

Research article

# Cultural Storytelling and Tourism at the Stratford Festival of Canada: Citizen's Sustainable Cultural Activities and Contents Production<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstracts:

William Shakespeare, the great English playwright and poet, is also known as a pioneer in the arts and culture for citizens. It shows the extent of his influence on the achievements in diverse fields such as literature, education, cinema, dance, visual arts, theatrical performance, and academia. National cultural contents of each country, in turn, include both particular and universal cultural narratives before they become part of a policy and meet users. The playwright virtually influences across the globe. Many global cities, including Seoul, used Shakespeare's works to overcome the branded image as a colony. While producers in education and performing fields used to developed content with Shakespeare's works, the new cultural industries do the same thing from the perspective of urban regeneration.

The excessive industrialization so far has faced a fundamental question of productivity with population decrease, and the urban decline began. 'Cultural storytelling' these days work with the efforts to revive prosperous cities, demanding process-driven implementation rather than rapid development. Festivals using various performances can call various fields together, establishing a virtuous circle of local resources.

The concept of a festival can reinforce a city's brand. Some cities enhanced their strategic achievements with such functions of cultural industries. The cultural storytelling approach can use diverse stories in the field of

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<sup>1</sup> This study is built on two previous essays of the author: "Sustainability of the Citizen's Theater Festival by the Seoul Metropolitan Theater: Based on the Cultural Storytelling Methods of Canada's Stratford Festival" presented at the Humanities Contents Association Conference in 2019; "A Study on Revitalizing Tourism by Using Historical and Cultural Contents of Gangjin-gun: A Case of 'Sooner or Later' Project and Resident Participation" published in *Hallyu and Cultural Contents*, Academic Association of Global Cultural Contents (AAGCC) in 2019.

Festival, therefore offering easy access to current issues.

The Stratford Festival of Canada started in 1952 and marked its 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. It is a success case that started as the Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada and evolved to become the current event. Meanwhile, this study reviews Gangjin-gun's Sooner or Later Project in Korea, to understand how a historic figure was used to strengthen a local brand and link its elements with tourism. The Korean case shows similar features, as shown in the Canadian case's policy implementation process. The cultural elements in the two cases demonstrate aspects of sustainable civil cultural activities and content production. The study aims to have a new look at the cultural storytelling at citizens' theater festivals in Korea.

■**Keyword:** | Stratford Festival | cultural storytelling | cultural activities | contents production | Applied Theater Festival | sustainable | tourism

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## 1. Introduction

### 1) Preceding Studies

William Shakespeare, the greatest English playwright, is also known as a pioneer in the arts and culture for citizens. It shows the extent of his influence on the achievements in diverse fields such as literature, education, cinema, dance, visual arts, theatrical performance, and academia. The playwright virtually influences across the globe[1]. In the previous century, many global cities, including Seoul, used Shakespeare's works to overcome the branded image as a colony. While producers in education and performing fields used to developed content with Shakespeare's works, the new cultural industries do the same thing from the perspective of urban regeneration[2]. National cultural contents of each country, in turn, include both particular and universal cultural narratives[3] before they become part of the policy and meet users.

Launched in 1952, the Stratford Festival has a history of over six decades. The event was founded as the Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada, and it gradually became a repertory theater festival producing different contents under the current name. There are two social and cultural aspects in this case.

First, there is an aspect of **urban regeneration**. Let us examine how 'cultural storytelling[4]' has materialized in the case of the Stratford Festival, which involves the development of local stories and spaces. Stratford, Ontario, is a Canadian city with no direct relevance to the English cultural information of Shakespeare. The city, nevertheless, managed to structure its stories and spaces based on the theme of Shakespeare. There will be a comparative analysis using a Korean case of Sooner or Later Project in Gangjin-gun of Korea. The two cases show similar operational mechanisms. Second, there is an aspect of **tourism** that is present in both the Canadian and Korean cases. Their local cultural elements, or resources as well as the citizens' cultural activities and contents production, are linked to tourism, creating a certain level of synergy. The case of Sooner or Later Project shows how local cultural elements can be developed to become historical contents, offering a solution to challenges each region many have today. In this case, existing cultural information was used to become part of arts and culture, presenting sustainable tourism[5]. Included in this process are the concept of the festival venue, the availability of cultural space, the cluster of cultural industry, non-profit organizations, membership, education, and a community of participating citizens. These elements are connected to the sustainable tourism of the region.

