

An Introduction to Course ; “Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Regional Development”

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Summary

This paper aims to introduce briefly a course of “Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Regional Development” which has been being lectured since the School Year 1999 at The Faculty of Regional Development Studies, Toyo University. In the first chapter of the paper, nexus between cultural heritages and regional development are described and in the second chapter, necessities of formulating specialists for planning and managing regions with cultural assets are explained. In the third chapter, a course of “Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Regional Development” is outlined and in the fourth chapter, it is emphasized that technical transfers and cooperations among worldwide experts in related various fields such as architecture, archeology and regional / urban planning are key factors for further development of relations between cultural heritages and regional development.

The first and second chapters are extracted from the paper ; “Seeking of new value of Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Regional Development”⁽¹⁾ which is a selected paper to be presented at “Two Thousand Years, And More, in The History of Structures and Architecture”, UNESCO / ICOMOS.

1. Nexus between cultural heritages and regional development

1.1 World Heritages and Regions

The National Land Agency of the Government of Japan conducted the research project⁽²⁾ to clarify the relationship between World Heritages and those regions in 1996. 399 Cultural and Mixed Properties as of February 1997 were studied from viewpoints of “habitation in properties” and “using for region”. According to the report residents live just inside of 122 properties (34 %) out of 399 Cultural and

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Mixed Properties and 136 (37 %) around the Properties. 212 Properties are in use for local inhabitants. Furthermore the case study was made on 16 World Cultural Properties and 3 World Natural Properties in 15 foreign countries. Main findings of the case study could be a fact that their properties are not only used directly as historical and natural resources (e.g., tourism resources) but also recognized to be much more valuable properties with historical and natural contexts for their regions and people. That is to say their historical backgrounds and relations with natural environment are revived in regional contemporary life. It seems to have been clarified that World Properties have clear relation with regions and keep their potential to contribute to regional development empirically.

1.2 Cultural properties and regional / urban development in Japan

Japan's many local governments have been being developing local socio-economy by restoring and preserving historical archeological sites, old towns and quarters, intangible cultural heritages and so fourth. If such effort developed further, a better way of sustainable regional development with cultural heritages could be found.

For example, Kawagoe City located 30 km far from Tokyo is one of best models of preserving old quarter with traditional buildings along a main street⁽³⁾. Today it is known that economic development and preserved traditional buildings are well coordinated and the downtown of the City is much more animated with traditional landscape and buildings. Their activities of local government, residents and specialists were commenced in 1955 to preserve traditional buildings. They had been under risk to be demolished mainly due to Japan's high economic growth and rapid urban development. Today's prosperity of the downtown has been being developed together with activities to preserve the old quarter.

On the other hand it has been so much discussed in Japan that highway and freeway constructions affected many historical landscapes, and hotel buildings destroyed natural scenery and so on.

How to avoid such conflict and how to find better way of construction and implementation of projects that might affect regional values such as landscapes and historical assets? One very possible solution might be to formulate regional planners who could understand how to coordinate regional development and cultural / natural values from the viewpoint of regional development.

If the restoration and preservation of cultural heritages and socio-economic

development could be well harmonized, they would improve and further develop their socio-economic situation with using cultural heritages as assets. And then next generation could inherit our common cultural properties in better condition.

It seems that cultural heritage could contribute to local socio-economic development, and simultaneously local socio-economic development could restore and preserve cultural heritages. There the existence of mutual relationship between cultural heritage and socio-economic development could be found out. But as some past cases showed us, development does not necessarily mean a direct relation with tourism industries development.

Accordingly it is very important not to introduce an easygoing "heritization" to sites of cultural heritages. Hence it could be avoided to destroy true values of heritages due to development.

2. Necessities of formulating specialist

In order to realize sustainable regional development with cultural heritages, first of all human resources are in need. Such human resources who will be in charge of regional development on site should be able to understand how to coordinate regional urban development planning with cultural assets.

According to the Study Report⁽⁴⁾, since 1997 experts of Institute of Asian Cultures, Sophia University have been giving Cambodian students lectures on "Cultural Site Management" under the UNESCO Project. The lectures are given in classrooms and on sites as well. After a few years Cambodian experts could be enough number to conduct research and to restore and preserve their heritages such as Angkor Watt area by themselves. Hence formulating and training such specialists are very necessary.

3. Course of "Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Regional Development"

Course, entitled "Cultural heritage in sustainable regional development" was opened at The Faculty of Regional Development Studies, Toyo University in School Year 1999. It is given to educate and formulate specialists from viewpoints of regional planning with cultural heritages. The syllabus consists of the institutions of planning, technical and environmental considerations for master planning, managing development of regions / urban areas, case studies and so on.

It is emphasized to study what is the basic concept of regional development and how to apply institutional systems for planning and development. Then students are highly expected to master a method how to coordinate regional development planning and cultural heritage.

4. Technical cooperations to developing countries

The International Congress entitled "The World Cultural Heritages in Asian Countries-Sustainable Development and Conservation" was held in Kyoto and Tokyo on October 13-18, 1997 by Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties. Eleven historical cities were presented and discussed from the viewpoint of how to achieve sustainable preservation of their cultural heritages in a context of very rapid urbanization in Asian developing countries.

These cities needs expertise to preserve historical towns and architectures in scientific and effective manner. Accordingly it is very important to transfer knowledge and experience internationally. A good case of technical transfer and training is the activity of Sophia Univ. in Angkor Watt area of Cambodia as depicted in the second chapter of this paper.

5. Conclusion

World Bank organized "Culture in Sustainable Development Group" with staffs of IBRD and they are today achieving very vital activities in collaboration with UNESCO, ICOMOS and many other international institutions⁽⁵⁾. Japan also has many good practical experiences on site and legal / financial supporting systems to be transferred to developing countries in this field.

Therefore, further international technical cooperation and information exchanges among officials and specialists of culture in sustainable regional / urban development are highly expected. A course of "Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Regional Development" lectured in the Faculty of International Regional Development Studies, Toyo Univ. could contribute to such expectation by educating regional planners.

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