

Urban Regeneration through Cultural Diversity and Social Inclusion

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Abstract

The paper aims to rethink creative city theory by analyzing urban regeneration processes in Japan through cultural creativity and social inclusion. This paper is described and illustrated by an example the model case of “cultural creativity and social inclusion” in the city of Kanazawa, Yokohama and Osaka. And it offers a new direction to Asian cities.

Keywords: *Urban Regeneration, Creative City, Arts, Culture, Creativity, Social Inclusion*

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Introduction: The Era of the Creative City

With a major shift toward globalization and knowledge-based economy, the industrial city is already declining. A great deal of attention is being given to the development of a new type of city, 'the creative city'. These cities are characterized by the formation of clusters of creative industries, such as film, video, music, and arts. These are also cities where 'the creative class' made up of high-tech experts, artists, and creators prefer to live.

The concept of 'the creative city,' both in theory and in practice, is at the heart of this paper. This concept refers to a mobilization of the 'creativity' inherent in art and culture to create new industries and employment opportunities. In addition to addressing the problems of homelessness and the urban environment, it is believed that such an approach can foster a comprehensive urban regeneration.

In academia this concept first attracted attention through the works of Peter Hall, an internationally renowned authority on urban theory, and Charles Landry, an international consultant (Hall, 1998; Landry, 2000). In Japan and Asia, the author has played a leading role in promoting this concept in both theory and practice through his research and policy work (Sasaki, 1997, 2001).

Part of the broader diffusion of the creative cities ideal has come through the launch of UNESCO's "Global Network of Creative Cities" in 2004, and interest has quickly spread beyond the confines of Europe and America to Asia, and developing countries throughout the world. Prior to this, UNESCO performed the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity 2001 for the purpose of restraining standardization of the culture under the current globalization. Now 28 cities in the world and three cities in Japan, Kanazawa, Kobe and Nagoya are registered to the global network.

Many municipalities (Bangkok, Chiang Mai, etc.) in Thailand aim to build up Creative Cities. Moreover, the central government identified ten cities which support a strong promotion policy, and budget was allocated to seven universities in order to promote the creative industry.

In Asia, especially Japanese cities, with their long history of bureaucratically led developmentalism at the center of urban and regional politics, have suffered as neoliberal globalization has transformed industries and threatened social welfare systems. Environmental, employment, and housing crises have also become more acute in this era of neo-liberalism. At the same time, the businesses and families that have been central to coping with social crises in the past are no longer functional these days. In these times of crisis and recession, it seems that the time for fundamental social reconstruction from the grass roots has arrived.

While promoting global research on urban problems from the perspective of creative cities, we must be careful not to force a Western conception of the creative city ideal on our study of Japanese cities. Instead we must rethink the concept of creative cities in light of the myriad problems facing Japanese cities with the hope

of creating a new urban society and a new urban theory based on culture, creativity and social inclusion that are appropriate to the Japanese context.

1. Rethinking Creative City Theory

The creative cities idea emerged as a new urban model with the European Union's 'European City of Culture' or 'European Capital of Culture' projects. In these cases the creativity inherent in art and culture were utilized to create new industries and employment opportunities while also tackling environmental problems and homelessness. In short, this was a multifaceted attempt at urban regeneration. And the work of Charles Landry and Masayuki Sasaki has put the issues of minorities, homelessness, and social inclusion at the center of their respective visions of the creative city. In addition, Richard Florida has suggested that US cities should deploy policies to attract the type of people he defines as a 'creative class' and sees as needed to sustain the new creative industries (Florida, 2002).

Florida has also advocated his own creativity index consisting of eight indices in three fields: talent, technology, and tolerance. This index has created a stir among urban theorists and policymakers throughout the world. Among these three categories, Florida himself has stressed tolerance. Especially sensational has been his gay index, in which the regional proportion of gays and lesbians to the entire nation is measured by location quotient (Florida, 2005). His gay index has become a symbol strongly suggestive of the creativity of social groups like the open-minded, avant-garde young artists called Bohemians. Florida contends that this group displays the American counter cultures fundamental opposition to highbrow European society, as in American musicals compared to European operas and American jazz and rock versus European classical music. The impact of Florida's unconventional theory has led to the common misperception that cities prosper as people of the creative-class, such as artists and gays gather (Zimmerman, 2008; Long, 2009).

Creative Cities and Culture Based Production Systems

Other theorists, however, have noted that attracting people of the creative-class does not automatically make a creative city. As Allen Scott, professor at UCLA, maintains, for the development of creative industries that serve as economic engines for a creative city, it is imperative to have a large workforce with specific skills and the necessary industries to support that workforce (Scott, 2006). And if the city's economy does not have a marketing capability that enables it to develop on the world market, sustainable development will prove elusive. University of Minnesota Professor, Ann Markusen, like Scott, attaches importance to the role of the cultural and economic sectors of the city in these days of the knowledge/information-based economy. At the same time she criticizes Florida, saying that his argument lacks a development theory applicable to particular local economies. She contends that although export-oriented economic theories have long been in the mainstream as development theory for local economies; in this era of knowledge/information based economies, economic development in import-substitution industries is more desirable (Markusen and Schrock, 2006).