The city of Stratford was facing a crisis of decreasing population and declining economy due to the decay of the steel industry. It was in the midst of such a crisis that Tom Patterson, a local journalist, proposed the Stratford Shakespearean Festival.

If we look at the Korean situation, the country relied on arts and culture as citizens' movement to restore its destroyed community amid the economic growth in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Korea's industrialization failed to promote social and cultural productivity but led many cities to decay due to population decrease. By the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Korean cultural industry strove to present job creation in its field as part of urban regeneration[6].

Now, the age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution saw the cultural industry using one source to produce multiple contents: the evolution to so-called one-source-multi-use (OSMU) or media mix gave birth to an urban development model applicable to many areas. In the festival sector, such a root source produced various stories

in cultural-storytelling[7].

Based on “the nature of art as a process [8],” festivals used the theater using a form of an academy where experts and citizens collaborated. As a result, local citizens could build up their subjective competences[9]. The activities found new stories or re-interpreted existing ones for content-production to resolve current local issues.

In 1991, Korea returned to a local government system, which led to heightened interests in the urban regeneration project. Arts and culture are increasingly used in the cultural industry based on citizens’ participation. Experts and citizens work together to build a foundation for job creation by their local cultural activities and content-production.

Recently, Korea’s urban regeneration centers are expanding nationwide, implementing club and village-making projects[10], which offer resources for tourism. The outcome, together to revive a prosperous city. The resulting ‘cultural storytelling’ approaches the whole process of citizens’ life from the perspective of urban generation. This, in turn, builds a virtuous circle of local resources with new policy implementation.

In the theatrical arena, it is a common practice to develop local sources for production, and the outcomes are often connected to festivals as a program in which citizens participate. Concerning a city’s roles and functions, festivals tend to promote strategic performance or branding related to the cultural industry. Thus festivals can help cities achieve their goals as each locality learns its unique history and adds local identity or modern interpretation[11].

This study will review how the Stratford Festival of Canada used the status of an English playwright and compare the case with the Sooner or Later Project in Gangjin-gun, Jeollanam-do, South Korea. It aims to understand the sustainable forms of citizens’ theater festivals at the same time, examining how citizens participate in the theater.

## 2) Methodology and Scope of Research

The Research Information Sharing Services (RISS, <http://www.riss.kr>) has been the basis for understanding previous studies. Andrew Dickson’s *Worlds Elsewhere: Journeys Around Shakespeare’s Globe* (2015) showed a perspective on Shakespeare’s status from a cultural industry’s perspective. Resources from the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) offered credible and extensive materials for analysis regarding the playwright’s life, relevant forums, training, and production. Historical episodes and cultural information related to Shakespeare became valuable references for this study. One small piece of information regarding the existence of Shakespeare Inn in Stratford was an important clue as the study developed the idea of cultural storytelling[12]. A field trip to the venue in September 2019, during the Stratford Festival period, secured some practical data.

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) of Korea describes cultural storytelling as follows: “Stories that used to be delivered only orally in the past are now made into images and videos, becoming a kind of storytelling[13].” Today, the advancement of the cultural industry makes cultural contents out of such storytelling, leading to the one-source-multi-use (OSMU, also known as media franchise) format.

Meanwhile, the world is facing a new pandemic of COVID-19. As the virus has hit our communities hard, a new light is shed on the roles and functions of a global community[14]. All forms of tourism, be it an act of seeing, listening, or doing, are now different: everything is subject to the pre- and post-COVID-19 division. Even our everyday life sees rapid changes and new formats with the fourth industrial revolution. In many areas, contents are now made for video delivery to replace face-to-face contact, getting distributed by such platforms as YouTube.

