

Cultural Contents Service Development Plan Based on Spatial Characteristics - A Case of Storytelling Sources Development in Korean Confucian Cultural Area -

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Abstract. Currently many countries are increasingly investing in the development of their own cultural contents based on their spatial characteristics. Northern Kyungbook area in Korea is jumping on the wagon, developing its cultural contents on the basis of its spatial characteristics as a Confucian cultural area. The Storytelling Theme Park Service is a prominent example of its efforts to develop its own cultural contents. The Service has been developed by extracting storytelling sources from the elements of Confucian culture, in particular the old diaries of Confucian scholars of the area. The project is based on the appreciation of rich historical and cultural context of the area and is expected to contribute to the development of various cultural industries of Korea. So it can be considered as a case showing that cultural contents development based on spatial characteristics can benefit from the efforts at the state level.

Keywords: Cultural Contents Service, Spatial Characteristics, Storytelling Sources Development

1. Spatial Characteristics and Cultural Contents

We are living in the Digital Age where time and space are no longer unsurmountable barriers. Rapid accelerations in Information Technology development are making this possible and have become the basis of many emerging new media forms. And now the world's center of economy of gravity has shifted from heavy industries to service industries. Above all, cultural industry is getting the spotlight as the next big thing. It's because cultural industry has become a rich value-added business in itself and can be an efficient way to promote the unique qualities of the area as well. Countries all over the world are scrambling to develop their own unique cultural contents.¹ Unique here means cultural contents with spatial

¹ Kim Saeng-Soo: Strategic Utilization of Place Marketing in the Local Government for the Regional Development – Focused on Regional Museums in Yeongwol County -. The Korea

characteristics that cannot be found in other cultures. In other words, the production of cultural contents reflecting the spatial characteristics has become the core component of cultural industry competitiveness.

Most prominent among the unique spatial characteristics are traditional cultures based on the historical contexts of each community. Traditional cultures, by definition, have been formed from the unique historical and cultural characteristics of the area and so cannot be reproduced in other areas. Thus, reviewing some ways to develop cultural contents services based on spatial characteristics can show how utilizing the cultural historical context of the area and the contents developed from it can be a promising business model.² This study focuses on the case of development of storytelling sources in Korean Confucian cultural areas. It's because this case can shed some light on approaches for developing cultural contents services on the basis of spatial characteristics of each area.

2. Spatial Characteristics of Northern Kyungbook Province Confucian Cultural Area

Korea isn't a big country in the context of East Asia. A single nation country, Korea has a long history and a long cultural tradition. Confucianism, first introduced in Mid-Koryu period from China, remains a crucial component of Korean culture for nearly a thousand years. Neo-Confucianism, imported by An Hyang in Koryu period was accepted by Koryu ruling class as its political ideology, and later, in Chosun Dynasty, became an official governing philosophy.

Every characteristics of Chosun Dynasty can be explained by the Confucian ideas. Sarim class, a literati emerging from Mid-Chosun period, applied Neo-Confucianism to every aspect of people's lives, establishing Confucian ruling order throughout the country. This ruling order was instanced by social institutions. Hyangyak(鄉約), recommended rules of conduct in social life, was established as a means to maintain the social order in rural communities. Hyangkyo(鄉校), an educational institution, was established to transfer Confucian ideas down to the youth. Suhwon(書院), an institution which functioned as a venue for Jesa(祭祀, memorial services to ancestors) and education, was established to spread the ideas of revered Confucian scholars. They were all institutions for instilling Confucianism into the people and thus encouraging its ideals to be embodied in their everyday lives.

Also functioning as an important means of transferring Confucian ideas was publications produced by Confucian scholars. They recorded everything they saw, heard and felt in writing to inculcate Confucian ideas. Their efforts were challenged by the then low level printing technologies. Meager printing technology prevailing at

Local Administration Review. Vol.21-1, 203(2007); Berg, L. van den and Braun, E.: Urban Competitiveness, Marketing and the need for Organizing Capacity. Urban Studies 36, (1999)

² Yong-Mo Seo, Myung-Hwan Chun, Hyung-Jun Kim: City Marketing Strategy using City Identities – Focus on the Application of Modern Architectures -. THE KCA THESIS JOURNAL. Vol.10-1, (2010)

the time forced them to scribe or copy by hand every book by book. Meanwhile these efforts made numerous written materials available today.