Markusen credits Jane Jacobs as the pioneer of this theory, and contends that cities pursuing export-oriented economic development through mass-production are liable to have insufficient consumption within the region and limited fields of industries. On the other hand, she advocates an import-substitution model that is centered on cultural industries to enhance consumption in the region, bring about a diversified workforce and more sophisticated human capital to develop new knowledge/information-based industries. Therefore, Markusen insists, it is important to analyze the role artists play in creative cities on multiple levels - socially, culturally, and economically (Markusen and King, 2003).

And, based on her own investigations in the state of Minnesota, Markusen takes notice of the existence of artists' centers where artists periodically get together, practice, give public performances, and communicate openly with older artists and audiences. Then she demonstrates empirically that investing in such centers attracts artists, stimulates cultural consumption in the region, and combined with medical and healthcare industries, stops the trend of population exodus. Such an approach to urban regeneration, then, helps declining downtown areas to recover and gives rise to a socially inclusive environment, which can help tackle problems in low-income communities (Markusen, 2006). She points out that it is local arts councils that were established in a spirit of autonomy in numerous communities and states that have served as the leaders of spontaneous regional cultural policies.

Andy Pratt, professor of King's College London is a specialist on cluster policies for cultural and creative industries, and he notes that family-operated and small-sized businesses are in the absolute majority in such cultural industries. And, in order to survive on world markets, it is imperative for these industries to have a network of horizontal cooperation with each other. He points to three characteristics in comparison with ordinary industrial clusters. The first is the importance of the qualitative content of the networks of the entities constituting the cluster, especially the process of 'tacit knowledge' exchange and its spillover. The second is that, among corporate transactions that are part of the cluster, the importance of non-monetary transactions based on relations of mutual trust increases. Third, for the formation of the creative cluster, it is important to analyze not only its economic and social contributions, but also how such industries fit in the broader cultural context of the city or region (Pratt, 2004, 2008).

In other words, for creative industries, whose 'lifeblood are the creativity, skill, and talent of individuals,' to form a cluster, it is imperative to have a 'milieu' in place where creativity can be nurtured and flourish. In creative city theory it is the 'creative milieu' and 'social structure of creativity' and, above all the social, cultural, and geographical context that are truly vital for the effective integration of industrial, urban, and cultural policy. Florida also points out the importance of the 'creative milieu,' but he does not deeply analyze the economic aspect of creative cluster.

Jane Jacobs' analysis of Bologna provides a good illustration of these principles in practice (Jacobs, 1984). Bologna is a city with a flexible network system of small scale production facilities that has repeatedly demonstrated a faculty for innovation and improvisation. With these principles in mind, we could define the creative city as 'a city that cultivates new trends in arts & culture and promotes innovative and creative industries through the energetic creative activities of artists, creators and ordinary citizens, contains many diverse "creative milieus" and "innovative milieus", and has a regional, grass-roots capability to find solutions to social exclusion problems such as homeless people. (Sasaki, 2001).' For further clarification of the six conditions needed for the realization of a creative city, see note 1.

Based on empirical analyses of Bologna and Kanazawa, I defined a 'cultural mode of production model' (refer to Figure 1) as the well-balanced system of cultural production and cultural consumption that takes advantage of accumulated cultural capital to produce products and services high in economic as well as cultural value in a system where consumption stimulates production. (Sasaki, 2007) This definition, however, requires further elaboration in light of the research of Ann Markusen and Andy Pratt.

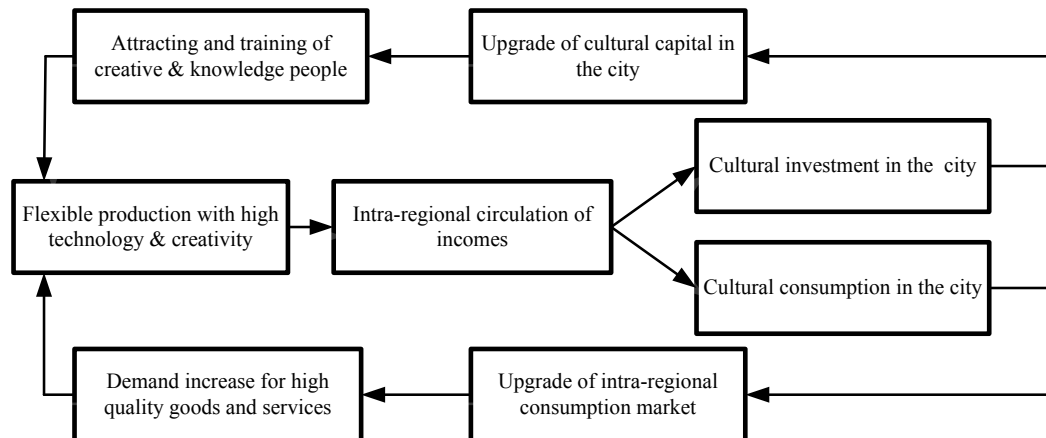


Figure 1. Cultural Mode of Production Model

We can call this method of developing new industry for the development of the city economy through high-quality cultural capital the "cultural mode of production utilizing cultural capital."