As this study describes cultural storytelling, the description is limited to space. The embodiment of culture from such storytelling will have to meet other formats and channels in the future. Our life today is rapidly seeing the application of technology, and there are many studies regarding post-COVID-19 life in this regard.

Christian Salmon, in *Storytelling: Bewitching the Modern Mind* (2010), explains how we need to produce stories, not brands, and how we are in an era of the narrative[15]. Lee Myeong-hyeon, in *Classic Narratives and the Storytelling of Cultural Contents* (2017), insists that classics should expand and changed according to the changes in time because they need to acquire ‘newness’ by coming into contact with today’s thinking and perceptions[16]. As mentioned before, our world today is already seeing rapid re-interpretation of contents and stories in new production and distribution platforms and channels amid the change due to the COVID-19.

From the preceding studies, this study has identified the following four elements of the Stratford Festival of

Canada from the perspectives of urban regeneration and tourism.

**First, the festival concept and the cultural space:**

In its cultural storytelling, the Stratford Festival of Canada borrowed Shakespeare's birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon, his works and characters, applying them somewhat arbitrarily to the city of Stratford, Ontario. It all began with William Sargint: the English settler built the Shakespeare Inn and Tavern in the Canadian city, and Thomas Mercer Jones, a director of the Canada Company gave Sargint a portrait of Shakespeare in 1832 during his stay at the inn. This event gave Stratford its name[17]. By the early 1950s, the city was struggling with the decline of the railway industry. It was then when Tom Patterson, a local journalist, used the idea of the Shakespeare Inn to found a festival[18].

On July 13, 1953, the Stratford Festival opened its curtain, presenting *Richard the Third*. Between 1953 and 2018, the Festival produced consistent results, with 702 performances and other program activities. At least one-third of the event is filled with Shakespeare's works, be it comedy, tragedy, or history play. By 2019, there have been 254 programs related to Shakespeare[19]. 244 performances were presenting the playwright's works. Also, there are original productions based on Shakespeare's works, including *The Boys from Syracuse* and the *Breath of Kings*. The event offers a forum with diverse themes, such as 'Shakespeare's Achievements,' 'Shakespeare's Future,' 'Shakespeare's Universe (Her Infinite Variety),' 'Talking About Shakespeare,' and 'Shakespeare's Love[20].'

Also, the Festival uses Shakespeare on Broadway—for instance, *Hamlet* can be produced as a work of classic, opera, musical, jazz, and theater[21]. Compared to the Broadway contents, Shakespeare's works in this Festival have gradually become those of repertory theater.

While the Stratford Festival was an event for Shakespeareans during the earlier period, it has evolved to become an event that shows the city's local identity, as the change of name and the local resources used in the Festival represent.

**Second, the policy for the cultural industry:**

Shin Dong-ho examined the support system for the cultural industry in his "The Cultural Industry Cluster at the Stratford of Canada: The Case of the Stratford Festival." According to Shin, the strong support from the local council enabled the construction of the Avon Theater ('Shakespeare Theater'), offering a legal foundation for the Festival producing performing contents continuously.

While the Korean definition of the content industry refers to the entire industries based on entertainment, different countries have different distinctions such as the creative industry in the United Kingdom and China and arts industry in Canada[22]. The nature of these industries is to find ways to utilize local resources in their structure rationally

In tourism, there has been a humanistic approach to establish a unique identification or local identity as a relatively autonomous means of scientific research. As the economic growth from industrialization began to slow down with the decline of cities, global cultural industries strove to recreate the past growth and used local resources in their efforts. Experts and citizens working together in arts and culture are trying to resolve local issues based on their cultural activities and content production[23].

**Third, local community with citizens' participation:**

The Stratford Festival faced resistance from residents in the initial period. However, as parties involved resolved the issues, a local community was created, which also provided volunteers. The Festival operates on membership that has various offers for local and overseas productions. Members can enjoy free or discount tickets for individual performances[24].

