Urban Space, Culture, and Industry:
Mixed Processes of the Creative City Yokohama Initiative in the First Decade

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Abstract
Since the 2000s, the creative city policy has been attracting worldwide attention as a strategy for regenerating cities that have declined with globalization and deindustrialization. This study focuses on the City of Yokohama, which adopted a creative city policy in 2004, examining the causes and aims of that policy and the actual processes of its implementation and evaluating its achievements and remaining problems.

The immediate cause of forming the policy was the decline of the central area through the globalization of economy. Some creative officials in the city government discussed how to utilize historical buildings in order to maintain the symbolic value of central urban space and adopted the creative city policy, which suited well to the urban design and cultural policies that the city had been implemented from the 1960s onward.

The objectives of the creative city initiative are to attract artists and designers; to form a cluster of creative industries; to reshape the waterfront of downtown area; and ultimately, to make a creative city led by general citizens. The policy was suggested by an urban designer who was recruited by the mayor of the day. In the first decade, the initiative has been quite successful in attracting artists, designers, and architects, but failed to form a cluster of the creative industry. The restructuring of the waterfront area has partly been achieved, but the role of the general citizens remained to be defined.

The mixed processes reveal that the agenda of the creative city is characterized primarily by urban design and has a weakness in relating cultural policies to industrial development. After the advent of a new mayor in 2010, the initiative is turning from a comprehensive strategy to an ordinary cultural policy and diminishing its spatial perspective.
**Introduction**

Since the 2000s, the “creative city” has been attracting worldwide attention as a strategy for regenerating cities that have declined with globalization and deindustrialization. The creative city is a notion proposed by a British urban planner, Charles Landry (2008), who emphasized the importance of using the creativity in regenerating cities. It is a dynamic and flexible urban strategy for revitalizing cities by enhancing their own local values through mobilizing civic resources and fusing culture and industry. It came from experiences in European cities such as Glasgow, UK, Helsinki, Finland, and Emscher Park, Ruhr, and so on, but the concept is spread in the East Asian cities, particularly urban China, Korea, and Japan.

Among forty one cities registered in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, for example, five are China’s (Shenzhen, Shanghai, Chengdu, Hangzhou, and Beijing), three are Korea’s (Icheon, Seoul, and Jeonju), and four are Japan’s (Kobe, Nagoya, Kanazawa, and Sapporo) as of November 2013. Other than the members of UNESCO Creative Cities Network, Incheon and Pusan in Korea, and Yokohama, Hamamatsu, and Osaka in Japan call themselves a creative city.

The notion of the creative city, however, is likely to become vague as it diffuses worldwide. The same slogan may be interpreted differently, implying various intentions, and many forces may work under that slogan. Then, it is necessary to analyze a planning and implementation of a creative city policy as a social process.

This study focuses on the City of Yokohama, which launched a creative city initiative in order to revitalize its old downtown area in 2004. It is one of the earliest cities that adopted a creative city policy in Japan and has promoted the initiative for about a decade. The objectives are to attract artists and designers, to form a cluster of the creative industry, to reshape the waterfront of the downtown area, and to make a creative city led by ordinary citizens. The policy was composed of three dimensions – spatial, cultural, and industrial – and the outcomes have been mixed in the first decade. The initiative has been quite successful in attracting artists, designers, and architects, but failed to form a cluster of the creative industry. The restructuring of the waterfront area has partly been achieved, but the role of the general citizens remained to be defined. Why was the creative city policy made in Yokohama? How has it been successful in attracting artists and making creative neighborhoods and why? What issues are remaining? This study examines the actual process of the Creative City initiative in Yokohama and evaluates its achievements and problems.
Research Organization and Methods

This study has started in 2010 as a research project in the Institute of Global Urban Studies aided by the Grant-in-aid for Scientific Research (B), JSPS, FY2010-2013. It also financially aided by the Dai-ichi Life Foundation in 2012. The research has been conducted with faculty members of the Institute and undergraduate students in my workshop at Rikkyo University. We collected data from books written by ex-officials, lectures of city officials and art managers, official documents of the Creative City Yokohama projects, websites of the projects and related organizations, interviews with those city officials, civic leaders, artists, architects and university students who are involved in the initiative, and field observations in various art events and public meetings.

