the city. The community of living culture is its integrated form, while the citizen's theater festival enhances the citizenship and offers action plans for a cultural community.

Waldorf believes that various experiences that cannot be obtained from educational theories will expand knowledge and social web of relations significantly[45]. According to Freud, although cultural desires may grow autonomously by a society's members, the social institution of the state will create a status of tension to restrain such cultural desires[46]. At an early stage of the policy approach, the expansion into a citizen's movement is critical. It is necessary to control how fast the movement spreads by locality, and how voluntary the movement should be by the citizen's reluctance.

The differences between the 20th and 21st centuries identified above show us how the citizen's movement is approaching the holistic life of the people. In the 20th century, the movement was largely about changing citizenship. In the 21st century, the applied theater developed through arts and culture in two ways. The city may be urban or rural, but more and more non-profit organizations started to establish a theater company. However, while in urban cities, citizens voluntarily set up a theater company in rural cities, it is usually a public agency that makes it happen.

As the applied theater involves subjective participation by citizens, the theater is now used as a tool to resolve the issues of urban and rural communities at present. It then leads to the phenomenon of urban regeneration.

The applied theater is producing meaningful outcomes that ultimately change the indicators of economic, social, cultural activities in a region. The applied theater programs in various areas, including Seoul, thus stress popular elements strongly tinged with cultural contents. In its use of space, the theater is now going beyond the spatial constraints of a performance venue, using outdoor spaces and presenting complex themes (such as therapy, performance, exhibition, festival, fair, and research)

As the applied theater spreads across the nation to many cities, including Seoul, Incheon, Chuncheon, Daejon, and Daegu, it encourages subjective participation by citizens. While the existing programs tended to use the applied theater as a therapeutic program, the Seongmisan Village in Seoul and the Sooner or Later Project in Gangjin, Jeollabuk-do went one step further, incorporating cultural activities and productivity together in the community of living culture. The arts and culture contents at the urban cities are reviewed from the planning stage so that outcomes can be applied to rural cities or localities with a relatively small population. A recent phenomenon of the Destination Management/Marketing Organization[47] for regional development is one such example. The urban cities of Seoul, Incheon, Chuncheon, Daejon, and Daegu focused largely on the resident organizations under their city governments.

Lim Fan defined a local community as a geographically limited space, where the residents have social and psychological solidarity for the place they live in. It indicates the importance of a citizen's community through diverse activities and contacts. Also, a cultural community is a group in which residents live with the unique local culture as an intermediary; it is a community where local cultural resources are actively managed for shared purposes and interests[48].

In explaining the development of the applied theatre, Philip Taylor pointed out three purposes: first, to promote the understanding of the applied theater; second, to build a community through theatre; third, to discuss

participation and create experiences for local activists in arts and culture.

Meanwhile, Korea focused on securing human resources and fostering citizen activists to resolve community issues. The first step was to identify the status of various theatrical and other artistic works in Korea's arts and culture education. The next step was to identify facilities and spaces other than a theater so that they might be used for the applied theater. The audience and participants were trying to find answers to the questions they faced both in the public and private arenas.

The following summarizes what has been happening in the scene.

First, job creation. In offering a theater class for citizen's culture, Seoul used local resources (people and spaces) to foster citizen activists in the theater. This, in turn, led to cultural activities, contents production, and job creation, which ultimately made contributions to local society. The DSSC mentioned above received supports from Seoul Metropolitan Government's Village Community Project, helping local residents of Dongdaemun area to experience the theater production process and do the actual works, promoting the rights of their people to enjoy the culture.

Second, citizen actors. As local theater companies offer the applied theater classes, they produced many citizen actors. Some of them appeared in a 2013 production of *Aida* for the 100th anniversary of Verdi, and its reproduction in 2014. However, their appearance at present is quite limited[49].

Third, new theater companies. Between 2009 and 2019, the Seoul Metropolitan Theater helped the inauguration of theater companies by citizen actors, including Applied Theater 2010, Siyeon, Dubichum, Sichimi, and Odangchum, whose activities extend to produce cultural contents. Some of them plan a citizen's theater festival, holding forth a possibility of citizen's festival. The Applied Theater 2010 celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2019, producing a performance at the S Theater of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts. It is a positive outcome that shows voluntary cultural activity and content production by citizens.

