Parallel Session F
Planning & Policy Development for Creative Communities

THE BANDUNG CREATIVE CITY MOVEMENT: AN EXPLORATION OF THE SOCIAL AND SPATIAL IMPLICATIONS OF POLICY TRANSFER

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ABSTRACT

Many cities in the western world have adopted Creative City policies as a strategy for encouraging economic growth. The Creative City discourse, as pioneered by economic geographer and policy guru Richard Florida (2002), was developed within a Western context and has been scrutinized as an elitist view of the city by many scholars (for an example see Peck, 2005). Recently, the Creative City discourse has begun to spread into the developing world and, as a result, the city government of Bandung is in the early stages of fashioning a policy focused on becoming a Creative City. In light of the criticisms of Creative City policies in the West, and the historical problems associated with policy transfer between countries, this exploratory study asks how the Creative City movement is different in the context of a developing country and how this difference should be considered when formulating a strategy for the creative economy.

This paper explores the initial discussions surrounding a Creative City policy for Bandung as well as examining its existing creative economy, infrastructure and talent. Different viewpoints on what role creativity currently plays in Bandung are explored as well as the potential negative consequences of a Creative City policy. The paper concludes by identifying how the Creative City discourse must be adapted to the Bandung context; this includes addressing challenges such as a different socio-economic environment and the need to acknowledge small-scale actors and the informal sector. There is also recognition of Bandung's potential to foster a creative economy due to its existing creative infrastructure and talent. These findings are an examination of how the Creative City discourse must adapt to fit within a developing world context.

INTRODUCTION

The city government of Bandung has recently begun fashioning a policy focused on helping Bandung become a Creative City and has gone as far as changing its English motto to "home of creative minds". This new policy is indirectly inspired by the "creative city" discourse, as termed by economic geographer and policy guru Richard Florida (2002) and developed within a Western context. The Creative City discourse has, in that context, been scrutinized as an elitist view of the city by many scholars (Peck, 2005). In light of such criticisms, this exploratory study makes use of observations and interviews in order to ask the question of how Creative City discourse traveled to Bandung and the implications of transferring such ideas to a developing nation.

Context

Bandung's context must be understood in order to frame the development of its Creative City strategy, which articulates the promotion of creativity as an important city goal. Although many residents have long considered Bandung a creative place, it is only recently that the city has made creativity an important and explicit policy goal. Indeed, the development of the policy is in its earliest stages and few concrete steps have been taken by the city as of yet. The development of a Creative City policy follows several events which have driven the development of the Creative City movement in Bandung. These include the naming of Bandung residents as Indonesia's Young Entrepreneur of the Year in both 2006 and 2007, as well as the city being selected by the British Council as the home of a three-year pilot project on creative cities in Asia.

The Bandung Planning Board (BAPEDA), as well as some of the city's academics, artists, business people, and citizen groups, are currently engaged in formulating and executing a Creative City strategy for Bandung. The first step of this has been to map creative spaces in the city. Given the momentum of the Creative City movement in Bandung, it is valuable to examine the relevance and applicability of such a strategy in Bandung and ask: how should the international discourse of creative cities be adapted to serve the local needs of the city?

Literature Review

The theoretical framework of three distinct discourses is integral in understanding the process that is occurring in Bandung. First, literature on policy transfer can help to expose the dangers in moving policy from one context to another. Second, Creative City literature must be explored in order to understand the original theory, its criticisms, and how it differs in Bandung. Finally, literature on the social implications of space is important in understanding the potential social ramifications of Creative City policy on the people of Bandung.

Policy Transfer

Much of the theory on policy transfer states that movement of policy has increased due to structural changes such as the globalization of the economy, new information technology such as the internet, and the increasing reliance of policy makers on the opinions of big name experts. Policies that are widely adopted are often couched in the language of "best practice" (McCann, 2004; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). Related to these processes is the impact of global economic integration in encouraging cities to compete with each other directly for access to capital. As Harvey (1989a) has established, cities have increasingly attempted to adopt policies that allow them to stay ahead of their rivals; this competition has led to the migration of certain policies as tools for economic advancement (McCann, 2004). This transfer is considered problematic due to the "serial reproduction" of similar policies without regard for context (Harvey, 1989a). Creative City policies exemplify a part of this process.