1. Proposal for the Creative City Yokohama Initiative

Around the year 2000, the old downtown area in Yokohama City was declining through the globalization of economy. Prolonged stagnation after the burst of the Bubble economy since the 1990s and the Asian currency crisis in the late 1990s brought about the consolidation of major banks in Japan. Thus, some bank premises located in downtown Yokohama went out of use and was about to be demolished. In addition, spatial restructuring in Tokyo, which had also slowed down since the 1990s, restarted in the late 1990s and office space in the central Tokyo was anticipated to be oversupplied in 2003. Thus, the land market in Minato-Mirai 21 (MM21), a new business district in Yokohama, has stagnated, let alone in the old downtown of Yokohama. Furthermore, a new subway line, the Minato-Mirai Line, was expected to be operated throughout the old and new downtown areas, which would be connected directly from Yokohama to Tokyo through the Tokyu Toyoko Line. This brought about the higher demand for residential buildings in the old downtown in Yokohama. In sum, vacant offices increased and old office buildings were likely to be rebuilt for residential use. City officials did not considered this change desirable because urban landscape would be disturbed due to the loss of historical buildings that symbolize downtown Yokohama (CCY 2009, p.10). Instead, they wished to preserve the symbolic value of urban space in the port city.

In 2002, Hiroshi Nakada elected mayor. He defeated the incumbent Hidenobu Takahide who was endorsed by all the major parties (the Liberal Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Japan, the Komeito, the Social Democratic Party, and the New Conservative Party.) The new mayor was an independent fiscal populist and supported by increasing non-political voters who were deprived of political choice.

The new mayor appointed Takeru Kitazawa, an associate professor of urban engineering
at the University of Tokyo as one of two advisors (Noda 2008, p.74). Kitazawa was recruited as a city official in 1977, joining the Urban Design Team of the day and promoting to the director of the Urban Design Office, and turned to a university professor in 1997 (Akimoto et al. 2010, pp.80, 98, 105-6). According to Noda (2008, pp.74-75), when Kitazawa recommended the mayor to preserve the former premises of Dai-ichi Bank, the mayor asked him to propose how to utilize it as well as to save. Thus, the Committee for Revitalization of the Urban Center Through the Promotion of Arts, Culture, and Tourism chaired by Kitazawa was set up in November 2002.

The committee released an interim report in March 2003 and a final report in January 2004. The interim report suggested an experimental project of utilizing two historical buildings and Yokohama City launched the project of utilizing former premises of Dai-ichi Bank and Fuji Bank by October 2003. The final report, Proposals for Building Creative City Yokohama, pointed out that urban developments were slowing down in the MM21 and old downtown districts and then they proposed “Creative City Yokohama” as a vision for urban regeneration. The report suggested four goals and three strategic projects.

Four Goals were:
- Realization of creative milieu that artists and designers prefer to live in;
- Economic vitalization through the formation of a cluster of the creative industry;
- Utilization of attractive local assets;
- Making a creative city led by ordinary citizens.

Three Strategic Projects were:
- Creative Core: establishing Creative Neighborhoods;
- Image Culture City;
- (tentative) National Art Park.

“Establishing Creative Neighborhoods” implied the preservation and utilization of historical buildings, old warehouses, and vacant offices in the downtown for cultural and artistic purposes. Image Culture City signified the formation of a cluster of the creative industry. A certain company of the image culture industry was anticipated to be attracted in MM21. National Art Park represented a plan of reshaping the waterfront of the downtown area as a national project. It included reshaping the Zou-no-Hana (“the nose of an elephant” pier) district for the 150th Anniversary of the Opening of the Port to Foreign Ships 2009 and preparing Yamashita Pier as a venue of the Yokohama Triennale 2005.  

In sum, the objectives of the initiative were to attract artists and designers by utilizing old buildings, to form a cluster of the creative industry, to redevelop the waterfront of the
downtown, and ultimately to make a creative city led by the general public. Thus, the policy was composed of three dimensions – cultural, industrial, and spatial. How was the policy implemented and how were these dimensions related to each other?

2. Process of the Creative City Initiative

(1) Creative Neighborhoods

The Beginning of BankART 1929

After releasing the interim report, the city government launched the experimental project of utilizing two historical buildings—premises of the former Dai-ichi Bank and Fuji Bank branches. The city hall began to seek for management organizations publicly under the title of Yokohama Creative City Center Project in October 2003, because the interim report suggested that the project should be managed by “a new non-profit organization.” Of twenty four applicants, the city adopted two groups—the ST Spot Yokohama and the YCCC project. The former is a non-profit organization that manages a public theater with the same name located in the west side of Yokohama Station. The latter was a unit of artists and architects headed by Mr. Osamu Ikeda, the leader of the PH Studio.