Jo Myeong-rae sees space and a spatial life as a subject and an object in *How to Read Our Society Using Spaces* (2013). Space is one of the fundamental forms that establish the world together with time. Jo suggested how environment, domain, and context constitute an axis where spaces are arranged and composed for the actions and reactions between the subject and the object[25].

**Fourth, a social perspective on the holistic life in tourism:**

In tourism, space and time work to connect local resources organically. It is not a common space—it is where cultural activities and content production happen as part of human life.

Min Wung-gi argues in "The Ecological Framework Development of Convergence Research for Korean Tourism Sociology:\*A Change from an Analytic Method to an Integrating Method in the Application of

Sociological Theories” (2016) that the research method of tourism sociology follows social phenomena and has an integrating form by humanist imagination. Humanist imagination includes a universal narrative of culture but aims to declare independence through historical facts of a region as best as possible. [26] It is, therefore, not about whether you have cultural elements or information of a region, but about how well you can utilize and apply them.

A review of the subsequent studies also shows an integrated form of tourism by enabling people to experience a region in diverse areas: Park Ki-su’s *Structure and Strategy of Storytelling for Cultural Content: Asking Storytelling for Directions as a Key Driver of Cultural Content* (2015); Kim Yeong-sun’s *Local Cultural Content and Storytelling: Memories and Stories of Geomdam* (2011); Korea Tourism Organization’s *Tourism Storytelling: Shining the Light* (2006). According to them, festivals are where we can expect a synergy effect by liaising with various cultural industries of a region.

## 2. Cases of Cultural Storytelling

### 1) The Stratford Festival of Canada

The success of the Stratford Festival demonstrates not only an outstanding achievement of urban regeneration but also how an artist’s works are used by producers in educational and performing sectors, leading to policy implementation in a physical space[27]. Each country may have similar policy features, but their primary supports for key cultural industries seem to have distinctive features. There are three aspects to examine in this regard.

**First, there is a support system for cultural industries.** The Stratford Festival is a performing content of the province of Ontario, and it used the status of an English playwright of Shakespeare. The starting point was naturally the construction of a theater for Shakespeare’s works. It was a re-construction of local space. Then English cultural information was utilized in the new local cultural space, giving birth to the Stratford Festival. One of the reasons for the success was the existing structure of organic clusters in Ontario, which helped various arts industries to find their places in the region[28]. The Stratford Festival was legally incorporated as a non-profit foundation to manage the event properly[29]. The Festival then employed local resources for its events, expanding the scope of activities to tourism.

While the fame of Shakespeare was crucial to appeal to existing Shakespeareans in many fields, the Festival gradually moved away from such a limited approach. The idea originated from a minor historical fact (the existence of Shakespeare Inn) was an excellent addition to produce such significant achievement. The Stratford Festival thus used English cultural information firstly, added historical significance to some facts secondly, and provided a symbolic structure to the value of a cultural space thirdly. Finally, the outcomes were eligible for content production, evolving from a Shakespearean event to become the Stratford Festival of Canada today.

**Second, a festival and tourism can work together.** As described above, the Stratford Festival took time to evolve to its current structure, which produces content. The result demonstrates many roles and functions of first sources in the processing of adding stories to a locality. A region’s humanist and historical place and connections give it a unique identity as a relatively autonomous means of scientific research. It also aims to declare independence through historical facts of the region as best as possible, while including a universal narrative of the culture[30].

The 2019 program of the Stratford Festival (between April 16 and October 31) offered twelve productions in contemporary, tragic, comic, and musical theaters. Among them, three were Shakespeare’s plays—*Othello*, *Henry VIII*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The Forum offered 57 activities, including special performances, presentations, discussions, meals, and workshops[31]. Compared to the previous festivals, there are more classics, contemporary plays, musicals, musical performances, training, and storytelling activities[32], implying an expanded scope that has a forum, workshops, tours, and diverse contents. The Forum stresses a sustainable future for Stratford, leading the way for the change in the local Festival[33]. In this vein, the Festival did more than merely using the first sources; it discusses many themes such as local history, culture, and arts so that the event can remain sustainable, using Canada’s unique resources.