In this light, it is important to understand how transferred policies can fail. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) identify three main reasons for policy failure. The first is uninformed transfer, when a

foreign policy is selected but not fully understood or understood improperly. In this case, any policy implemented will likely fail because the implementation will be guided by incorrect principles. The second is incomplete transfer, meaning that not all the institutions needed for the policy to be successful are brought over upon transfer, potentially leading to failure as programs or policies that were integral to its development in the original context may not be present in the transferred policy. The third reason is inappropriate transfer, when a policy is transferred from an area where the social, economic, political and ideological context is so different that it becomes impossible for it to have the same affect in a new context. It is important to keep these types of failure in mind when attempting to adopt a policy developed in another location.

THE CREATIVE CITY

Historically, the ability of a city to develop new and innovative ideas has been perceived as a key factor in urban success, particularly from an economic perspective (Jacobs, 1969). More recently, researchers and policy-makers have advocated for the importance of "creativity" in city growth and for its explicit promotion as a policy objective; it is this type of policy discourse which has been transferred to Bandung.

Researchers such as Florida have suggested that the key driver of urban economic growth is not creative industries but creative individuals - those whose economic function is to come up with new ideas (Florida, 2002). He defines these individuals as members of the creative class. This creative class is viewed as highly mobile and drawn to cities which they find vibrant, interesting, and which exhibit Tolerance towards other ways of life. Tolerance is one of the three T's that Florida considers characteristic of successful, creative cities along with Talent and Technology. In Florida's view, cities can enjoy a virtuous cycle in which building an exciting, Tolerant city attracts Talented people, who develop high value Technology, which then brings more money into the city to be spent on an improved quality of life.

There are many policy tools which governments have used to promote and utilize creativity and to attract creative people. Place-making is one of the most popular methods, in which particular parts of the city are developed and reinforced as magnets for creative individuals and organizations. Often this process is combined with goals of general quality-of-life improvements. For example, depressed inner-city neighbourhoods in North America have been the target of revitalization projects, often through the reuse of older spaces. As old spaces acquire new uses and residents, the areas become more physically attractive, crime is reduced and a wider variety of local amenities are introduced. This is intended to improve the quality of life for new and existing residents.

As policy makers have explored and adopted strategies focusing on the promotion of creativity, a number of criticisms have emerged, many of which focus on the issue of social stratification. They note that the economic shift towards a greater focus on creative industries and occupations creates winners and losers and that Creative City strategies widen the gap between them. Critics such as Jamie Peck have argued that stratification and displacement are intrinsic to Creative City strategies because they consciously advance the interests of certain residents, occupations and parts of the city over others (2005). Public and private funds flow to these star people or areas, leaving others behind. At an individual level, this creates a situation in which "the talented minority command huge premiums, while many others navigate an unstable urban labour market with… low-end service jobs" (Bradford, 2007).

Place-making policies that are designed to attract creative industries and workers may also have a stratifying effect on the physical character of the city. Revitalization projects are often associated with gentrification and displacement (Barnes, et. Al. 2006), while those focusing on spectacular museums and festivals, are seen to simply create theatres of consumption in which public funds subsidize upper-middle class cultural tastes (Cuthbert, 2006). This has been identified by Harvey (1989b) as a result of the entrepreneurial city attempting to attract capital through spectacles.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SPACE

Place-making and urban design concerns are tied to a number of community variables and well-designed, appropriate, and responsive urban spaces all contribute to building healthy communities. Research has shown that public space contributes significantly to sense of community, heterogeneous civic culture and, ultimately, social inclusion (Guite et al, 2006; Sandercock, 1998).