Most of Hangkyos and Suhwons, mentioned above as functioning as institutions for spreading and transferring Confucian ideas, as well as written records, were destroyed over time. Many historic sites have disappeared and many written records were destroyed or compromised by the weight of time. Northern Kyungbook Province is the area where the written materials and historic sites can be found the most in Korea. The area, including Andong and Yungju, is thus called the representative Confucian cultural area, with its Confucian culture remaining as prominent spatial characteristics.³

So core components of this area's cultural contents is Confucian culture. Recently this area is trying to develop its cultural contents based on this Confucian cultural heritage. The most prominent example is 'ugyo.net' services provided by Korean Studies Advancement Center located in the city of Andong. The name 'ugyo.net' combines 'ugyo,' Confucianism in Korean, and 'u' in the concept of 'ubiquitous,' representing the center's efforts to serve Confucian cultural contents for Information Age. And this study aims to provide information on the development of Confucian cultural contents carried by Korean Studies Advancement Center.

3. Cultural Contents Source Materials of Confucian Cultural Area - Written Records

Most of written records available today in Northern Kyungbook Province were produced by Confucian scholars of Chosun period. Richness of this area's written culture is shown by the fact that about 60% of written records produced in Chosun period were from this area.⁴ Written records from Chosun are mostly produced by Confucian scholars, so they also can be called Confucian written records. Korean Studies Advancement Center located in Andong has about 340,000 items of them.

Presently available written records from Confucian culture can be classified roughly as four types. The first category comprises of records printed in woodblocks. Woodblock printing was a prevailing printing method before metal types were invented. In Chosun, printing with metal types was more widely used than woodblock printing. Other East Asian countries relied more on woodblock printing than metal types, due to unique properties of Chinese characters. The total number of Chinese characters is a controversial issue due to their sheer numbers. Thus typeprinting seems to have been not easy to be widely used in areas where Chinese characters were used. Anyway, in Korea woodblock printing was a preliminary phase before typeprinting, especially, of written records from Confucian culture. Woodblock printing can be

³ Seong Yun Kim: The Confucianism cultural sphere of younngnam(嶺南) and deployment of Local school -centering around Local feature of Younngnam school's thought system and cultural aspect appeared in its transfer process in andong(安東), sangju(尙州), seongju(星州) sphere. The Journal of Chosun Dynasty History. Vol.37, (2006)

⁴ Kim Jong-seok: The Valuation of KSAC's Wood Blocks in the Documentary Heritage's aspect. Korean studies. Vol.17, (2010)

valuable as written heritage, but of more value is some kind of collective intelligence shown in the making of woodblocks. The collective intelligence always appeared in the procedures whereby preparatory meetings were convened, specific roles were assigned, members chipped in, materials for printing were acquired, and, ultimately, printing blocks were made. This is a phenomenon that could be found only in Korea.⁵

The second category consists of anthologies of works by Confucian scholars. The collections were made from written records produced by Confucian scholars in their lifetime. Typically these anthologies were collected posthumously by descendants or disciples of the scholars based on their writings. Also, relatives, friends, and former teachers and students were sought in person to acquire correspondences received by them from the dead to collect into the books. Anthologies compiled the ideas of the scholars on their own, but most Confucian scholars in Chosun period also belonged to some schools of philosophy and political factions, so their writings also represent the ideas of these schools and factions. Therefore, their anthologies functioned as a means to collect and pass down not only the ideas of the scholars themselves, but also the ideas of groups they belonged to.⁶

The third category is writings exchanged between Confucian scholars and communities. These are called old manuscripts and include correspondences exchanged between individuals, between individuals and government offices, between government offices, and even between monarchs and their subjects. These are letters inquiring after each other's health, containing serious philosophical discussions, petitioning or complaining to government offices. Some are letters from government offices informing petitioners of actions taken by them, others are from lower offices up to higher offices, others are from higher offices down to lower offices, containing directions, still others are appointments bestowed by monarchs to newly appointed state officials. Some are lists of donations from guests at the time of wedding ceremonies, and others are for discussing or informing of current issues. Every interaction between individuals ended up written in records, including records of buying and selling servants and lands. These documents are valuable written records showing vividly how people in every walks of life led their lives.⁷

The fourth category is represented by diaries written by Confucian scholars. Whereas anthologies were collected by others after the scholars passed away, diaries are very valuable in that they contain information daily scribed by the scholars themselves about what they saw, heard, and felt in their lifetime. The diaries are particularly invaluable in that the records were not contaminated by the viewpoints of other people. Diaries left by Confucian scholars are various in forms: written during service for the state, written during travels to China as envoys, written after sightseeing reputed mountains, written in the midst of everyday lives in the homes and rural communities, written during war periods, and written for celebrating constructions of Suhwons and monuments. These diaries are particularly useful as

⁵ Sul Suk-Kyu: The background and meaning of the production of Confucian wooden blocks for printing. Korean studies. Vol.6, (2005)

⁶ Sin Seung Un: The Publication Culture of Confucian Society -Emphasized the Compilation and Publication of the Anthology in the Chosun Dynasty. Dae dong mun hwa yon gu. Vol.39, (2001)

⁷ Jung Jin-Young: A Study on Ways to Compile and Utilize Historical Manuscripts. The journal of bibliography. Vol.34, (2009)

sources of cultural contents due to the various interesting events contained in the records.⁸

4. Extracting Storytelling Sources from Confucian Diaries

One of the richest veins containing of rich and diverse source materials among Confucian written records is diaries. So a web service was created and is being maintained to facilitate using source materials extracted from diaries to create cultural contents--Storytelling Theme Park Service(<http://story.ugyo.net>). Here are offered motifs that can inspire cultural contents creators, as well as diverse materials, including history, space, and props, needed to create cultural contents.