As the Festival taps into the tourism potentials, the local performing venues are considered. In 2019, the activities included Warehouse Tour, Festival Theater Tour, Garden Tour, Set Changeover Tour, and Archives Tour[34]. Virtually all available physical resources are used. For instance, the Set Changeover Tour making a product out of what happens in the backstage, allowing people to see the usually invisible part of the theater. The

Festival also resolved inconvenience traffic facilities and enhanced accessibility by operating shuttles from major spots to Stratford during the season.

**Third, existing cultural spaces are used.** In 1952, actor James Mason and the first Artistic Director Tyrone Guthrie joined the Festival, followed by actors around the world[35]. As an immediate result, the local economy revived, mostly aided by the establishment of cultural spaces, including the theater[36].

The early theater was an amphitheater that housed the stage and auditorium under a giant tent. Even after the proper construction of the Festival Theater, the vent rented many other venues in Stratford, renovating existing cultural spaces.

There are four distinct stages for the Festival. The main Festival Theater (1953) is located in downtown Stratford, on the Lakeside Drive along Lake Victoria[37]. The other three are Studio Theater (2002), the Avon Theater (1956), and the Tom Patterson Theater (1991)[38].

The Tom Patterson Theater started as a rented venue in 1971 along the banks of Avon River, with seating for 410 people. In 1982, it became the home of the Shakespeare 3 Company. In 1991, the premise was renamed to the Tom Patterson Theater. There is an ongoing project to build the new Tom Patterson Theater, for which the Government of Ontario contributed 20 million dollars in 2019. The Avon Theater was also a rented facility, and the Festival purchased it in 1963 when Tanya Moiseiwitsch led the renovations of the interior. In 2002, the Studio Theater was added as a fourth venue with seating for 260 people, modifying what had been the Avon Theater's scene shop[39].

## 2) Sooner or Later Project: Gangjin-gun, South Korea

There are six distinctive aspects in the Sooner or Later Project of Gangjin-gun (*gun* is an administrative district under a Korean province).

**First, there are unique concepts and cultural spaces.** Gangjin-gun (*gun* is a Korean administrative district under a province) used the Sooner or Later Project to discover its local history and characters and dramatized the stories in the form of *Madanggeuk* (people's theater) to maximize benefits. The venues for local storytelling then became tourist attractions as local historic sites, which helped revive the region.

Sooner or Later Project has a description of Time to Meet the Joseon Dynasty, and it offers both long-term and short-term events. For the long term, the Project created jobs for the actors working for the dramatization of stories and led to the foundation of a theater company, with citizens volunteer works. For the short term, the performances and dramatized plays are presented with citizens' participation, using such format as a flash mob[40].

As Gangjin-gun develops historical contents through the Sooner or Later Project, many materials are used for 'dramatization.' The performances are usually presented at Saeuijae Street, a place known for accommodating a house of exile for a great *silhak* (practical thinking) thinker of the later Joseon period, Jeong Yak-yong (simply known as Dasan). The place has been rebuilt to become a kind of living museum where actors play their part on the street dressed in costumes. The Project has many activities, including *Ginyeo (courtesans trained for artistic performances) Produce 1810, Women at the Washing Place, A Singing Master and a Maiden Who Has a Dancing Fever, Dasan and the Tavern Woman, Goddess Hangah and Moon Rabbit, and Bleh, Shaman*. The reconstructed area also has a commercial complex, inviting young people to start up their businesses.

**Second, jobs were created.** Gangjin-gun is a rural area with a high ratio of senior population as the youth tend to move to cities. The Project recruited local people as actors for dramatization through auditions and training at an academy. As community members voluntarily participated in the Project, they contributed to promoting attractive local tourist resources, revitalizing the local economy, and making up for the youth labor. The local actors appear in many productions from the Project[41]. Such positive outcomes led to the foundation of a theater company that would prepare the basis for continued job creation.