Lefebvre's (1991) trialectics of space lends itself to framing the various dimensions of public space and its social implications. Lefebvre argues that while space is a basic structure in everyday life, it is also a complex social construction based on values and social meanings which consists of representations of space (codes and knowledge about space), spaces of representation (symbolic meanings enacted in spatial form through human appropriation), and spatial practices (routine experiences that 'secrete' their own social space). Spatial practices are the lived experiences of space (Lefebvre, 1991).

Public space is "the common ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind a community" (Carr et al, 1992). It provides neutral ground and opportunities for social interaction between all sectors of society, which can form the basis of community spirit (Swanwick, et al 2003). Psychological sense of community, as defined by McMillan and Chavis (1986) is a feeling that members have of belonging, of mattering to one another and to the group. Involvement in community social life not only has a significant impact on the well-being of individuals, but on quality of life and preservation of the community itself (Ahlbrandt and Cunningham, 1979).

Sense of community is not static however; it is affected by changing values and external forces, like socio-economic status and place-based identity (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Studies have found that sense of community is associated with the symbolic interaction that residents have with the physical environment. Place attachment is used to describe a "positive affective bond or association between individuals and the environment" (Rivlin, 1983). This means that well-designed public spaces should be relevant, responsive, and appropriate. In order to maximize place attachment, these spaces should offer comfort and security, common experience, increased awareness of the community and, especially in the case of marginalized populations, encourage users to see opportunities for hope (Carr, 1992; Rivlin, 1983).

OBSERVATIONS

Creative Community
Bandung has been a centre of knowledge and creativity within Indonesia for many decades. Its extremely high number of universities per capita (over 50 institutions), many of which focus on arts, science, engineering, and technology studies, support its image as an intellectual city which attracts young people from all around Indonesia. Most of the creative people we interviewed had completed university or are in the process of finishing their studies, and those that come to live, work, and study tend to stay in Bandung. The city's geography and political history both play a key role in the character of its creative community.

The Political Climate and Creativity
Bandung residents emphasize a long history of arts and culture; however Suharto's dictatorship limited creative expression for many years. Key informants have suggested that since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, people across Indonesia are more willing to speak out against corruption and other political issues, especially through different creative mediums. This new absence of state powers led to the creation of new institutions by the people, providing the organizational space for new identities to emerge. Residents of Bandung are more willing to mix ideas and exchange information in a way that had been dangerous in the past, contributing to an explosion of creative activities and enhanced networking of creative people within the city.

Many people we spoke to noted that there are still significant limitations on freedom of expression, however. Examples included the outdated methods of the formal education system

which focus on memorization rather than creativity, regulations on public space and internet use and restrictions and police raids on concerts and other artistic events. Although short lived, the ban on websites such as YouTube was identified as an indication of the government's tendencies towards censorship.

CEATIVE CITY POLICIES: FOUR PERSPECTIVES

For individuals working on the many creative endeavours in Bandung, there are a variety of perspectives on the appropriate nature and goals of a Creative City strategy. Study participants expressed an array of opinions on the meaning of Creative City, key barriers and challenges of creative policies, and the role of the government in developing such a strategy. Four dominant perspectives on the role of Bandung's Creative City strategy are outlined below.

Regional Creative Centre/City of Spectacles
As a regional creative centre, some feel that Bandung should present itself as a Creative City to the nation and the world. Strategies would include the promotion of great architecture and design and the attraction of creative workers. Government officials and creative professionals expressed their desire for Bandung to be recognized as a "hub of creative minds", a point of view in-line with the Western Creative City strategies.

This perspective is reinforced by the British Council's selection of Bandung for a 3-year pilot as the first Asian city in its Creative City program. Others have expressed the desire for Bandung to be the first Asian city to join the United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s creative cities network (UNESCO, 2008).

For those groups that share in the vision of a spectacular city which attracts creative industries, the role of the government is to encourage quality urban design. One participant indicated the need for an "architecture advisory board" to ensure that design standards are met within the city. Many interview subjects including some who were generally critical of this perspective felt that these design strategies could improve the prestige of Bandung, whose image is currently that of a "street vendor city".

