Cultural renaissance and cultural tourism in the City of Tainan

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Claiming Tainan’s cultural renaissance

2003 mayor Hsu (2003-10); the national museum of literature;

2011 deputy mayor Lin; a creative quarter development plan
2008 director Chan; **Old Buildings Happy (New) Forces project**
local assets, creativity, diversity, daily life 
values and aesthetics (bottom up development of 
local character and quality concerns)
‘Cultural renaissance, Tainan’ 2003/2008
identity and economic development

• The city- a brief history/ heritage and fabric
• A culture-led redevelopment process
• Public realm enhancement
• Tourism promotion
• Other areas of changes
• Discussions – theories, concerns, expectations
Taiwan- Tainan (south of Taiwan)

The first major city in Ming and Chin Dynasties (1663-1895)

770,000 inhabitants before merging with Tainan County
The city of Tainan – city fabric, historic landmarks and local traditions; difficulties

• Before the 20th century
  a harbour village- a town- a walled city
  Dutch fortifications (1624-1653),
  the first Confucius temple (1665),
  major historic temples,
  military base and facilities (1850)
  an organic fabric of streets, lanes and canals
• The period of the Japanese Occupation

a modern urban plan, grid-iron street network with roundabouts and key buildings

a new townscape
(western classical)
原臺南合同廳舍
（現警察局與消防局）

breanupse Simple Life
http://ethuby.jumnet.net/blog
Tainan in the 1930s
• End of WWII to the early 1990s

Economic development led planning a period of fast *urban growth and development boom*
change of economic base and urban form;
land speculation and ill urban management
*crises in conservation, environment protection and urban quality* (townscape, legibility, urban service, public realm, …)
*reforms started*
From the late 1990s onward

An era of reform/ new development policies—science park, historic parks (back to the past landscape?), cultural districts, cultural tourism, urban regeneration, healthy city etc.

Improvement of the public realm, community empowerment

Recurring theme of Tainan’s identity—

history and culture
• A culture-led redevelopment process
• Cultural capital *Citing Kyoto city as the model*
designating cultural districts/parks (historic quarters)/
establishment of the city’s Bureau of Culture/
cultural festivals/ national level museums
district for creative industry
waterfront leisure development

• Related plans and policies
Healthy City Tainan (2004-2010), Urban Vision Strategies, Cityscape Policies, Sustainable Whitepapers
expansion of urban design control
The Confucius Temple cultural park
The five harbours district
• New tourists attractions (venues and festivals)
• International hotels
• Private sector investment in renovation
• New tourism magazines and guidebooks
• Weekend tourist buses
• Tourism growth- increase in numbers of visitors to heritage sites, tourist related commercial activities,..
• Cultural elements: local rituals, music, performing arts, crafts; history and…
Meaning of changed places

“sense of place” : settings, activities, meaning

• Easy access to Heritage sites/ historic significance and cultural content?
  
  Space of culture and history or Space of leisure, entertainment and consumption - vendors, leisure activities and space design

• Stereotypical visuals, activities and experiences on those historic streets; similarities in festival contents

• Characteristic local goods made and easily seen elsewhere
• the World Tourism Organisation’s definition that all tourism trips can be considered as cultural tourism, because they ‘satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience, and encounters.’ (Richards, 2007: 6)

• William’s idea of seeing cultural tourism as the ‘arts and learning, the special processes of discovery and creative effort’ (1958:8, cited in Smith 2003: 9), and

• the conceptual definition by the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research:... away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs (Smith, 2003: 30)
• The emphasis of Taiwan’s historic background as cultural content (for city identity) is highly political (the city’s status; the strongest base of the opposition party)
• The management of cultural tourism, economical

• Cultural policies? (indicators? Planning for the processes of learning, discovery and creative efforts?)

• Lack of significant support (public transport? quality public realm (friendliness)? sensitive enhancement of historic quarters? longer-term thinking and investment in cultural development? cultural depth and due consultancy?)

• And others (ways of living that are hostile to the environment and tourists,…)
Unresolved conflicts; poor quality
• The architecture of the new south
mostly housing, a sense of quality and identity

• **Old Buildings Happy (新欣) Forces**

  2008-, new tourist attractions, media attention

  Foundation of Historic City Conservation and
  Regeneration (founded in 1999; historians, architects, designers,
  developers, journalists, etc.; promoting sensitive regeneration of the
  historic city Tainan)

  promoting innovative redevelopment that respects
  historic assets: appropriate techniques, innovative
  management, spatial/ aesthetic quality, cultural concerns
• Searching candidate projects
• Developing criteria for the prize
• Media exposure + lectures, tours
• Expert reviews + Public poll

• **Student design competition + workshops (architecture and media)**
News papers
Magazines/ architecture, design, literature, business, tourism, etc.
Radio and internet...
The momentum is developing and encouraging cases - from 15 in 2008 to around 40 in 2012; from pubs, restaurants to hotels, bookshops, offices and studios etc.; public awareness and support; schools involving and public sector recognition; media

Diversity and vitality, local character, creativity and sustainability (buildings and uses); the values promoted and (aesthetic experiences in daily lives) (no support from the public sector yet)

The need for tourists to explore, discover through the city; beyond satisfying the mouth and the eyes (beyond mass tourism; more time to learn and experience; cultural contents beyond consumption)
• Criticisms: violating building norms (conservationists); quality of renovation; relations to surroundings; cheap copy of former examples; variety of building types; support from the city (resolving use conflicts, suitable building codes, planning and financial support?)

• The value beyond the buildings- city wide quality- style and character (property or land values; tourist consumption); the concept of eco-museum (developing cultural depth and diversity of the city before for tourism)

• A good complement to current public sector policies of culture-led regeneration: process and content