Extracting storytelling source from the diaries should be preceded by understanding unique characteristics of diaries. One of the foremost characteristics of diaries is that, written in Chinese characters, they have a limited readership. Chinese characters were widely used in Chosun period, but now they can be understood by a small number of people. Understanding diaries properly needs overcoming this language barrier in advance. So arises the need to translate diaries in Chinese characters into contemporary Korean.

Second characteristics of diaries is that they should be read as a cultural code of Chosun period. Their contents cannot be understood without understanding daily lives of Chosun period. Temporal and social differences separating Chosun period from the present can be a cultural barrier, resulting in the necessity of providing background material explaining why specific events happened the way they did.

Third characteristics of diaries is that they are produced on the daily basis. Writers recorded daily events in diaries, so some events were covered over a span of several days, in some cases, even several years. In the process of extracting contents source, daily events recorded in diaries need to be converted into stories consisting of a single story.

Fourth characteristics of diaries is that they were not intended to be read by other than their writers. So understanding them needs special care. Generally, grammatical subjects were omitted and, when their authors refer to other people, they often did it in their own idiosyncratic way, making it difficult for contemporary readers to identify the reference. So genealogical records of the family of the writers or records showing their social relations(school ties or regional ties) should be consulted to understand the diaries properly.

Extracting cultural contents sources from diaries can only be possible when taking these characteristics into account. Aforementioned Storytelling Theme Park Service actually extracted storytelling sources on the single event basis from diaries. The standard applied when extracting sources were that extracted stores should be categorized on the thematic basis, so allowing contents creator to search the sources for specific themes they are interested in. In addition, characters are categorized by salient features, like their social status or titles, so events characters appear in can be utilized as motifs for cultural contents.

⁸ Yeom Jung-Sub: A Study on the Characteristics and Classification of the Diaries written in Chosun period. Quarterly review of Korean history. Vol.24, (1997)

Background material surrounding specific events are provided to ease contextual understanding of the events. Background information, like historical and cultural information about the period the events occurred in, can be very useful for understanding the events. In particular, historical terms and proper nouns inevitably found in diaries can be looked up in a dictionary provided for users. On the other hand, multimedia material is provided for the events difficult to understand from written information only. For example, 3D objects representing arrangements and structures of buildings in Suhwons can be found. And photographs are provided for existing historical sites. A map representing routes used when going from Kyungsang Province to Seoul for taking state examinations is marked with dates indicating the progress. Procedures of memorial services to ancestors are displayed in flash animation to make it easy to understand the overall process.

Ultimately, extracting work amounts to making a database of storytelling sources. And the web services offer links to themes-characters-multimedia-background information surrounding the sources. A kep map showing the services is shown below.

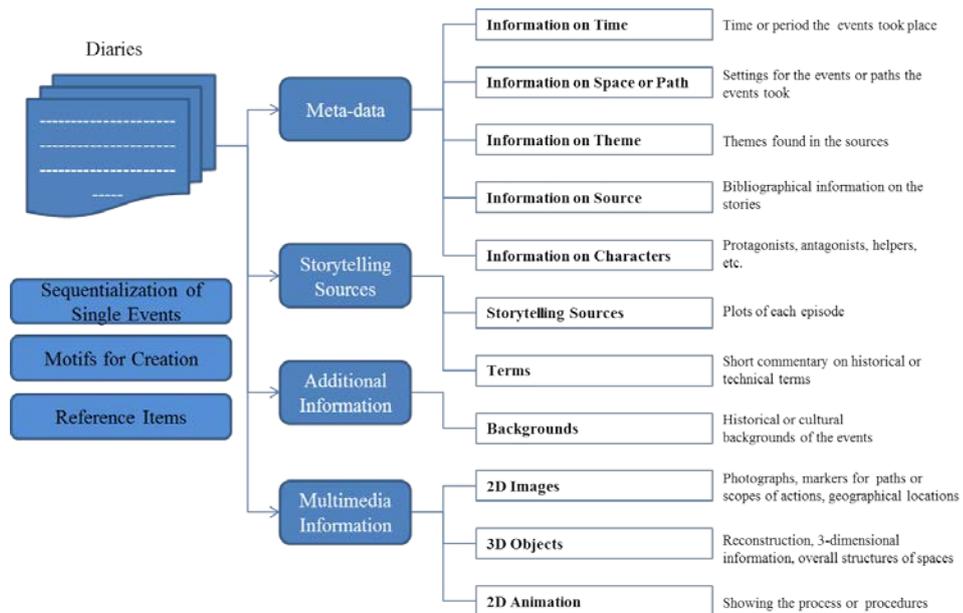


Fig. 1. Key Map of Cultural Contents Sources Services from Diaries

5. How Storytelling Sources Can Be Utilized

Most of cultural contents from the diaries are events that happened in the context of spatial characteristics of Confucian cultural area. So the efforts to provide the

