

Action

and/or

Interaction

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Tense of Local Cultural Production Action and/or Interaction

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Efforts for the precise classification of local areas and regions or small cities and rural areas are valid in the context of sublating the discriminatory hierarchy contained by each language. In fact, in terms of post-modern urbanization, each region exists according to the positioning of the degree of alienation. And the regions are given the meaning of local, regional and rural areas according to various needs in addition to the image objectified as nostalgic for city-dwellers. Why are the terms 'local' used mixed?

The origination of local in today's administrative units can be examined in the formation of nation-states and within the context of modernization amidst the different political and economic conditions of the world. But this also involves abundant local transitions that are specific to each area and cannot be generalized based on the interaction of capital (local economy) and coercion (national authority) from the conflict between government powers that drove localization. The perspective from a cultural context is as follows.

In terms of a variety of small and large borders on the world map, local areas have in fact become what they are today on the coordinates of interaction where there is state intervention, collision, and competition in the course of reshuffling the capital order and folk history in the context of cultural identity.

As known, "local" in Korea has two problems resulting from the rigid state-led local space development under the pretext of modernization: unequal local development from an

economic aspect and local alienation from a cultural aspect. Under the leadership of the central and local governments to overcome the challenges, all local cultural administrations have been competing with one another to formulate better and more cultural policies.

The competitive reality of local cultural policies which are somewhat roughly compressed together is that while using the equal, or at least homogeneous, term of “local area” for the space, history, or people—which apply forcefully—of rural areas and regions in order to enhance and discover each local cultural identity in the cultural topography of the center and heart of the city, while also conveying the paradox of homogeneity or objectification.

Then is cultural production action executed under such context a local art? It is also necessary to examine why local areas are needed for cultural producers today. First briefly, looking into the examples of such words as local, regional, and rural areas—as mentioned at the beginning of this article—can provide a clue for examining the present state of the interaction between the cultural production agency and the local agency within the terms. As an approach to the question “why are local terms mixed and used?”, recent articles and notices that can be accessed by anyone with keywords like “local culture” and “local art” in Google will be used as a few examples to illustrate how cultural production action having placeness in the current times can be positioned.

“[Invention of Local Areas] Art for Local, Local for Art”

[Mar. 22, 2022, Wisdom of Thinking](#)

“Local Areas' Interest Is Necessary for the Development of Local Artwork” [Jul. 10, 2020, Gyeongnam Domin Ilbo](#)

“Activation of Base Region for Art Activities of Mapo as Cultural Channel” [Mapo Foundation for Arts and Culture](#)

“Local Art Activity Support Project” [Gunpo Cultural Foundation](#)

“The Federation of Korean Cultural Centers procured data on local cultures including publications from 231 regional cultural centers nationwide to contribute to developing unique cultures of local areas and strengthening the competitiveness of local areas...” [Local N Culture](#)

Although it is challenging to deal with the multiple definitions of “local” in detail, there are several publications from before 2000 that demonstrate how different perspectives and agencies used the words “regional” and “local” interchangeably. There was just a single article with the keywords “local culture” and “local art” in the 1980s, but their use grew exponentially between the 1988 Summer Olympics and the year 2000 (refer to Naver News Library), thus hinting at the glocalization phenomenon in which local competitiveness accelerated in the new economic order of neoliberalism. When we look deeper into the aforementioned, the word “region” started to vanish and “local” became more widely used, although neither of them was distinguished in many tenses. Not only that, regional administrations began referring to themselves as local areas. However, unlike the cultural topography, the word “local” is still used to describe regions, small cities, urban areas, gardens, and the like in general. Region or local, sometimes called province in some areas, is termed differently by projecting the user's understandings and desires. The terms “country person” or “provincial person” carry a strong connotation when emphasized.

Then, what does “local” mean in the context of cultural topography? From a cultural perspective, “local area” passes through local and transcends places that act as regional areas to become a cultural region beyond the current administrative borders (including the sphere of everyday life; Hoengseong and Wonju of Gangwon-do are considered one-day life zones, thus being a single local area). The cultural producer, which is the agency (from an eco-

conomic context of regional administration), is also considered an expert that go beyond local boundaries. A local area, however, refers to a specific place, and people, history and daily life—which are elements of various local cultural identities—are objectified within the limitations of local borders. Cultural action, where the differentiation of local areas intersects, is thus positioned on the structural limitations of cross-cultural interaction. In fact, cultural production in local areas transcends local boundaries and represents the actions of experts, objectified interaction, or interaction with the local agency and the action of (only) the local agency. To reiterate, cross-cultural interaction between the local cultural production agency and the local agency becomes delayed and exaggerated **within the return of the production agency exceeding the local and the return of “local”** in each regional cultural administration.

The local culture space “Pink Factory” in Hongcheon serves as the production base of an independent project “My Hongcheon Culture Story: In Search of Jungang Market” that kicked off in 2014 to connect local students and local senior citizens. The project aimed at questioning the semantic network of borders (between local and cultural identity) of the administrative area of Hongcheon from a cultural aspect. For five years (2015–2019), international artists who shared a critical mindset on the themes of “locality”, “tradition”, “superstate space”, “movement”, and “gender” were invited to conduct research on Hongcheon, and in-depth studies also took place through site visits and workshops. The procedures and results of a wide range of methodologies were recorded through exhibitions, performances, and publications. In addition, the population composition of Hongcheon was taken into account and the social white paper of the local government was referred to for carrying out the community project with various local cultural agencies and local agencies. Starting in 2020, projects have been organized and carried out focusing on detailed places,

myths, and nature of the local area, and a base called “Pink Annex” was built in idle land at a market, which is the center of local networks, to narrow the gap with local residents. With the direct involvement of hundreds of people, they question the borders and identity of Hongcheon, the actual existence of Hongcheon and its operation, and the timeliness of mechanism and cause-effect. But because of the paradox of objectifying Hongcheon from these questions, they reach their limit and return and revert.

According to Raymond Williams, “Culture is a skill for a specific method of life that expresses meaning and value that exist not only in arts or academic, but also systems and common behavior.” In other words, culture is something that is ordinary and common. And the common culture represents the creation of conditions acquired with the participation of all members. In this case, culture serves the free illusion of members of a society ideologically, and it is newly created based on “creative and historical agents” according to its spontaneity. Local can be defined as areas where detailed and assertive cultural actions take place and where various cultures of cultural producers compete according to its spontaneity. It is now time to free ourselves from the swamp of objectification.

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