In Korea, applied theater class has become a means to create jobs for professionals and train citizen actors. While Ganjin-gun's Sooner or Later Project has some similarities in form, the approach is slightly different as it focuses on creating jobs for local people, not for professionals in the field.

**Third, local people serve with their talent for the Project.** Saeuijae Street is recreated based on the voluntary contributions of local people and the empathy created among them[42]. The young businesspeople in the commercial complex, residents, and tourists can serve for the Project doing what they can, which, in turn,

contributes to the increased sales for the young business proprietors at the Saeuijae Street commercial complex. People from the local community take part as best as they can. For instance, people sometimes wear hanbok from the Joseon period at the commercial complex as they sell or promote products. Elementary school students are encouraged to write letters, which makes the experience more relatable. Local students from elementary to high schools perform for tourists, singing, or playing traditional Korean music. Lastly, twenty-four actors of the Project also work as culture and tourist guides for Gangjin-gun. They actively participate in guiding local historic sites and contribute to boosting the local economy significantly. With their work, the lack of resources in this field has been resolved,

The active participation of local people on all levels has made the region a tourist attraction, reinforcing the local tourism business. The primary benefit may be found in tourist communications, as the actors work as commentators of cultural heritage and tourist attractions. They deliver credible stories to tourists for local historic sites[43].

**Fourth, there are community activities that involve tourists.** Performances that involve tourists include the group choreography that announces the beginning of *madanggeuk*, flash mobs with tourists, and nighttime performances. *Thank You, Tavern Lady* is a *madanggeuk* production that offers various community activities with visitors. It also reduces the physical distance between the stage and the audience[44].

Elementary students visiting the performances can write letters to actors. The program offers many community activities that are communicated by visitors using various means (social media platforms, Youtube, and other media)[45]. The word of mouth led to an increased number of tourists.

**Fifth, the Project is leading to the foundation of a theater company.** Gangjin-gun is preparing to launch a theater company with the development of the Project. While similar programs in other regions usually happened without involving local people or creating jobs only for professionals in the field, the Sooner or Later Project has a different approach. Since the Gangjin-gun Government is initiating the theater company's launch, it is possible to ensure the annual budget officially. When it becomes a reality, it will overcome the general budget constraints for applied theater companies.

The Project is an example of a government driving the foundation of a theater company, contrary to the voluntary organization of applied theater companies in other regions, as the case of the Seoul Metropolitan Theater Company demonstrates. Gangjin-gun's case can build upon citizens' participation to drive sustainable cultural activities and content production. The earlier, private-driven theater companies usually had difficulty in securing budgets and resources. They could offer only one annual performance, at most, and their activities did not expand any further.

**Sixth, the Project liaises with tourism.** Gangjin-gun, located in the southwest part of Korea, is not too accessible from Korea's metropolitan regions; the area has very poor access to nearby cities. From Seoul and its vicinities, it takes five hours to go to Gangjin-gun by car; the closest big city is Mokpo in Jeollanam-do (South Jeolla Province), and it still takes thirty-five minutes by car. Considering the geographic disadvantage, the Gangjin-gun Government used the Gangjin Culture and Tourism Foundation, whose Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) set out to develop tourist products using 'familiarization (FAM) tour.' The FAM tour promoted Gangjin-gun by structured local resources in its history and culture. The Sooner or Later Project offers multiple activities and performances in this regard. Everything becomes part of a three-step tour in the neighborhood[46]. As influencer marketing encourages people to local attractions by social media platforms, Gangjin-gun needs to offer more conveniences than shuttles to enhance access. The conveniences should invite visitors to stay for more than one night, together with tourist attractions and other entertainments. In the 2019 FAM tour, the Saeuijae performance of the Sooner or Later Project was offered with a hanok accommodation called Fuso (*Fuso* is a Jeolla-do's provincial word meaning to 'mitigate or ease'). The offer presented a potential for developing tourist attractions in the region. The Fuso brand will be a subject for further study.

