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DEVELOPING CREATIVE CITIES THROUGH NETWORKING: CREATIVE CITIES IN JAPAN

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FROM GLOBAL CITIES TO CREATIVE CITIES

The global society of the 21st century is undergoing a major paradigm shift, “from the nation state to the city”. The “century of the city” is starting.

The cities attracting attention in this process are not only the major urban centers known as “global cities” that monopolize global functions in economics, politics and culture, and which stand atop the global urban hierarchy system. People are also taking an interest in “creative cities” that cultivate creative art & culture and foster an innovative economic base. The terrorist attack of 11th September, 2001 provided an opportunity to reconsider the trend of globalization based on market fundamentalism. As a result, many people have taken a more critical view of global cities like New York and expressed a preference for the alternative globalization based on mutual recognition of cultural and social diversity. Many cities are now attempting to stimulate and encourage their citizens by promoting creativity in art & culture and encouraging innovation in various areas to revive their economies.

Since the bursting of the Japan's economic bubble, Japanese cities have experienced difficulties emerging from a long period of economic stagnation, and this is one reason for the growing interest in “creative cities” and “urban regeneration through art and culture.” Japanese cities that have moved in this direction are Kanazawa, where local business leaders and citizens have created the Kanazawa Creative City Council and begun promoting a grass-roots movement for the creative city, and Yokohama, where the new mayor adopted “the artistic creative city strategy” and established a bureau for promoting “Creative City Yokohama”. Also in Osaka which has been suffering from a long-term recession, the Graduate School for Creative Cities has been established in Osaka City University in order to develop a problem-solving urban policy and to foster human capital to revive the city. Then in October 2007, the first World Creative City Forum was held in Osaka and the agenda “Developing Creative Cities through Networking” was adopted. (appendix 1)

WHY HAVE CULTURE AND CREATIVITY MOVED TO THE CENTER OF URBAN POLICY?

As the trend of globalization has progressed, advanced capitalist countries have lost manufacturing base and entered into a stage of becoming new knowledge and informational economies. The key driver of the new knowledge economy is creativity, especially artistic and technological creativity.

Therefore creativity has moved to the center of urban policy.

If we go back far enough in the lineage of the creative city theory, we arrive at the so-called founding fathers of “cultural economics”, namely John Ruskin and William Morris. Ruskin, who was active in Victorian England, resisted the utilitarian economics of the times, and proposed “art economics”, which placed emphasis on creative human activities and receptiveness.

According to him, not only artistic works, but all valuable goods have both a functional and artistic aspect, and help to support the lives of consumers and increase their sense of humanity. That which brings out this intrinsic value is “work,” that is free creative human activity rather than “labour” forced upon one by another. He argued that this original, intrinsic value first became an effective value when it was met by a receptive consumer who could evaluate it. Morris, the successor to Ruskin's school of thought, criticized the mass production and consumption system by large mechanized industries as leading to an estrangement of labour and the de-humanization of life. He went on to coordinate the Arts and Crafts Movement, which aimed at “humanization of labour” and “atification of everyday life” by reintroducing craft-like production based upon the creative apply activities of artisans proposed by Ruskin. P. Geddes and L. Mumford were the ones who began to coordinate Ruskin and Morris' thoughts to urban studies. Mumford, especially, in his *Culture of Cities*, lambasted the monetary economics that dominated the megalopolis, and proposed “cultural economics” which places emphasis on human life and environment over anything else, emphasizing “reconstitution of cities to fulfill human consumption and creative activities.” (Mumford, 1938)

Furthermore, looking at contemporary creative city research, we find ourselves arriving at the American urban researcher J. Jacobs, the person who called those cities that were especially good at industrial innovation and improvisation “creative cities.” (Jacobs, 1984) contemporary researchers of creative cities, like C. Landry and F. Bianchini were influenced by her, and has defined creativity as something more than fantasy and imagination, and placed it somewhere between intelligence and innovation, that is, the concept that acts as a mediator between art and culture and industry and technology. At present, they are continuing with their comparative research on cities, keeping in mind the question of what kind of role a creative culture has in reconstructing the urban economic base. They believe that cities that make much of the creativity of artistic activities and try to have massive “citizens' creative activities” and “creative cultural infrastructure,” tend to embrace industries which specialize in innovation, and are able to develop an administrative capacity to deal with difficult problems. What is important for creative cities is creative problem solving in the areas of economics, culture, organization and finance, as well as the fluidity to change the existing system whenever chain reactions in such occur. (Landry and Bianchini, 1995)

Furthermore, Landry specified the relations of creativity and heritage, as in the quotes below:

“Cultural heritage is the sum of our past creativities and results of creativity is what keeps society going and moving forward.”