The "cultural mode of production" at which Kanazawa aims consists of the following.

1. Produce goods and services with high cultural value added, through the integration of the skills and sensibilities of the artisans with high-tech devices in the production process,
2. Create a tightly knit, organic industry-related structure of companies developing endogenously in the region, ranging from the cultural-goods industry to the high-tech, software and design industries, in order to

3. Circulate income obtained outside the region within the region, with an aim toward new cultural investment and consumption.
4. The cultural investments would go to the construction of museums and the support of private design research centers and orchestras, etc., and the increased cultural concentration in the city would result in the development and establishment in the region of high-tech/high-touch creative human resources, the players in the cultural mode of production.
5. Cultural consumption upgrades the quality of local consumer markets and stimulates the demand for the cultural mode of production through consumers who have the ability to enjoy goods and services that have abundant cultural and artistic qualities.

In Japan and other developed societies, since a mass production/consumption system of cars and hi-tech electronics has declined in current global economic crisis, it seems that a shift towards creative economy based on the cultural mode of production becomes the urgent problem.

Creative Cities and Social Inclusion

At the same time that we are facing the hardships of the worst global crisis in eighty years, we must ensure that the disabled, the aged, the homeless, and refugees are not excluded, and that we overcome all forms of discrimination as the new knowledge and information based society takes shape in this era of globalization. Creative city theory must confront head on and offer creative solutions to the problem of social exclusion in our times. In the EU, it is understood that socially excluded populations have suffered poverty and discrimination and have also lacked sufficient educational opportunities. As a result of inadequate education, employment, and income, not to mention discrimination, these populations have been driven into a corner socially. This, in turn, has created a situation where individuals can easily come to feel powerless, and therefore may find it difficult to function as active members of society and their communities. On the other hand, a policy of social inclusion should allow for all members of a particular region to participate economically, socially, and culturally in their communities. Such a policy should provide a basic standard of living and welfare, as well as the necessary opportunities and resources, to guarantee the basic human rights of the residents of a given community.

In other words, a policy of social inclusion should bring an end to the factors that lead to social discrimination in the first place, and promote the social participation and interaction of individuals. These guiding principles are quite congruous with new ways of thinking about social discrimination that emerged in Western Europe in the 1980s-1990s. This new paradigm went beyond regarding a requisite level of income support and social-welfare as adequate inputs to insure social inclusion. Instead, the social participation, identity, and empowerment of socially disadvantaged individuals have increasingly come to be seen as important factors in the formation of policy. Such thinking is also consistent with the stress on 'capabilities' and their unequal distribution in the writing of Amartya Sen (Sen, 1985). Furthermore, as social inclusion has become an important theme in EU

discussions of urban regeneration, Bianchini and Landry have stressed the need to foster the social independence and reintegration of the homeless (Bianchini, 1997 ; Landry, 2000). On the other hand, Florida’s creative class seems the elitist notion and tends to raise social tensions (Peck, 2005).

In Japanese creative cities, some social experiments and practices of social inclusion through art projects just have begun.

2. Creative City Challenges in Japan – Cases of Kanazawa and Yokohama

Experimental new policies in Kanazawa and Yokohama are representative models that have materialized in Japan at the same time that the creative cities trend has gained currency in the West.

	Population	Economic Aspects	Cultural Aspects Budget (yen/capita)	Creative City Initiative
Kanazawa (UNESCO Creative City)	450,000 Human Scale City	Small artisan & Medium-sized Companies Traditional crafts	Traditional & Contemporary art 4,000 (yen/capita)	Business Circle Citizen Group Mayor office
Yokohama 2004~	3,600,000 Modern Large City	Large Companies Port, Car, Hi-tech Industries	Contemporary art Art NPO 2,500 (yen/capita)	Mayor Office Art NPO
Osaka 2007~	2,600,000 Second largest Business Center	Large & Small Companies Creative Industries High unemployment rate 7%	Contemporary & traditional art 1,000 (yen/capita)	Citizen Council Art NPO

Table 1. Characteristics of Kanazawa, Yokohama and Osaka

Kanazawa as a UNESCO Creative City

In terms of population, surroundings, and defining characteristics, the city of Kanazawa has much in common with Bologna, an example that will be treated elsewhere in this volume. Kanazawa is a human scale city of 450,000 that is surrounded by mountains that are the source of two rivers that run through the city. Kanazawa has also preserved its’ traditional cityscape and traditional arts and crafts. As a mid-sized city Kanazawa has maintained an independent economic base while also maintaining a healthy balance in terms of development and cultural and environmental preservation. At the end of World War II Kanazawa soon established the Kanazawa Arts and Crafts University. In addition to nurturing traditional arts and crafts, the city has also produced leaders in industrial design, and local talent that have become innovators in the traditional crafts. Kanazawa has also become a national leader in historical preservation, as is evident in the meticulous preservation of the Tokugawa era castle town district.