Critics of the "spectacles" approach identified a restrictive criteria surrounding government support as a significant barrier to creative activities. Despite budgeted funds to support creative projects, restrictive requirements exclude certain creative groups from participating; for example, many felt that in order to participate in city promoted events a large amount of capital was required. Such barriers exclude small-scale creative enterprises and limit the potential for new groups to reach a broad audience.

Economic Development and Employment
Some respondents saw the primary purpose of Creative City policies as leveraging creative endeavours for economic development. The government aims to utilize a Creative City strategy as one tool for addressing the loss of textile manufacturing jobs in Bandung; this motivation is similar to that of many cities in more developed economies.

Economic development plans for creative industries are intended to improve employment not only the creative class, but for all workers connected to the creative economy, including factory workers producing T-Shirts. Furthermore, interview subjects emphasized that creativity-focused economic plans are meant to augment existing strategies for employment, not replace them.

This economic vision of the Creative City fails to fully examine the economic impacts on informal industries. Although the potential positive impacts the Creative City on the informal sector were addressed when participants were asked about the topic directly, the extent of perceived economic benefits were limited to "trickle down" effects. One participant with an academic affiliation did express that the "gem is the kampung"; meaning that the informal inner city economy is essential to the city and that this movement will help these people benefit. However, they emphasized that this benefit arises from not only from economic improvement, but enhanced public space.

Some informants saw the Creative City strategy as simply "a new name for something old"; a restatement of older philosophies promoting support for small and medium sized businesses. Participants agreed that this support was needed for both creative and non-creative enterprises. The way the government defines creativity, and thus who is included and excluded within this realm, must also be taken into consideration when identifying the potential effects of a Creative City strategy. According to one participant, "if you want to support local economy, all local economy is creative". Academic participants also emphasized the need for government to address larger social issues, through education reform and environmental improvements as part of a strategy that will further encourage future economic growth in the Creative City.

Empowering Grassroots
Some participants viewed Creative City policies primarily as a tool for assisting local grassroots artists. They suggested that while artists require little direct support from the government and are happy to work within a D.I.Y. (Do It Yourself) philosophy, they felt the creative community would be more productive if provided with certain resources. Some common desires are multi-use public spaces, as well as direct funding for public art and public events. However, public space alone is not enough to empower the grassroots creative communities. Artists emphasized the need for policies guaranteeing freedom of expression in reference to recent laws restricting internet communications and a ban on music concerts that followed the death of 11 youth at a recent metal concert.

Support for empowering grassroots networks of creative individuals was a recurring theme. Evidence of these groups can be seen in the ways residents utilize any available public space as a place to congregate, network, and create. Dago, the Common Room (a building open to the public for work and exhibition space), and independent book stores were the most identified examples of creative spaces.

Many informants and academics expressed the sentiment that certain underground, creative groups have no desire to be included in Creative City policies discussions by the government. There was a strong desire among informants to avoid a centralized organization of creativity, because creativity is viewed as a fluid process that cannot be planned; many would prefer to focus on social networking as a tool for creativity and innovation. Therefore they are hesitant to engage in any strategies put forth by the city.

City Building
To some, creativity was primarily a tool for achieving broader city development aims a philosophy in line with Landry's vision of the Creative City where creativity enables innovative ways to solve a broad range of urban problems (2000). While increasing employment was an aspect of this, strategies that were suggested also included tools for kampung improvement and improving public spaces such as bridge underpasses. Creative endeavours were also seen as a way to encourage citizens to become more politically and socially involved in their city. Some examples of this engagement can be seen through the activities organized by participants involving public art projects in parks.

Many participants felt that before these activities can positively impact Bandung, important social problems must be addressed. There is a saying that "ideas come from Bandung, but money comes from Jakarta," indicating that financial security is still a priority among residents. Others felt that the quality of the environment and lack of public spaces was stifling for creative innovation. The current state of knowledge transfer in the form of job training, access to employment, and formal education are also seen as problems in fostering a creative city.

CASE STUDY: DISTROS

Creative industry in Bandung is exemplified by the distribution outlet or 'distro'; independent clothing designers and distributors, primarily known for their T-Shirts.