“Culture is the panoply of resources that show that a place is unique and distinctive. The resources of the past can help to inspire and give confidence for the future.”

“Even cultural heritage is reinvented daily whether this be a refurbished building or an adaptation of an old skill for modern times: today's classic was yesterday's innovation. Creativity is not only about a continuous invention of the new, but also how to deal appropriately with the old.” (Landry, 2000)

POTENTIAL OF CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND CREATIVE PEOPLE

In the emerging knowledge society, creative and cultural industries become notable as the economic engine of urban and regional development. According to the definition of D. Throsby(2001), cultural goods and services involve creativity in their production, embody some degree of intellectual property and convey symbolic meaning. He formulates a concentric circle model of cultural industries, with the creative arts lying at the core, and other cultural industries (publishing, advertising, tourism, etc.) forming layers or circles around the core, extending further outwards as the use of creative idea move into a wider production context. Also Throsby stressed that “culture may have a more pervasive role in urban regeneration through the fostering of community identity, creativity, cohesion and vitality via the cultural characteristics and practices which define the city and its inhabitants”.

Additionally Throsby analyzed cultural heritage as cultural capital, as below:

“Consideration of heritage as cultural capital can provide a means of integrating the interests of conservationist, who are concerned with the protection of cultural value, and economist, who look at heritage project as problems of allocation of scarce resources between competing ends.”

“Treatment of heritage as cultural capital parallels what has now become an accepted treatment of environmental resources and ecosystems as natural capital, and Again the fact that cultural capital embodies and gives rise to cultural and economic value gives it a distinctive claim to attention and conditions the way analytical method should be used in evaluating it.”(Throsby, 2001)

R. Florida, who was also influenced by Jacobs, advocates “the rise of the creative class” and insists that the new urban economy is driven by the location choices of creative people who prefer place that are rich in cultural diversity, enjoy appealing amenities, and have tolerance for the avant-garde and gay people. He emphasizes the “social structure of creativity”, comprising new systems for technological creativity and entrepreneurship, new and more effective models for producing goods and services, and a broad social, cultural and geographic milieu conducive to creativity of all sorts. (Florida, 2002)

The British government and the Mayor of London have announced a policy promoting “creative industries”, that is, “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.” They include thirteen sectors such as advertising, architecture, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, fine arts and antique, game-software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and television and radio. These industries produced £120 billion and hired 1,320,000 employees in 2000, and ranked second in GDP and a third in employment in London. (DCMS, 1998, 2001)

We estimated the size of Japanese creative industries and compared the results to the UK. According to Table 1, even though the Japanese figures are larger in absolute terms, considering that the total Japanese economy is about double that of the UK, Japanese creative industries, as contributors to the total national economy, reached only half employment and one-third of the total revenue of British creative industries. Therefore, there is positive potential for the growth of Japanese creative industries.

(In Japan, there are no equivalent government statistics for the “cultural industries”, but data compiled by the author and provided in Table 1 show that the scale of the market for the thirteen industries listed above amounts to 38.834 trillion yen and the industries employ 1,408,780 people. Comparing Japan and the UK based on this data, Japan is higher in absolute terms in both employment and market scale, but when differences in the scale of GDP and total employment between the two countries are taken into account, employment in the UK cultural

industries is roughly twice that of Japan and the scale of the market is roughly three times greater. This could be said to indicate the future potential of the creative industries in Japan. The only industries in which Japan has a superior market scale are the game software and craft industries. There is a large gap in the design and performing arts industries, and in the music and film and video industries there is an enormous difference in the scale of employment.)

THE DEFINITION AND SIX ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CREATIVE CITIES

Based on the work of Landry and Florida, the author defined creative cities as follows ; Cities that cultivate new trends in arts and culture and promote innovative and creative industries through the energetic creative activities of artists, creators and ordinary citizens, contain many diverse “creative milieus” and “innovative milieus”, and have a regional, grass-roots capability to find solutions to global environmental problems such as global warming. Therefore the author summarized the Creative City with the following elements based on the above definitions.

Firstly, not only artists, scientists, workers and craftsmen should involve themselves with creative work, but also all citizens should devolve (or expand) their own free creative activity. As a result, they will be able to experience greater satisfaction with their lives. In order to create this situation, it is necessary to encourage production of useful and culturally valuable goods and services, and to improve the environment of factories and offices. Secondly, the ordinary life of citizens should be artistic. To be so, it is necessary to ensure that there is enough income and free time to exercise a range of creative actions. In addition, high quality consumer goods should be available at reasonable prices and arts and culture such as the performing arts should be accessible for low price.