In addition to preserving the historical landscape and traditional arts and crafts, Kanazawa has also produced leading orchestra conductors and chamber music ensembles. Other civic achievements in the area of cultural creativity include the nurturing of local artists through the establishment of the citizens’ art village and the twenty-first century contemporary art museum.

At the same time that the trend toward globalization quickly intensified in the latter half of the 1980s, the textile industry that sustained Kanazawa’s high

growth rates through the years went into decline. In September 1996, however, the Kanazawa Citizens' Art Village opened in a vacated spinning factory and adjacent warehouses. The mayor of Kanazawa opened this twenty-four hour facility in response to citizen requests for a public arts facility that they could use in the evening-mid night hours after they had finished their daytime responsibilities. The facility itself is composed of a drama studio, a music studio, 'eco-life' studio, and art studio that occupy four separate blocks of the old spinning compound. Two directors that are elected by the citizen oversee the management of each studio. The active use and independent management of the facility is a remarkable example of a participatory, citizens' cultural institution in contemporary Japan. In sum, through the active participation of the citizenry, abandoned industrial facilities were used to construct a new cultural infrastructure, a new place for cultural creativity.

Another example of reimagining existing facilities and utilizing them in creative ways in Kanazawa would be the Twenty-First Century Art Museum that opened in October of 2004. The art museum is in an area of the central city that many feared would lose its vitality when the prefectural offices moved from this area to the suburbs. In addition to collecting and exhibiting contemporary art from throughout the world, the new museum also began to solicit and feature locally produced traditional arts and crafts. In addition to this fusion of the global and the local along with the modern and traditional, the new museum also pursued a policy of stimulating local interest and talent in the arts. To this end the first museum



Figure 2. The Twenty-First Century Art Museum

director, Mino Yutaka, solicited local schools and the general citizenry to participate in educational tours he dubbed 'museum cruises.' At the first year, the museum attracted around 1.5 million visitors - three times the population of the city. Furthermore, the revenue generated from these tours exceeded ten-billion

yen. From 2008 the museum also sponsored open-air exhibits, which livened up a relatively quiet part of town and allowed people to view the work of local artists and studios that produced both contemporary and traditional works. Such policies are a shining example of creatively fusing the traditional and the modern through culture as part of urban regeneration.

With the museum at the center of industrial promotion efforts in the area of fashion and digital design, the city of Kanazawa has been promoting development in the creative industries. Thus we can see how the promotion of art and culture has led to the development of new local industries in contemporary Japan.

The city of Kanazawa is an excellent illustration of how the accumulated creativity in a city with a high level of cultural capital can be used to promote economic development. With a history as a center of craft production in the Edo era, Kanazawa also clearly illustrates the historical stages of economic development from craft production, to fordism (mass production), and finally to a new era of culture based production in the contemporary creative cultural industries.