Early distros grew out of subgroups in the city's underground music scene during the mid-1990s and have continued to grow in recent years. Musicians and their friends would produce music

and merchandise, such as T-Shirts and independent magazines. While this merchandise may initially have been sold at shows or on the street on Saturday night, the more popular and entrepreneurial groups opened their own stores. Over time, certain clothing designers established a following within a particular music scene that then expanded to attract a variety of young people more generally.

The ability of small clothing labels to rise and prosper is tied to the specific history of Bandung as a textile centre. The city has a large amount of machinery and low cost labour skilled in clothing production; silk screening in particular is concentrated in small shops in the Parahiyansan area. Many of the customers of such organizations are informal merchants reprinting knock-offs of popular clothing labels. Furthermore, a designer can easily experiment with different styles by printing a limited run of any number of shirts and seeing if they are popular.

Despite their status as an alternative to the mainstream, a distro can be a very profitable business. A knockoff Gucci or Green Day shirt may sell for 15,000 Rupiah or less at a local market. By contrast, an independently designed distro shirt bought from the same clothing producer and printed at the same printer can sell for close to 100,000 Rupiah, which can only be afforded by middle-class consumers. Some distros described themselves as earning over $20 million Rupiah per month. While some distros sell only in Bandung, others have expanded to other major cities in Indonesia, as well as distributing their merchandise to Singapore, Malaysia, and elsewhere over the internet.

ANALYSIS

Policy Transfer
The perils of policy transfer discussed by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) must be taken into account by all parties involved in formulating the city's economic development strategy. At this point only academics have currently addressed the need for careful reflection on the challenge of bringing a policy developed in the Western context into a developing country; although the city is making efforts to understand where and why creativity exists in Bandung.

The Creative City
Creativity can allow certain cities to develop niches based on distinctive characteristics and advantages (Duxbury, 2004) The case of the distros indicates that such industries may be an effective response to changing economic conditions that Bandung is facing due to competition from China and Vietnam. Despite lack of access to a wide-range of international markets, it may be that the large, young populations in Indonesia and Asia are enough to make Bandung's independent fashion industry a propulsive force in the local economy. Another issue regarding distros is the level of pay for employees. While distro owners may be economically successful, many distro employees were described as underpaid.

Within the Indonesian context, Bandung appears to display some of the creative city characteristics highlighted by Florida (though a proper analysis of this would require a quantitative study). Of Florida's three T's, talent appears to be most prominent, as the city has a high percentage of young, educated people due to its institutions of higher education. Bandung is seen by its local residents as diverse and tolerant, but this is only the case relative to the Indonesian context. While the city attracts migrants from across Indonesia, it is not seen as an international city with significant populations from other parts of the region or world. Furthermore, compared to other Asian countries, Indonesians are generally less likely to move abroad and therefore may have fewer international contacts. Interestingly, researchers such as Soemardi and Radjawali (2004) have noted that Bandung has a strong ICT industry, including the Bandung High Technology Valley Industry group; however, this fact was not explored in our analysis. In general, Bandung has some, but not all of the characteristics that can allow a 'creative city' to enjoy economic growth.

Through our research, we discovered significant competition within the creative movement and between creative organizations and others; including artistic and social conflicts as well as competition over resources and access to decision makers. This competition also exists within

and across creative industries. For example, when founded, the distros presented themselves as a more local, original and independent alternative to the mainstream labels. As these businesses have become more successful, and newer companies have formed, rifts have developed between the 'original' distros and the newer ones due to economic competition between rival businesses. Some of the businesses have established an exclusive industry group called KICK which others feel challenge the independent nature of the industry. There are also artistic conflicts, as newer designers are accused of copying the styles of others.

Education also emerged as an important component for fostering Bandung's creative community. Outside of the many local universities, current formal and informal systems of knowledge transfer were acknowledged as a barrier, preventing access to the skills and talent necessary for engaging in creative industries. The discussions surrounding the development of a Creative City strategy fail to fully examine the ways in which the average Bandung resident may benefit from future policy. Bridging the gap between those currently involved in creative processes and those who are not requires educational support for people of all ages. Proper job training programs would need to adjust in order build on the capacity of workers supporting these creative industries and school systems would need to incorporate creative thought into their curriculum.