In February 2004, they amalgamated to form a management body called BankART1929. 1929 alludes to the year in which two bank buildings were constructed. Then the former Dai-ichi Bank and Fuji Bank premises were utilized as BankART1929 Yokohama and BankART1929 Bashamichi respectively. The former contained a multi-purpose space, a book shop, an office for preparing an archive of Kazuo Ono, who was a great dancer born in Yokohama, and the office of BankART. The latter included a multi-purpose space and a pub and so on, but it was suddenly closed in October 2004 due to the use for the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts, and had to be relocated in February 2005 to the Nippon Yusen Yokohama Kaigandōri Warehouse, which was a vacant warehouse that the city hall leased from a shipping company, Nippon Yusen Kaisha. Since then the warehouse has been called BankART Studio NYK.

For about two years of the experimental project, art exhibitions, performances, conferences, and lectures had been held almost every day. In March 2006, at the end of the experimental term, a delegated committee assessed its performance and evaluated it positively. The city hall decided to continue the project for another three years. Members of the ST Spot retired then, and BankART1929 chaired by Mr. Ikeda became an incorporated non-profit organization in 2007.

The processes of making the creative neighborhoods that followed are so complex in time and place that it may be as well to describe them by location.
The Premises of the former Dai-ichi Bank Yokohama Branch
The building of the former Dai-ichi Bank Yokohama Branch was originally located in the site adjacent to the Yokohama No.2 Joint Government Office Building (the former Yokohama Silk Inspection Office.) It was demolished due to a widening of the road, but its balcony was saved and moved across the street. In 1995, it was restored as a part of the Yokohama Island Tower, the headquarter building of the Urban Renaissance Agency (called UR in short). After the beginning of the experimental project, Yokohama City bought it from UR and utilized it as BankART1929 Yokohama till March 2009. After the end of the project, the Dai-ichi Bank premises come to be utilized as the Yokohama Creative City Center, which is managed by the Yokohama Arts Foundation, providing a venue for art events as well as having an intermediary function for promoting creative activities of artists by locating the Arts Commission Yokohama office (Picture 1).

The Premises of the former Fuji Bank Yokohama Branch
This building was built as the premises of the former Yasuda Bank Yokohama Branch in 1929. Thereafter, it was used as the Fuji Bank branch and then closed. In 2002, Yokohama City bought the land and was donated the building by the bank. As described above, it was utilized as BankART1929 Bashamichi from March to October 2004 and since April 2005 it has been used for the Graduate School of the Film and New Media, the Tokyo University of the Arts (Picture 2).

Nippon Yusen Yokohama Kaigandōri Warehouse
When the City decided to use the premises of Fuji Bank for the Tokyo University of the Arts,
the members of BankART, who had just started the project, felt disturbed. They claimed that the city be find an alternative building within walking distance, having at least the same space, and being able to be moved in immediately (Ikeda 2011, p.79). The city made a great effort in finding out the NYK warehouse and signed a contract with NYK to lease it. The leader of BankART told that he had felt the city took the creative city initiative seriously. Thus, they overcame the crisis and began to use the first and second floors of the warehouse as BankART Studio NYK by February 2005. They run a café, a book shop, and nine studios.

Eventually, after March 2009 when the use of the Dai-ichi Bank premises as BankART1929 Yokohama came to an end, BankART Studio NYK, leased by the city, has continued to be run by BankART. Meanwhile, the third floor became available and the office of the organization was moved in the second floor. The building was also used as a venue of the Yokohama Triennale 2008 and 2011. Thus, BankART Studio NYK has become an important base of the creative neighborhoods in Yokohama (Picture 3).

Kitanaka BRICK & Kitanaka WHITE

The project for establishing creative neighborhoods has an unexpected effect. During the experimental project went on, a real-estate firm, Mori Building Co., asked BankART to utilize the two old buildings for eighteen months before their redevelopment works would begin (KBW 2006). The site was across the street from the Dai-ichi Bank and there stood four warehouses and two office buildings which had been owned and run by Teisan Warehouse Company since 1926. Mori Building purchased the site from Teisan Co. after the latter’s relocation and set up an association for redevelopment with nearby land owners. Mori Building proposed to rent two office buildings to artists and designers at a nominal rate. Mr. Ikeda, the subdelegate of BankART1929 at the time, looked for tenants in his large circle of artists and architects. Consequently, about fifty units or two hundred and forty artists, designers, and architects agreed to conclude the contract with Mori Building. Majority of them are considered to be moved from Tokyo. Two building were called the Kitanaka BRICK and the Kitanaka WHITE respectively because one was made of brick (Picture 4) and the other was cement mortar plastering.3 Thus, the Kitanaka BRICK &

*Picture 3 Nippon Yusen Yokohama Kaigandōri Warehouse*
WHITE tentative project had started by May 2005.