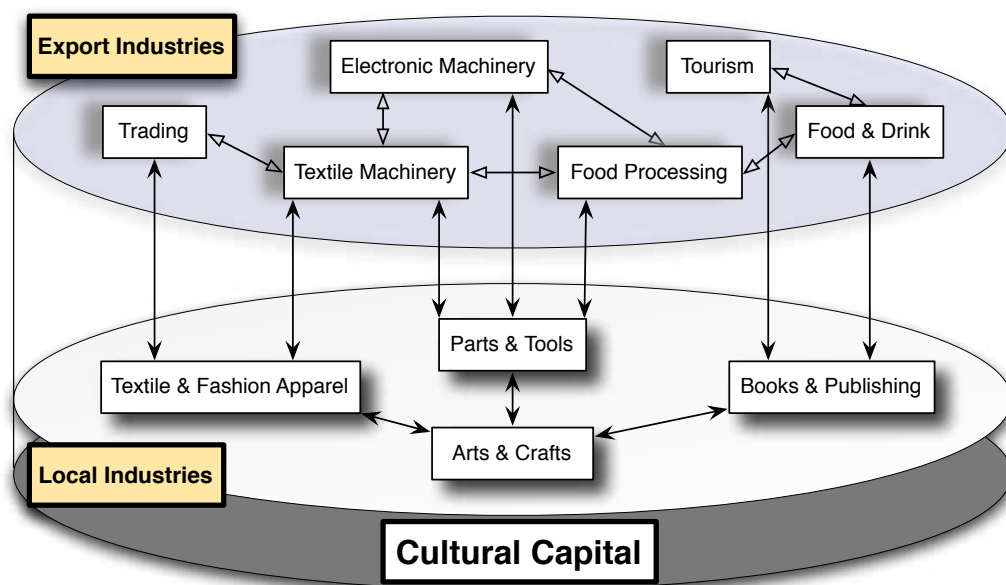


Figure 3. Culture and Economy of Kanazawa City

The creative city strategies of Kanazawa also demonstrate the importance of citizen and government collaboration in forums such as the creative cities council that brought together experts from various fields, and people from inside and outside of government to deliberate on and decide on matters of public policy. Such a forum and mode of deliberation and decision making is clearly congruous with the ideal of urban creativity. The experiences of Kanazawa that have been delineated above are befitting a UNESCO Creative City in the craft category. October 2008 the city applied to UNECO and was registered smoothly June 2009.

In 2009, facing the challenges posed by the current global financial crisis, the city of Kanazawa has implemented the “Monozukuri (craftsmanship or art of manu-

facturing)” Ordinance for the protection and promotion of the traditional arts and crafts, and other new industries. Mayor of Kanazawa describes its aims as follows:

“I think that the present society has lost sight of the meaningfulness of work and the basic way of life. In such an age, we should re-evaluate and cherish the spirit of “Monozukuri” which leads to the creation of values. Without such efforts, we might lose our solid foundation of societies. Fortunately, the city of Kanazawa has a broad base of “the milieu of craftsmanship” handed down from the Edo Period. The arts of Kanazawa’s traditional craftworks include, among other things, ceramic ware, Yuzen dyeing, inlaying, and gold leafing. We aim to protect and nurture the traditional local industries while working to introduce new technologies and innovative ideas. We also applied to UNESCO’s Creative Cities Network for Crafts and Folk Art category. The Ordinance is intended to recognize anew “the importance of Monozukuri” and “the pride in Monozukuri” so that the region as a whole can support “Monozukuri” industries in order to realize “the lively city, Kanazawa.” The Ordinance applies to the fields of agriculture and forestry as well. Therefore, we are planning to develop an authorization system for Kanazawa brand agricultural products and to open the Kanazawa Forestry Academy. We are also aspiring to build cooperation between businesses and universities through the opening of institutes for research and promotion of Kaga-yuzen silk dyeing and Kanazawa gold leaf craftwork. I assume that diversified “Monozukuri” will pave the way for diversified urban development.”

As described above, in the city of Kanazawa, both mayor-led administrative and private efforts are ongoing as what is called “two wheels of one cart.”

The Creative City Yokohama Experiment

In stark contrast to the image of Kanazawa as an Edo era castle town with a long and rich history, is the image of Yokohama, a port city that is 150 years old and has become one of Japan’s largest urban centers. At the height of the bubble economy the city of Yokohama pursued a large-scale waterfront development project to create a new central business district with the aim of shedding its image as a city of heavy industry. However, with the collapse of the bubble economy and subsequent construction boom in central Tokyo, Yokohama suffered a double blow. From the beginning of 2004, however, Yokohama embraced a new urban vision and embarked on a project to reinvent itself as a ‘creative city of art and culture.’

The contents of this new urban vision were fourfold: 1) To construct a creative environment where artistic and creative individuals would want to live; 2) to build a creative industrial cluster to spark economic activity; 3) to utilize the city’s natural assets to these ends; and 4) to utilize citizen initiative to achieve this vision of a creative city of art and culture. By 2008 the city aimed to attract close to 2,000 artists and nearly 15,000 workers to its’ creative industrial cluster.

From April of 2004 Mayor Nakada opened a special ‘Creative City Yokohama’ office. At the center of the new offices activities has been the establishment of several ‘creative core’ districts in the general vicinity of the port. These creative cores utilize numerous historic buildings such as old bank buildings, warehouses, and vacant offices to house new ‘creative spaces’ for citizen artists and other

creative individuals. The 'Bank ART 1929' project was the start of this ambitious undertaking. This project is under the guidance of two NPOs that were selected via a competitive process and are in charge of organizing an array of exhibits, performances, workshops, symposiums, and various other events that have attracted participants from Tokyo as well as Yokohama.



Figure 4. The 'Bank ART 1929' - Above

Figure 5. The 'Bank ART 1929' - below



Since its inception the creative corridors have expanded as they have incorporated numerous vacant buildings and warehouses in the vicinity. As of March 2007 the economic ripple effect of the creative corridors for the local economy is estimated to be in the range of twelve billion yen. And in July of 2007 an arts commission composed of public and private individuals and institutions was established to support and attract artists and other creative individuals to the region.

And in the numerous activities that are underway in Yokohama, the experimental 'Kogane Cho Bazaar' of Yokohama, is an illustrative example. This event was in the gang and prostitution area that had developed from the chaotic period of the immediate postwar years to become a shopping district that has over 250 shops. In recent years however, many shops had closed down and the area was in decline. Many young students and artists collaborated with local businesses in the bazaar's projects. The diversity on display during the planning sessions for this event was a clear illustration of how cultural projects can lead to social inclusion. Indeed, these planning events featured the participation of local residents, university students, artists, and all manner of specialists to create an art event to enliven an area blighted by a plethora of vacant shops.