### **3. Implications: Citizens' Cultural Activities and Content Production Using a Theater Festival for Citizens**

First, the Stratford Festival of Canada uses both Shakespeare and his works in established venues, producing performing contents that constitute a repertory theater. The resulting diversity evolved a Shakespearean festival

into the current Stratford Festival. Experts from multiple fields initiate the festival forum so that the Festival can work sustainably to resolve urgent local issues. Theater studies are offered to encourage student exchanges. There is a virtuous circle among all the activities, generating Shakespeare-related tours to museums, art galleries, and theaters. The form of experiences here shows the ‘nature of art as a process [47],’ with various projects each year. The electronic payment system plays a big part here, providing information to potential visitors regarding local tourism, food, and accommodations and allowing them to make decisions at once. The system delivers information both for the would-be tourists and the would-be audience.

In many aspects, the connection among various sectors in arts and culture, as well as the systematic management are essential in this cultural industry cluster of Canada. Also, the Festival had cultural spaces, support systems, human resources, and legal incorporation. The efficient operation made the Festival establish itself as an international event.

Second, the Sooner or Later Project of Gangjin-gun shows how local stories can build a brand and how local people can make up for the lack of human resources in certain areas. Saeuijae of Gangjin-gun was a local tavern where Jeong Yak-yong (Dasan) stayed during the initial period of his exile. Saeuijae Street has now become a kind of living museum that is similar to the Korean Folk Village (*Minsokchon*) of Suwon. Although the scale is quite small, Saeuijae Street can be easily accessed from all directions, with open entrance and exit. While most of local governments charge some fees for themed streets or villages, Gangjin-gun allows tourists to visit historic sites free of charge. The FAM tour by the Gangjin Culture and Tourism Foundation employs local resources for its program.

Gangjin-gun works very hard to develop historical and cultural contents because aging became a reality a long time ago. The subsequent decrease in local productivity revealed an issue of the labor force. Not only Gangjin-gun but also many other Korean local governments have used citizens’ participation in cultural industries to promote local productivity, promoting cultural activities and content production by citizens. As local governments pursue this kind of goal, multiple uses of tourist resources and cultural storytelling can add appeal to each locality. The case of Gangjin-gun is worth observing further, as it is driven mainly by the local government, and the theater company is still in the process of launching.

A good comparison may be an urban case of the Seoul Metropolitan Government. According to the 2013 Seoul Comprehensive Plan for Theatre Development, the city planned to “support arts activities using local theatre companies” in 2014. Programs were prepared to liaise arts professionals and citizens to perform their roles in a village community, as in the case of 2013 Seoul Citizens’ School for Arts & Culture. The programs were closely linked to urban regeneration projects. In 2015, the project goal was to use local theatre companies to “provide citizens with arts programs so that they can discover hidden desires of artistic expression[48].”

The Seoul Metropolitan Government launched a plan to foster cultural activists (citizen-actors, applied theater companies, citizens’ theater festival) for cultural activities and content production. The job creation for professionals, participation by local theater companies, and citizens’ participation are encouraged to develop into a festival. However, Seoul’s case is based on voluntary activities and participation by citizen actors and theater companies the city has produced since 2009 through the Seoul Metropolitan Theater (SMT) Applied Theater Class.

Since 2009, the SMT Applied Theater Class under the Sejong Center for the Performing helped the inauguration of five theater companies by citizen actors: Applied Theater 2010, Siyeon, Dubichum, Sichimi, and Odangchum. Exchanges among such organizations rarely happened, and Seoul hosted the Citizen’s Theater Festival by the Sejong Center—which ended up as a one-off cultural event. Odangchum organizes Ten-Minute Theater Festival to meet similar organizations. Although exchanges among the theater companies remain meager, their content production continues. Most of them produce experimental plays to resolve budget challenges[49]. In 2019, Applied Theater 2010 celebrated its 10th anniversary, producing *Someday in Those Days*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at the S Theater of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts. Dubichum wrote an original play called *Floating Island* and produced it.