Thirdly, universities, technical schools, research institutes, theater, library, and cultural institutions which support creative activity of science and art in a city have to function as the creative support infrastructure.

Fourthly, the environmental policy is crucial. Successful environmental policies preserve historical heritage and a city's environment as well as improve all amenities. Consequently, citizens find their creativity and sensitivity enhanced.

Fifthly, a city has to have the well-balanced economic basis which supports sustainable and creative region.

Finally, in terms of public administration, the Creative City is based on an integrated urban creative policy and a cultural policy unified with industrial and environmental policies under democratically managed public finance. The author has given advice on developing specific urban policies to the cities of Kanazawa and Yokohama, among others.

CHALLENGES FOR CREATIVE CITIES IN JAPAN

An increasing number of cities in Japan are attempting to develop “creative milieu” and revitalize the city and region by utilizing cultural resources and fostering new creative industries.

Kanazawa

Kanazawa has been referred to for a long time as “the little Kyoto” with a richness of traditional arts and crafts, and a beautiful human-scale city which is attractive to tourists on the coast of Japan Sea. The textile industry, which previously was an engine of local economic growth in Kanazawa, has declined. Old warehouse and textile factory that are no longer used were utilized to create the Kanazawa Citizen's Art Center in September 1996. In response to public opinion, these facilities are designed to be used freely “24 hours a day, 365 days a year”. Four warehouses were converted into studios, the “Drama Factory”, “Music Factory”, “Art Factory” and “Eco-life Factory”. The buildings were remodeled to serve as space for performance as well as practices, and directors of these

facilities were chosen from ordinary citizens. This example of a cultural center run and used by citizens is attracting attention throughout Japan.

A sleek new building resembling a flying saucer, the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, has suddenly appeared in an empty space in the center of the city left when the prefectural government office moved to the suburbs. This museum was built with the purpose of fusing contemporary art with local traditional crafts and performing arts. The museum collection and exhibitions focus on international contemporary art, and famous artists are invited to produce artworks in open demonstrations accessible to the public. According to former museum director, Yutaka Mino, "Art is an investment in the future, developing human resources for a future filled with creativity," and this ideal is being carried out through the "Museum Cruise" program, which brings all of the elementary and junior high school students in the city to the museum. With the help of such programs, the museum has received 1.5 million visitors, three times the population of the city, during the first year. The economic impact (without considering the construction investment) has surpassed 10 billion yen. The city of Kanazawa is starting new programs to promote regional industries tied to contemporary art, beginning by establishing a Fashion Industry Creation Organization to support the creation of new fashion and digital contents industries in connection with the museum.

Kyoto

Stimulated by the success of the Kanazawa Citizen's Art Center, the historical city of Kyoto has produced its own "creative milieu", the Kyoto Art center, which opened in April 2000. It is housed in an old elementary school in the center of the city. Originally built in 1869, it features stained glass in the entryway, a tea ceremony room, and a large Japanese style hall. Because it is located in a kimono wholesaler's district it has been used for both commercial and local cultural purposes. To take advantage of its value as a cultural property, the building was remodeled to create a gallery and studio spaces and is attracting attention as a facility that supports the creative work of young artists who need a place to rehearse or produce their work. In addition to these examples, there are also spontaneous grass-roots movements led by citizens and young artists.

The traditional crafts and industries that have been the pride and identity of Kyoto throughout its history have become a part of the lives of its citizens both economically and culturally. They have also had the function of preserving the unique urban cultural landscape. Now that these industries are declining, however, older wooden row houses are being torn down and replaced by new apartments and parking lots, so the original urban landscape, "age-old scene" of Kyoto, is in danger of changing completely. In a counter-movement, artists are moving into vacant old residences and warehouses in the Nisijin area, a storied textile district, and an attempt is being made to restore the vitality of the city. The old wooden row houses (called Machiya) in Nishijin are unique because they combine space for the artisan work involved in the production of Yuzen dyeing and Nisijin textiles with living space. These houses are creative spaces that provide stimulation to artists not found in ordinary residences, and almost 100 artists are now living and working in this area.

Osaka

Osaka was once the foremost industrial city in Japan as well as a national center of finance and commerce. Today, however, it has the highest unemployment rate in the country. The number of homeless people is increasing rapidly, factories are moving overseas, and headquarters of large corporations are moving to Tokyo. Osaka's economy is rapidly deteriorating, and the city is in a historical period of decline.