Finally, as 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the port of Yokohama, an international creative cities conference has been opened with a purpose of building a creative cities network in Asia.

The case of Yokohama is remarkable in the sense that the policy aim of utilizing the creativity inherent in art and culture for the purpose of urban regeneration also led to a restructuring of the politics related to cultural policy, industrial policy, and community development. In other words the new organizations that emerged to revitalize Yokohama as a city of art and culture transcended the bureaucratic sectionalism that typically plagues policy formation and administration in the fields listed above while also constructively engaging NPOs and citizens in the formation and administration of policy. Throughout Japan it seems that urban policies and projects based on art and culture have given rise to a socially inclusive politics.

3. Osaka and the Challenge to be a Socially Inclusive Creative City

From the stimulating creative city success stories of Kanazawa and Yokohama, we now turn to the example of Osaka. Osaka has experienced many years of economic decline and has a municipal government facing a tremendous financial crisis. Amid such daunting challenges, in 2003 Osaka City University opened a Graduate School for Creative Cities, and by 2006 it had devised a creative city strategy for Osaka. However, in the fall of 2007, former Mayor Seki, who had embraced these policies and incorporated them into his campaign platform, lost the mayoral election. And his replacement, present Mayor Hiramatsu has failed to articulate a clear vision with regard to development and has shelved the creative city strategy referred to above. Despite this less than ideal political environment there are still some notable grassroots developments in the realm of what could be called a socially inclusive creative city strategy.

Osaka as a 'Creative City Too Soon'

As early as the seventh century, when Osaka was known as Naniwa, the Osaka area has served as a center for water transport. Furthermore, Osaka's Uemachi Plateau is the site of one of Japan's oldest Buddhist temples, Shiten' noji. Thus we can see that Osaka has a long history as an economic, cultural, and religious center. In the Edo period Osaka was the center of the national rice trade, and developed an elaborate canal system ideally suited for trade. Furthermore, the traders and money lenders that facilitated this trade gained a level of economic power that was expressed in cultural terms in their support of regional cultural forms such as the bunraku puppet theater which was registered with world intangible cultural asset of the UNESCO in 2003. After growing to become a modern metropolis in the Meiji years, Osaka became the national center of finance, manufacturing, and distribution following the disruption of the Great Kanto Earthquake that devastated Tokyo in 1923.

At the same time, Osaka, with Kamagasaki area where there is a heavy concentration of day laborers gathering and living there to seek work in construction sites, the formation of Korean ethnic communities which can be called a negative legacy of the age of Japanese imperialism, and the discriminated communities called "Buraku" from the pre-modern era, confronted its serious endemic problems of social exclusion and pressed to solve them in a creative way while in the process of developing into a modern metropolis.

However, today Osaka has alarmingly high levels of unemployment and a homeless population that is growing rapidly. The movement of many large-scale manufacturing facilities overseas, together with the movement of many corporate headquarters to Tokyo has been a double blow that has had a hollowing effect on the cityscape. The worsening economic situation of Osaka seems to have led to an overall decline for the city and region.

With expectations of becoming an Olympic host and a global city in the 1990s, Osaka embarked on an ill-conceived series of port and waterfront developments. The construction of a nearly vacant 'World Trade Center' building is perhaps the best illustration of the failure of urban policy in post bubble era Osaka. Indeed the problem of excessive debt in the city's budget has made the task of urban regeneration seem nearly impossible.

In light of the city's near bankruptcy city hall has professed to be pursuing thorough reform and streamlining its' operations. And in the midst of a fiscal crisis, in April of 2006 the city moved toward a 'creative city strategy,' as the former Mayor Seki directed mid-ranking workers from all sections of city government to assemble 'creative city teams' and come up with a 'creative city vision.' However, with Seki's electoral loss in the fall of 2007, the city government's support for a creative city approach to the city's problems has waned.

Barcelona and Montreal are world famous creative cities that have had to change their urban visions as a result of serious crises facing these cities. And whether or not a given city can confront the challenges that threaten to derail a creative city strategy depends upon a host of factors. These factors range from the boldness

of the urban vision and urban policies of city government to the capacity for the city as a whole to embrace the creativity inherent in art and culture to create new industries and employment opportunities while also including and empowering the unemployed and homeless populations as part of a 'bottom-up' and inclusive urban vision.