Since 2015, Seoul supported the Seoul Theater Association (STA) to host the Seoul Citizen’s Theater Festival (SCTF). The Festival rotates the administrative districts of Seoul (*gu*) to promote applied theater. Any civil organizations from the twenty-five *gus* of Seoul are eligible to participate in the SCTF, offering applied theater training programs. The purpose is to build arts and culture communities in everyday life and create self-sustaining local culture. The primary focus of the SCTF is the citizens who will produce and perform plays[50]. The cultural



storytelling is about the real life of citizens and traditional or original stories. The SCTF has many repeat participants, but the citizen actors and theater companies from the SMT Applied Theater Class do not seem to be actively participating in the occasion.

Lee Yeong-ku argues that cultural content planning must deliver spiritual and cultural values philosophically[51]. The first source in cultural content planning evolves to become contents in multiple fields, creating a virtuous circle. The Stratford Festival of Canada may not be appropriate as the first source of identity or spiritual and cultural value. However, from the perspective of cultural contents, the performances re-interpret many sources to turn impossibility into possibility. Gangjin-gun of Korea approaches the first source by developing stories. It is not about the quantity of cultural information but about the creative use of it (by representing it in cultural storytelling), ultimately to resolve current local issues.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study compared the Stratford Festival of Canada and the Sooner or Later Project of Korea to learn about the possibility of a sustainable theater festival for citizens. There are three aspects worth considering.

**First, the concept and establishment of cultural spaces are essential.** A cultural content planner must do more than adding space-time to artistic works. The two cases are widely different in the use and application of first sources: they may be too different to be compared, as the one has more than sixty-six years of history, and the other was a one-year project in 2019. However, both the Stratford Festival and the Sooner or Later Project used arts and culture to create jobs, communities, cultural spaces, the consequent foundation of theater companies, and liaison with tourism—both are moving ahead to the stage of policy for cultural industries. As these events are used to revitalize the local economy, arts and culture must be employed according to the urban or rural locality's unique characteristics.

**Second, there are roles and functions as a cultural industry cluster.** Seoul encourages voluntary cultural activities by citizens, but content production is performed by a few applied theater companies. It is because the operation of and content production by an applied theater company poses many challenges, including time, information, budget, human resources, and venue. There are no standards or established rules. Therefore, help from a supervisor and continued management system are essential if there are to be many applied theater companies.

**Third, there is a need for a system of tourism.** The rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution caused the evolvement of diverse types of cultural storytelling. In Korea, local stories are linked to relevant spaces, developing hidden local resources to see, eat, and enjoy[52]. However, there must be a system of tourism available in this regard. The Seoul Metropolitan Government encourages 'cultural activities' and 'content production' to discover further stories and develop contents[53], but they are not sufficient to produce local attractions as yet. The relevant policy must remain open and expandable so that the entertainment industries can be consumed by individual local approaches[54]. The result must be provided to users as a system of tourism in the format of individual mapping.

In summary, the establishment of a system under the policy support for historic and cultural content development was crucial both for the Canadian and the Korean case. Their use of the first source may be different, as the Stratford Festival relied on an English figure of Shakespeare while the Sooner or Later Project used a Korean figure of Jeong Yak-yong. However, both approached arts and culture from the perspective of urban regeneration to revive the local economy.

While producers used to drive the trend and concepts in educational and performing fields in the past, the recent cultural storytelling seems to present something new, asking the parties involved to contribute to urban regeneration as well as to cultural industries in this changing environment. First sources may evolve to form a policy in different cultural industries through various channels. Meanwhile, national cultural contents include both unique and universal cultural narratives before they are delivered to users[55]. If citizens are to participate in cultural activities and content production, different support systems must apply for each phase.

As the Stratford Festival had a different approach at first, Korea also relied on both established and original works as local theater companies worked together with professionals and citizens. The case of Korea developed through citizen actors, local theater companies, and theater festivals. After a one-off Festival involving the theater

companies the city had generated, Seoul started the SCTF in 2015 to include all twenty-five *gus*. However, there is a long way to go to involve citizen actors, produce content, and promote open communications and exchanges. It is an area for improvement for Gangjin-gun as well if its government is to launch a theater company as planned after the Sooner or Later Project.

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