Gangjin-gun, although a late-runner in the applied theater, has been driving the efforts and plans to launch a local theater company, as the 2019 Sooner or Later Project has produced meaningful outcomes. The project was so successful that its outcomes are now discussed as the alternatives required for the region's urban regeneration.

Fourth, the citizen's theater festival. The Citizen's Theater Festival hosted by the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts turned into the Seoul Metropolitan Government's project in 2015, expanding to become the Seoul Citizen's Theater Festival (SCTF) by the Seoul Theater Association (STA). Seventeen non-profit theater companies from twenty-five *gus* of Seoul participate in the SCTF, offering applied theater training programs. The citizen's participation in the SCTF continued since 2015, and the occasion is also about job creation for local artists.

While the Citizen's Theater Festival by the Sejong Center became a one-off cultural event, the expanded SCTF survived, hosting the 5th Festival in 2019.

5. Implications: Cultural Contents and Their Popular Expansion

First, widespread expansion by cultural activists. In 2010 and 2011, The GyeongGi Cultural Foundation (GGCF) and the Korea Arts & Culture Education Service invited Philip Taylor, professor of NYU Steinhardt and the author of *Applied Theatre: Creating Transformative Encounters in the Community* and discussed the issues in the Korean scene and the direction for development. In 2010, the GGCF hosted workshops and a symposium, with themes such as 'Talking Applied Theatre: Community, Participation, and Transformation Through Drama' and 'Drama out of Theatre: What to Do Now?' It was an effort to re-establish the concept and forms of applied theater by discussing Korean and international practices, ultimately to promote public interest

and the theater's expansion. While the 2010 events primarily talked about community, participation, and change by way of the applied theater, the 2011 event called Seoul International Symposium for Arts in Education and Creativity (SISAC 2011) used the theme of "Leading Change in Education through AIE (Arts in Education) and Creativity." The discussions on the latter occasion focused on philosophical and policy approaches regarding creative AIE. Another focus was on the various AIE cases involving field professionals in and outside Korea. It was about a community of networking by those who were interested in education and the future.

Although Seoul was a relatively late-runner in this field, its applied theater programs continued until 2019. Starting with the one-off Citizen's Theater Festival by the Sejong Center, the STA's expanded festival since 2015 became a kind of citizen's cultural movement, providing the Seoul's administrative districts with arts instructors. The Seoul Metropolitan Government selected seventeen out of a total of twenty-five *gus* in the city, supporting them to join the festival.

As the SCTF expands to include all districts in Seoul, the Festival is going beyond relying on professionals and their works, encouraging local citizen's participation. While some even venture to write their original stories, others still resort to existing plays. In any case, the underlying cause of the expansion may be different social issues, such as the destruction of tradition and the increasing lack of understanding of the community due to urbanization. The Festival must be used as one way to tell the stories of the citizens based on the goal of their communities.

Second, village-making or a community of living culture. Seongmisan Village is often cited and benchmarked as the example of a local community. The residents have raised a fund jointly and voluntarily to establish various village enterprises. Using joint funding, the Village is systematically operating programs to build a culture for the village community[50]. The programs eventually have bred profit and employment for the Village and its people. The beginning was in 1994 with a joint nursing community. The local community then spread into a humanities book club, theater and photography clubs, Seongmisan Children's Choir, and a village festival. As the small cultural groups were led by the residents, they established the Theatre Company Dried Radish and a singing group Vibration. They either worked with professionals to produce a theatrical performance or film a documentary on Seongmisan Village (residents Hong Hyeong-suk and Kang Seok-pil directed and produced the film, respectively)[51]. As showcased in this example, local communities are becoming those of living culture. Gradually, they go beyond the traditional and into the world of off-Theater, refusing to remain in the conventional theater. The change is noticeable[52].

