Bridging the Gap with South Korea’s Community-Based Archives - Unlocking the Potential, the Challenges, Insights and Learning from the Community

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Citizens' engagement with social activities expanded for the maturation of civil society

Increase of community-based archiving movement in South Korea

Role of community archives as an indicator for understanding a society (politics, economy, technology, education, etc.)

Demand for national policy and support for the expansion for community archives’ social role

Identity formation of community & building social cohesion

Networking based on cooperation with community archives
Development and Change of Community-Based Archives in South Korea

Since the late 1980s

- The emergence of major civic groups

- The contents and information related to civic group activities by employing transparency and experience acquired in the process

- The record governance participants as they are created through the voluntary engagement of citizens
Development and Change of Community-Based Archives in South Korea

Since the mid-1990s

Minority communities and their struggles for recognition

- Uncover and publish false accusations of the victims in order to honor them and to reconcile with the past
- Cataloging and digitizing archives such as documents, books, images, artifacts and films donated by different organizations
Development and Change of Community-Based Archives in South Korea

Beginning in 2010

Community-based archiving movement in local areas

- Urban regeneration & village revitalization programs → Change of the regional landscape → bringing awareness of “the memories of those who were there”
- Collecting local records and running outreach programs of cultural institutions (e.g. citizen archivist training program, exhibitions, etc.)
### Status and Characteristics of Community Archives in Korea

#### Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>regional</td>
<td>Cities, provinces, regions, villages</td>
<td>Administrative and regional boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transregional</td>
<td>Historical/social events and accidents of modern Korean history, cultural and artistic activity, citizen movement and networks, etc.</td>
<td>Pan-national, transnational thematic issues</td>
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## Status and Characteristics of Community Archives in Korea

### Status

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Current situation</th>
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| Community-led archiving         | • Collecting and managing not only historical archives but also current records  
|                                 | • Difficulties: lack of manpower and financial support for archives management  
|                                 | • Demand: guidelines, education, and consulting for community archives management                                                                                                                                 |
| Local authority-led archiving   | • Collecting archives with citizen participation (donation, exhibition, publication)  
|                                 | • Archiving as a form of published contents rather than ‘archives’ themselves  
|                                 | • Difficulties: lack of space, manpower and knowledge for archives management  
|                                 | • Demand: supporting archives management through partnership with archives                                                                                                                                          |
Emergence of a new archival platform: ‘Pul-soop’

- Platform ‘Pul-soop’ provides a digital platform for environmental organizations to build archives.
- Environmental organizations digitize their archives and register them.
- Digital archives of different environmental organizations are connected by a same platform ‘Pul-soop’.
- ‘Pul-soop’ enables us to access and discover useful information of the environment.
Needs of Networking According to Cooperation Among Community Archives

Change in the recognition of community archives in South Korea

- Social roles of community and community archives become more visible
- Community archives can also be subjects for collaboration instead of being objects only for collecting and managing.

The beginning of NAK; first step: Research focused on networking among community archives (2022)

- Research scope: communities that are passionate about archiving activities
- Research method: literature review, case study, survey, and interview
Needs of Networking According to Cooperation Among Community Archives

**Situation of communities**

**Difficulties in community activities**
- Lack of finances: 49.1%
- Insufficient infrastructure: 31.3%
- Difficulties due to changes in human resources: 7.5%

**Needs for community archiving activities**
- Financial aid: 38.4%
- Infrastructure support: 19.8%
- Training and consulting: 16.3%
Needs of Networking According to Cooperation Among Community Archives

**Awareness of Archives Management in Communities**

- **Importance of Community Archives**
  - Very important: 43.4%
  - Important: 41.5%
  - Less important: 13.2%

- **Roles of Community Archives**
  - Identify community history and achievements: 43.4%
  - Raise awareness of identity and community: 26.4%
  - Promote community activities: 17.0%

- **Difficulties in Archives Management**
  - Lack of manpower: 39.6%
  - Insufficient finances: 28.3%
  - Lack of knowledge about archives management: 26.4%

- **Awareness of Support**
  - Sharing information on community archive activities: 33.7%
  - Networking among community archives: 28.1%
  - Sharing the achievements and history of community activities: 20.2%

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9th Annual Conference of the International Council on Archives

ROME
19-23 September 2022
Needs of Networking According to Cooperation Among Community Archives

Needs of networking, cooperation and exchange as a bridge

• Promote the identification and sharing of information and resources
• Help in the community’s sustainability, stable retention of resources, achievement of community objectives

To create and strengthen the network of community archives

• Seek policy-based approach for community leaders, workshops, meetings, and media to engage in mutual relations and gather all capacities together through sharing information
• Develop various policies depending on the exchange between community archives and the subject of cooperation
• Support education programs to increase exchange between citizen archivists and community archives
• Increase mutual exchange between community and public archives
How to Activate the Cooperative Network

- Have various agents (experts, technicians, associated organizations, and public officials) who can connect resources (information, knowledge, technology, system, financing)
- Reflect the opinions of participants
- Improve each community’s self-sufficiency and capacity
- Develop a network
- Expand the community centered on educational programs and build a network with other professional groups

The Objectivities of National Archives of Korea is to Provide:

- Archival environments for the stable creation and management of archives
- Knowledge & technical information related to archives management
- Information related to community activities and list of community archives
- Opening a online/offline workshops and conferences for the network
- Information related to financial support
Conclusion

What NAK should consider

- Community archives should acknowledge themselves as archives and feel the need to share information about the archives.
- Communities should be able to identify themselves through the network platform in order to improve their sense of belonging, acknowledge and communicate with other institutions. This will ultimately contribute to the development of democracy.
- The network platform should be based on mutual interests and cooperation between community archives and mainstream cultural heritage institutions such as the National Archives. In such process, mainstream cultural heritage institutions should minimize their influences.
Conclusion

• Appropriate systems and policies should be made for the sustainable activities of the communities.
• Community archives information shared by the platform should be open to new interpretations under different contexts.
Thank You!

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