The Creative industries mentioned above, have become noteworthy for urban resurgence in Europe recently. How can such creative industries be promoted in Osaka? Creative industries rely greatly on the diversity and creativity of a city's culture, so cultural creativity is now an important issue for Osaka. There are many artists and creators in Osaka, but there is a shortage of talented producers and facilities for the incubation of creative industries (creative cultural infrastructure). A number of private theaters have closed after the bursting of the economic bubble, and the most capable television producers working in Osaka have been taken to Tokyo.

In spite of these trends, the author is monitoring two ventures that have value as creative infrastructure and “creative milieu”. One is Outen-in temple, a Buddhist temple that supports a small nonprofit theater for young actors using the main temple building as a theater, and Mebic Ogimachi, a business incubator for creative business that opened 2003 in an old water bureau building in downtown Osaka. It is necessary to develop emergency programs to foster creative people and to build “social structure of creativity” in Osaka.

Yokohama

Unlike the old traditional capital of Kyoto and Kanazawa, Yokohama is a modern city with a short history that began with the opening of the port 150 years ago. Yokohama carried out a large-scale waterfront development plan, “Minato Mirai (Yokohama port future plan),” during the time of the economic bubble in an attempt to change its former identity as a center of heavy industry. This effort was frustrated by the bursting of the bubble and a surge of new office building construction in central Tokyo, but a new vision for reactivation of the city was proposed in January 2004, “Toward the Formation of the Creative City of Yokohama.”

After making this proposal, Mayor Nakada established the Artistic and Cultural City Creation Division in April of the same year, initiating an effort to build the creative city of Yokohama involving the entire city government. A noteworthy result was “Creative Core . Working Toward Formation of a Creative Zone and Image Culture City,” a project that included “BankART 1929.” The old Fuji Bank and First Bank buildings of Yokohama were constructed in 1929, during the world economic crisis, and they are a valuable cultural heritage. In this project, the bank buildings as well as a number of warehouses and empty office buildings near the waterfront have been transformed into “creative milieu” for artistic creators and ordinary citizens. Two NPOs selected in an open competition are conducting a variety of exhibitions, chiefly of contemporary art, and other events including performances, workshops, and symposiums in these buildings over a period of two years.

What strikes me as most significant about the case of Yokohama is the reorganization of previously separate administrative units in charge of cultural, industrial, and urban policy to create two new core organizations, the Artistic and Cultural City Creation Division and the Creative City Promotion Section to promote the use of artistic and cultural creativity in urban revitalization. If this idea is effectively applied, Yokohama will take the lead in the movement to develop creative cities in Japan. Naturally, some conflict is to be expected between administrative units that previously had been vertically , but the best way to restore creativity to the city is to make the organization more creative, which in turn will bring out more creativity in individuals. Creative reform of the “culture of bureaucratic organization” will bring advance Yokohama toward its goal of becoming a creative city.

In Kanazawa, the business sector and individual citizens took the lead in starting the Kanazawa Creative City Council, making proposals that stimulated the city government to take steps toward making Kanazawa into a creative city. Meanwhile in Yokohama, setbacks in the Yokohama waterfront urban development project, “Minato Mirai,” led the current mayor to criticize the failure of the project and propose a new strategy for the city. It seems that efforts to develop a creative city will vary with the historical background of the city.

CONCLUSION : DEVELOPING CREATIVE CITIES THROUGH NETWORKING

Following these well known examples, other cities, including Sapporo, Sendai, Nagoya, Kobe and Fukuoka, are also pushing to become creative cities. Below is a list of what I consider the necessary steps to achieve this goal.

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, the social system, education, medical care, and the environment. In order to link cultural policy to industrial policy, urban planning, and environmental 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. In order to realize and to develop creative cities, not only do we need the global level inter-city partnerships promoted by UNESCO, but we also need to learn from partnerships seen at the Asian regional level or the national level as well. Collaboration among the public, private and civic sectors within the cities is also essential: We call for a multilayered and multifaceted partnership to be formed and encourage each city to provide diversified platforms towards this end.

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APPENDIX

Agenda “Developing Creative Cities through Networking”

We have participated in the World Creative City Forum 2007 in OSAKA, “Forum for Networking Creative Cities” (October 24th) and “International Symposium: The Age of the City . Developing Creative Cities through Networking” (October 25th and 26th). Based on the presentations and discussion in those three days we declare that we shall act with common objectives as regards the following points:

“Creative Cities” are becoming extremely important for urban citizens and urban policy administrators as well as academics as a model of a city in the society of twenty first century characterized by globalization and the progress of the knowledge based economy and also as a goal of urban polices.