In Seongmisan Village, cultural contents are crucial elements for the formation and continuity of the community. The Village uses all the spaces where their residents live, including the streets, square, and auditorium. Seongmisan Village has become an arts and culture town, creating one distinctive trend that includes education and creative productivity.

In summary, this study has examined the following. First, the study reviewed the development and expansion of citizens' cultural movement in the 20th and 21st centuries. A positive development was seen in the case of the Seoul Metropolitan Government's policies on the applied theater and the community of living culture. The review aimed to come up with some suggestions regarding what roles and functions the applied theater can have as a community of living culture.

Second, a model for advancement is the Applied Theater Class by the Seoul Metropolitan Theater at the Sejong Center, which started in 2009. Since 2009, the program has produced citizen actors who, in turn, have become a driving force in hosting the Citizen's Theater Festival in 2015. However, the Festival remained a one-off event, failing to gain further life. However, the STA inherited its positive aspects, selecting seventeen out of twenty-five *gus* eligible for support, hosting the First Seoul Citizen's Theater Festival. The year 2019 has seen the Festival on a fifth-year streak, indicating that the applied theater is in a stage of expansion into the community of living culture.

Third, while the various programs in citizen's cultural movement promoted the change in citizenship, the civic groups' participation still remains at quite a low level. Despite the continued efforts to restore traditions and the positive effects on changing citizenship, the programs do not seem to entail sustainability. It is not possible to say that a specific program has a positive impact just because certain groups have done certain things; to be able to make such a statement, the sustainability of the relevant programs should be proven. Thus it is necessary for the programs to promote the quality of people's life, encourage civic groups to make citizen's cultural movement a part of life, and present the cases of a community of living culture.

Fourth, there must be continued input and output of contents so that the Seoul Metropolitan Government can focus on the activities and productivity of the applied theater groups. When Seoul first introduced the applied theater in its policy in 2009, it was by using the spaces of the Seoul Metropolitan Theater (or the Sejong Center). With the spaces and human resources of the Sejong Center, cultural activities and contents production followed; this is how supports can generate sustainable activities and productivity. It is essential to promote the applied theater's power to grow naturally. However, without such power to grow yet, many organizations need a system to get help from subsidy or field professionals. To create a sustainable form of operation, it is necessary to manage the system with a supervisor who can oversee the process.

In conclusion, the applied theater, as the development of citizen's cultural movement, went one step further from its previous form. Going beyond the management by local theater companies, it has now become a part of the community of living culture. The applied theater has become a branch of citizen's education, expanding the geographical coverage, creating an arena in which professionals and citizens can work together. It was about removing any social bias and building a community with members of the same society. As one measure to revive the individual locality, the efforts spread to all fields other than arts and culture, pursuing the harmony within a local community.

The applied theater can also offer an arena of the festival to overcome the disintegration of the local community. As it promoted educational understanding under the community's shared goals and values, it may have contributed to deriving reductive values using local resources. If a local community should be approached as a cultural community, it is crucial to have urban and institutional support systems.

In the past, the concept of community meant a symbiotic social group, indicating that such a phenomenon occurs as the creatures of one species live together, clustered in one area. In a sense, a community is nothing but a web of relations called the ecosystem[53]. The latter definition can be broadened to include the spaces where activities (or exchanges) happen on the Internet.

The so-called fourth industrial revolution freed the community from the concept of settlement or fixed residence. It is an era when a community can now settle down or reside anywhere without being constrained by

physical location. As online communication enables everyone to access anything from anywhere, a community can arise according to the members' values and actions, regardless of a geographical location or a sense of social solidarity.

Today's community tends to form a new group in the virtual space through the Internet to resolve a specific issue. In these circumstances, the community of living culture as a part of the 'global village[54]' requires diverse perspectives and approaches.

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From a policy perspective, culture is explained in both a broad and a narrow sense. In a narrow sense, it is a process and outcome as a way and means of life that includes specific actions. The actions produce creative added-values combining the spiritual sphere, artistic and aesthetic imagination, and science and technology. In a broad sense, it is an outcome of actions based on spiritual and physical creativity that is worth conserving for humanity. In either sense, it is possible to explain the culture, including all activities created by the workings of the mind.

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