sources should go hand in hand with the efforts to utilize traditional culture in the context of today. Then, what are some of the promising ways to utilizing source materials for storytelling?

First, source materials for storytelling can provide motifs for creating cultural contents. For example, one source material tells of a story of a Confucian scholar travelling around Chungryang Mountain in present-day Kyungbook Province. The scholar witnessed some fossils of clam in the mountain and wrote about it in his diary, along with his opinion about the creation and the history of the universe. The story might be surprising for many people today, because it is not well-known that Confucian scholars of Chosun were interested in natural sciences, let alone natural history. This story shows that Confucian scholars of Chosun had aspects well-hidden from our view. Sources like this can provide novel ideas for storytelling.

Second, source materials can provide detailed information that can be used in bringing specific scenes to life. For instance, there's a source material recording in detail procedures for posthumous worship of Confucian scholars. The document tells at what o'clock the worship began, and what kinds of people gathered at which places. And some multimedia material is also provided on what the procedures consisted of, what kinds of foods were served, what kinds of bowls and plates were used, and what kinds clothes the worshippers wore. This detailed information can help recreate more historically truthful set and props in the process of creating cultural contents.

Utilizing source materials for storytelling is not confined to designing and production of cultural contents. They also can be used for cultural sightseeing services demanded by local communities. Most of cultural contents from the diaries are events closely related to specific spaces in Confucian cultural areas. They are in close relationship with events in the context of specific spaces, specific persons appearing in the events, and the cultural heritage, including the artifacts the people used. So storytelling using these source materials can help ignite interests and remember for people visiting the area. This way, written records passed down from Confucian culture can be recreated as cultural contents reflecting local characteristics, not remaining just as records from the past.

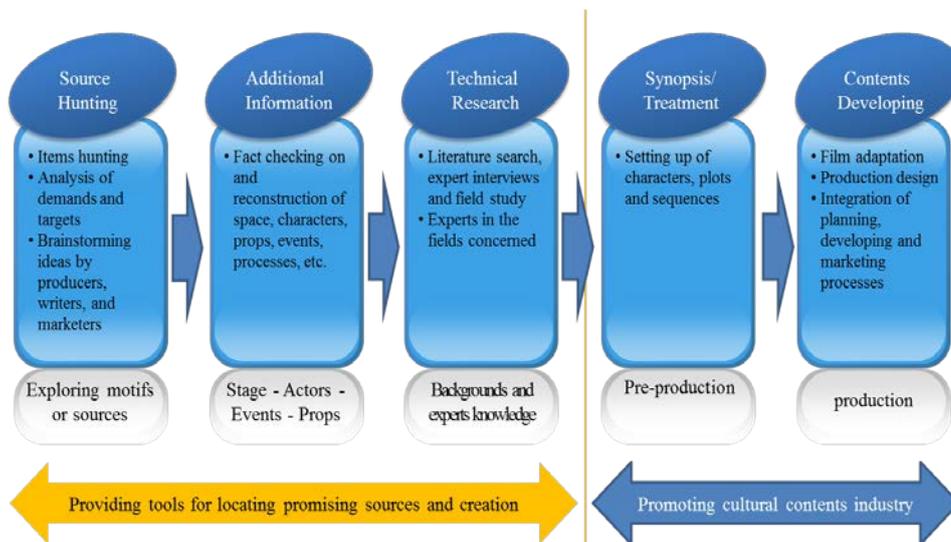


Fig. 2. Plans for Utilizing Storytelling Theme Park Service

Sources from Storytelling Theme Park Service can be utilized in various cultural industries for the creation of TV dramas, movies, novels, documentaries, plays, musicals, comics, animations, etc. These sources show the spatial characteristics of Confucian Cultural Area of Northern Kyungbook Province in Korea in its cultural historical context. But their significance is not limited to the area. Currently Korean Wave, represented by K-Pop plays a significant role in promoting Korean culture around the world. But the Confucian culture of the Northern Kyungbook area has formed and continues to form a crucial part of Korean Confucian culture, and the sources formed from its Confucian culture have the potential to represent the cultural contents of Korea. Cultural contents based on these characteristics can be expected to contribute to the development of Korean culture industry, as well as to the enhancement of the national brand of Korea.

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