The Social Implication of Space

Western literature suggests that public space contributes significantly to a sense of community, heterogeneous civic culture, collective efficacy, and ultimately social inclusion. Bandung residents, like many of their Western urban counterparts, recognize the importance of accessible quality public space and the social benefits that such resources can provide to the community.

In response to the lack of public space, several semi-private community gathering spaces have emerged as counter-spaces or spaces of representation across Bandung, which enact symbolic meanings through appropriation. Participants articulated the need for increased City support of public events which foster community pride. Participants also expressed the need for places in which networks of creative individuals could congregate and exchange ideas, with multi-use spaces seen as the appropriate venue. While semi-private spaces have emerged in Bandung that support a range of creative activities, it is important to recognize that such spaces may not be socially accessible to all residents. While these spaces promote themselves as accessible to all, a number of participants expressed discomfort engaging in creative activities and dialogue at a number of these gathering spaces.

In the absence of designated creative public spaces, various public spaces have been appropriated by residents and turned into "hot spots" for socializing and exchanging creative ideas. While the City is not prohibiting the use of appropriated spaces, like Dago Street, it is similarly not providing the infrastructure to improve such spaces. The City would like to support the creation of new spaces, but is overlooking the potential of already appropriated spaces.

CONCLUSION

According to the literature on how policy travels it is important that those who are developing the Creative City policy in Bandung reflect how the city differs from other Western Creative Cities. Critical reflection is needed on how Bandung should adapt the Creative City discourse in order to avoid the various types of policy failure and whether the creative cities literature is appropriate to Bandung at all. Harvey (1989a) and McCann's (2004) discussion on the role of competition between cities as spurring the adoption of certain "best practice" policies is a factor in the spread of Creative City discourse to Bandung as this notion of Bandung needing to compete was explicitly mentioned by several stakeholders. The pressure on the city to replace the jobs lost in the textile industry and the arrival of the British Council naming Bandung a Creative City may have created a perfect storm that is pushing Bandung to adopt a Creative City policy. If the transfer of the Creative City policy is inappropriate to Bandung due to its different socio-economic environment this could also lead to policy failure. However, it is important to note that

the process of forming a Creative City policy is still in its early stages in Bandung and, as of yet, it is not apparent that there has been an improper transfer of policy.

In this regard, there are several areas that we see as both negative and positive in the potential adoption of a Creative City strategy by the city of Bandung. On the positive side the case study of the Distros and Bandung's talented and vibrant culture within the Indonesian context suggests that the creative economy can serve as a valuable asset to the city.

On the negative side, aspects that are different in Bandung (and perhaps throughout the developing world) do pose challenges for Bandung to become a Creative City. The potential in the city is limited by the lack of an environment that encourages creativity. Structural issues such as an education system which does not make an effort to teach creativity and governance structures which exhibit a high level of social control may serve to dampen creative activities in the city. Furthermore, the social stratification which may be inherent to Creative City policies may be exacerbated by the more highly stratified economy that is present in Bandung; few of those we talked to had strong ideas about how the informal sector and average citizen could become part of the creative economy.

Those who transfer Creative City policies to Bandung must be aware of these differences if policy is to succeed. Efforts to instil a level of creativity in all the population and to engage a wide variety of actors may not be needed in a developed society where creativity is entrenched, but will be essential in the Bandung context. Governance issues regarding how people are allowed to use public space, or are encouraged to do so, take on a much stronger role in ensuring creativity is of benefit to the whole population. The city government has the power to promote these ideas by encouraging the use of public space for all and supporting events that are accessible to the whole community; this power is especially important in Bandung, where, historically, public space has not been used in this way. While Creative City policies have the potential to help Bandung, they face stronger barriers in the city which must be addressed if any Creative City strategy is to be successful.

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