In order to realize and to develop creative cities, not only do we need the global level inter-city partnerships promoted by UNESCO, but we also need to learn from partnerships seen at the Asian regional level or the national level as well. Collaboration among the public, private and civic sectors within the cities is also essential: We appeal for multilayered and multifaceted partnership formation and encourage each city to provide diversified platforms towards this end.

To develop creative cities further, we will continue research on success factors, conduct Evaluations, and discuss the following area to thus contribute to theoretical evolution of urban policies.

- 1) The development of creative cities based on their embedded culture and cultural diversity.
- 2) The role of creativity in helping cities to become more successful in the emerging economy.
- 3) How organizations in the public, private and NPO sectors need to rethink their role and purpose and how they are organized and how they are managed in order to help cities imaginatively seize opportunities and solve their problems.
- 4) The significance of cultural, social and economic roles that artists play in creative cities
- 5) The development of creative cultural industry as an economic engine of creative cities

We participants of world creative city forum 2007 in Osaka agreed the above and committed ourselves to progress in our respective areas.

October 26, 2007

Issued by the participants of World Creative City Forum 2007 in OSAKA

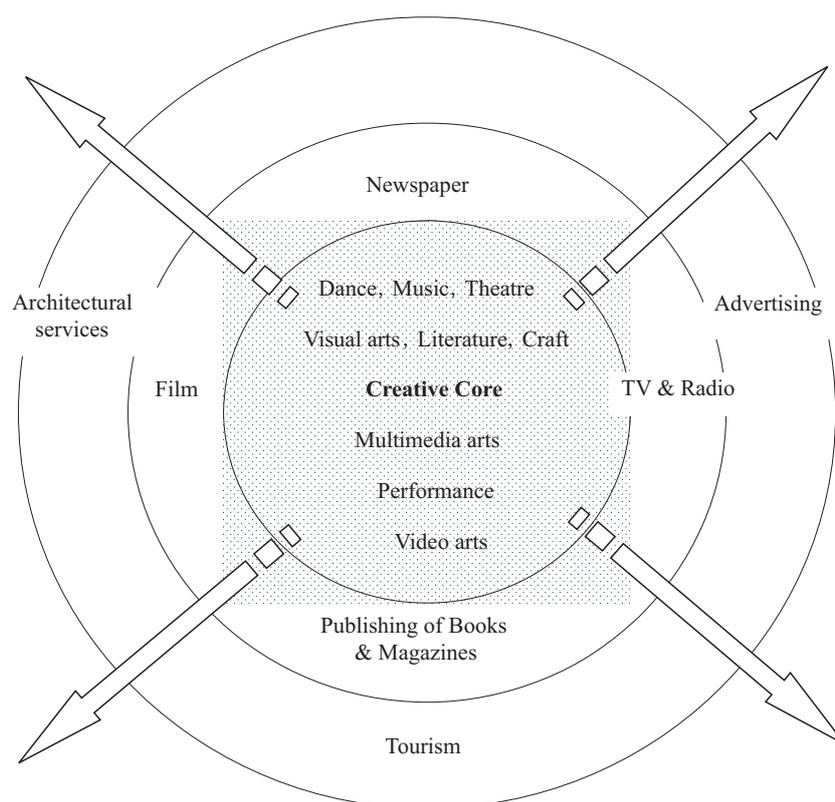


Figure 1. Concentric circle model of creative industries

Table 1. Market Size and Employment of Creative Industries (UK v.s.Japan,2000)
Exchange rate £ 1 = ¥ 1 8 5

	Market Size			Employment	
	UK £billion	UK ¥billion	Japan ¥billion	UK	Japan
Publishing	18.5	3,422.5	4,815.0	140,800	169,395
TV&Radio	12.1	2,238.5	3,738.6	102,000	135,000
Film	3.6	666.0	1,806.6	44,500	75,288
Music	4.6	851.0	2,142.6	122,000	119,002
Advertising	16.0	2,960.0	10,189.9	92,800	154,382
Game-software	1.0	185.0	1,210.0	21,500	29,000
Software	36.4	6,734.0	10,722.8	555,000	555,253
Design	26.7	4,939.5	665.2	76,000	46,861
Designer-Fashion	0.6	111.0	25.0	11,500	4,500
Fine Arts	3.5	647.5	84.5	37,000	23,500
Crafts	0.4	74.0	384.6	23,700	25,900
Performing-Arts	0.5	92.5	48.8	74,300	58,200
Architecture	1.7	314.5	3,000.0	20,900	12,500
Total	125.6	23,236.0	38,833.6	1,322,000	1,408,780