Osaka as a Grassroots Creative City

Osaka is not wanting in the area of young, artistic, or otherwise creative individuals. However, Osaka does lack the adequate urban cultural policy on 'creative space' or 'creative milieu' to nurture this talent. In recent years businesses such as department stores and newspaper publishers that have supported culture in the past have been closing their cultural facilities, such as stage theaters. And in the area of broadcasting, local television producers have been relocated to Tokyo as nearly all television production is now in Tokyo. Large scale advertising and public relations agencies as well as other mass media outlets have also moved to Tokyo. These events, then, have led to a decline in creative occupations, and the relative impoverishment of the creative class in Osaka. However, the declining fortunes of Osaka have not led to only pessimism and bankruptcy. Indeed, in the midst of the myriad challenges facing Osaka, a new grassroots movement has been born.

Prior to adopting the creative city strategy, cultural section of Osaka city government devised an action plan of arts & culture and started some interesting project in 2001. One of the most notable is a 'New World (Shinsekai) Arts Park project' which has been implemented to promote and support the arts in the deteriorate area of south Osaka around the Tsutenkaku Tower and the adjacent Shinsekai shopping arcade, and Festival Gate Amusement Park. The city has cooperated with four NPO art organizations to convert empty storefronts in the area into an experimental 'arts park' to foster the creation of contemporary music, art, and dance. And with the cooperation of the shops of the shopping arcade, new life has been breathed into local events like the Bon Odori (Buddhist All Souls Celebration). Furthermore, in the nearby Kamagasaki neighborhood a host of new facilities and services have emerged to serve the large homeless population there. These facilities and services have come to life through the efforts of NPOs and grassroots activists working in collaboration with the city. Creative strategies in Kamagasaki include facilities that offer both consultative services and lodging, and the employment of elderly residents as open air kami shibai storytellers. In 2009, one of the above-mentioned NPOs invited a streetwise opera group from London which is helping the homeless to gain their psychological dependence through performances involving homeless people themselves. The joint workshop with this group was a great success.

Unfortunately, due to the city's budgetary crisis and changing leadership in the Mayor's office, city support for the arts park has ended. And suffering a similar fate has been one NPO run consultation center in Kamagasaki, which has had to relocate to an abandoned storefront in a shopping arcade in the nearby Nishinari Ward due to budget cuts.

Another example of grassroots action in Osaka would be the NPO-like work of Oten' in temple, which has converted its' main hall into a small theater to support, and provide a venue for public performances for young artists in the area. In this same area of the Uemachi Plateau, traditional, wooden nagaya, or long houses, that have survived from the prewar years have been preserved as 'cultural commercial space' as a showcase of the culture and artwork of the area. The success of this project was facilitated by the efforts of the shops of the Karahori shopping arcade.

In neighboring Korea town, the success of the Seoul Olympics 2000 and the World Cup 2002 has served as a catalyst in making the area a center of Korean culinary and popular culture in an era when national interest in things Korean is quite high. And the Korea town neighborhood and community still possesses an air of the warm and casual interpersonal relations that have long been considered a defining characteristic of the old downtown. In these respects Korea town seems to be a creative success story in preserving both cultural diversity and the charm of old downtown Osaka.

Another notable project is the 'Ogimachi Incubation Plaza,' or 'Mebic Ogimachi,' which has close ties with the Osaka City University Urban Research Plaza. The Mebic Ogimachi was opened in May of 2003 in the Ogimachi branch of the Osaka City Water Works Bureau. The retro architecture of this building that was built in the early Showa era, provides the perfect ambience for the creative work of the plaza which, through two 'creativity managers,' aims to build networks in the fields of art and high-tech industry. The aim of this network building is the construction of a creative industry cluster in the Ogimachi area where over 2,000 small creative small companies locate, that will allow for the creative talent that is still in Osaka to continue working, despite the ongoing concentration of the creative industries in Tokyo. And by harnessing creativity through such clusters of creative industries such as design and modern art it is hoped that Osaka can be reborn as a 'creative city.'

With the aim of building a creative city through grassroots citizen participation a 'Creative Café' was opened in April of 2006 as a place for discussing all manner of issues relevant to the stated aim of the café. And in 2007 'Creative City Osaka Citizens Council,' was convened to put together a plan to build a network of such discursive 'creative places' in neighborhoods throughout Osaka. The vision of the plan has grown to become a plan to not merely develop 'creative places,' but to develop a 'nexus of creativity' where individual citizens are empowered to contribute to the revitalization of Osaka as a whole. It has been very encouraging to see that more citizens have participated in the construction of these 'creative places' than was originally expected, and as a result a wider 'ring of creativity' is already beginning to materialize.

In the above cases we can see how artistic and cultural activities can stimulate social inclusion.

When comparing the examples of the above three cities, a medium-scale historic city of Kanazawa is making a steady progress towards a creative city based on Bologna-type social capital with the initiative of the local businesses and citizens, involving the municipal government, while Yokohama is succeeding in forming an attractive and creative neighborhood to invite Florida-type creative class, and also has attained a positive outcome in the administrative efforts with mobility and cross-sectional cooperation led by the Creative City Headquarters. However, Yokohama has yet to establish a partnership with local businesses. On the other hand, Osaka is now creating a third model of creative city attempting to achieve social inclusion from the grassroots level although faced with an unexpected halt in the planned promotion of creative city due to the replacement of mayor. Its approach is expected to gain much attention as a new Japanese creative city.

In general, however, the urban cultural policy related to Japanese creative city projects seem to lack the strength and coherence of similar policies in the West. This in turn suggests that Japanese cooperatives, social enterprises, art related NPOs, and other such organizations do not have the same level of social prestige and influence as their Western counterparts. However, as we have seen, there are definite signs that a grassroots movement in the area of creative urban policies is definitely gaining steam throughout Japan.

Conclusion

We can summarize some policy implications through the above case study of Japanese creative cities.

For the establishment of creative cities in Thailand experience of Japan seems to be very useful.

Firstly, it is necessary to conduct an intensive analysis of the embedded culture of the city, increase the shared awareness of fusing contemporary arts with traditional culture, clarify the need to become a “creative city,” and elaborate a creative city concept for the future, with an understanding of the historical context of the city.

Secondly, in developing concepts, “artistic and cultural creativity” must be recognized as factors that have an impact on many other areas, including industry, employment, social welfare, education, medical care, and the environment. In order to link cultural policy to industrial policy, urban planning, and welfare policy, the vertical administrative structure must be made horizontal, ordinary bureaucratic thinking must be eliminated, and organizational culture must be changed.

Thirdly, art and culture must be recognized as central social infrastructures in the knowledge and informational society, and systematic planning must be carried out to bring out the creativity of the city’s people. Specifically, diverse “creative milieu” and “space for industrial and cultural creation” must be established in the city and creative producers must be fostered to take charge of this task.

Fourthly, promotion of creative policy cannot be continued effectively if it is limited to the city's government. It is essential to obtain the cooperation of a broad selection of citizens, including business leaders, and NPOs, perhaps in the form of a Creative City Promotion Council. The most important thing for the promotion of creative cities is the establishment of research and educational programs for developing the necessary human resources.

Developments in the creative cities field in Japan in the midst of worldwide crises and drastic social and economic restructuring suggest some new issues to consider in the field of creative cities theory

One issue to consider is the movement away from a mass production industrial society toward a creative society of cultural based production where cultural value and economic value are united. A related issue is the high level of cultural diversity required for this social transformation. Furthermore, with regard to cities in Asia with their shared history of large scale heavy industries at the heart of economic development policies, we must consider the necessary transition toward more compact cities. At the same time, we must also come to understand, appreciate, and preserve the tangible and intangible cultural capital inherent in the traditional urban culture of each individual city.

The second issue to consider is the need to face the problem of social exclusion directly, and provide the social infrastructure, including real and diverse 'places of creativity,' to foster and insure the active participation of the citizenry in urban policy. The need to create a social system that respects and promotes both individuality and creativity to the utmost degree is vital to the success of tackling both of the issues enumerated above. Building an educational and industrial system that foster and promote creativity will be central to the construction of businesses that equally regard cultural, social, and economic value. In addition, the reconstruction of urban space is a subject that is closely related to these issues.

In order to realize and to develop creative cities, not only do we need the global level inter-city network promoted by UNESCO, but we also need to learn from partnerships seen at the Asia Pacific regional level or the national level as well. When a creative city network in Asian Region is established to support these activities, a new form of "Creative Asia " will emerge.

Notes

1) The six conditions requisite conditions of a creative city are as follows: Firstly, it is a city equipped with an urban economic system in which not only artists and scientists can freely develop their creativity, but where workers and craftspeople can also engage in creative, flexible production, and in the process withstand the threats of global restructuring.

Secondly, it is a city equipped with universities, vocational colleges, and research institutes which support scientific and artistic creativity in the city, as well as cultural facilities like theaters and libraries. It also has a very active non-profit

sector featuring cooperative associations and establishments through which the rights of medium-small craftsperson's businesses are protected. Such a city would also have an environment where new businesses can be set up easily and creative work is well supported. Above all a creative city will have the necessary social infrastructure to support creative individuals and activities.

Thirdly, it is a city in which industrial growth improves the 'quality of life' of the citizens and provides substantial social services. Therefore it stimulates the development of new industries in the fields of the environment, welfare, medical services, and art. In other words, it is a city with a well-balanced development of industrial dynamism and cultural life, where production and consumption are also in harmony.

Fourthly, it is a city that has a right to stipulate the spaces where production and consumption develop, and where the urban environment is preserved. It is a city with beautiful urban spaces to enhance the creativity and sensitivity of its citizens.

Fifthly, it is a city that has a mechanism of citizen participation in city administration that guarantees the versatility and creativity of its citizens. In other words it is a city with a system of small-area autonomy supported by large-area administration that can take charge of large-range management of the region's environment.

Sixthly, it is a city equipped with its own financial administration that sustains creative, autonomous administration along with personnel who excel in policy formation.

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