Its impact was great. The residents held Kitanaka Open Doors twice in the period. They not only opened up a channel of communication with the general public but also amongst themselves (CCY 2009, p.74). They set their own “private” project into motion within the “creative neighborhood” originally initiated by the government, building a network of resident artists, designers, and architects, and making them visible to the general citizens.

As the project came to a close, the city officials and BankART members did never want to let the residents return to Tokyo (Shigokaibon 2009, p.15). The city decided to provide the ZAIM, the buildings of the former Kanto Finance Bureau and Labor Standards Office, which the city had acquired from the national government in 2002. The architects, however, hesitated to move in the buildings because they were required to sign one-year contract with the city. The period of contract was too short to run architectural design office. Then, Mr. Ikeda struggled to search an alternative property and fortunately discovered Honchô Building, a private owned property just across the street from the Kitanaka BRICK (Shigokaibon 2009, pp.14-15). Thus, the successors of the Kitanaka B&W project diverged in the two sites.

ZAIM

The ZAIM is composed of two buildings. They were originally constructed in 1928 as an office and a warehouse of a textile company. They were condemned by the U.S. military after 1945 and then owned and used by the Kanto Finance Bureau and the Labor Standard Office respectively. In 1993, both agencies were relocated to the Yokohama No.2 Joint Government Office Building, and in 2003 Yokohama City acquired the vacant buildings from the national government. The buildings had been utilized temporally as “Triennale Station” or the volunteers’ office for the Yokohama Triennale 2005 from August to December 2005 (ZAIM 2010, p.22). Mr. Tadashi Kawamata, the director of the triennale, gave them the name of ZA-IM (ZA means the seats in Japanese, symbolizing a meeting place, and IM signifies an intermediary support.)

Then the city hall decided to utilize the buildings for promoting culture and art under
the management of the Yokohama Arts Foundation. By August 2006, twenty five studios and offices moved into the ZAIM. Among them, ten were relocated from the Kitanaka B&W. They organized an open doors event, “ZAIM FESTA,” annually. The ZAIM Annex (warehouse) had been used until March 2009 and the ZAIM main building until March 2010, when the city decided to close it due to its heavy aging (Picture 5).

**Honchō Building 45 (Shigokai)**

The Honchō Building was originally built in 1929 as the former Teikoku Kasai (an insurance company) Building and then owned by Yanan Co., a transportation company (Picture 6). The first to third floors was used by the owner, but the fourth and fifth floors were vacant. In 2006, Mr. Ikeda struggled to search an alternative place to the Kitanaka B&W and fortunately found this building. It was located just across the street from the Kitanaka B&W and the owner of the building had looked at what was going on there and was interested in the project. He kindly offered the fourth and fifth floors as the equal conditions with Mori Building Co. (Shigokaibon 2009, p.15). Mr. Ikeda called this encounter “the urban experience.”

Thus, the floors were called Honchō Building 45 (Shigokai) and ten units including architects who hesitated to move into the ZAIM relocated their offices from the Kitanaka. The lease agreements were renewed again and again (Shigokaibon 2009, pp.14-15) and the building had been in use till September 2010, when the Honchō Building was closed due to its redevelopment. The tenants were relocated to the fourth floor of Utoku Building (called Utoku Building Yonkai) in the vicinity of Sakuragichō Station.

**Hammer Head Studio: Shin Minato-ku**

In May 2012, “Hammer Head Studio: Shin Minato-ku” was opened. It was run by the BankART1929 and Associates. This structure was originally constructed by Yokohama City
in order to use as a venue of the Yokohama Triennale 2008. It is located in Shinkō Pier and called the Shinkō Pier Venue (Picture 7). The land is owned by the national government and leased by the city for the exhibition. In the Triennale 2011, it was utilized as a venue of a special tie-up program, BankART Life III: Shin Minato-mura. During the period, BankART suggested the city to use the structure after the triennale.

The city government searched management bodies publicly and adopted the BankART and Associates. They attracted about fifty units of artists and designers and will utilize it as studios till May 2014. Mr. Ikeda, the delegate of BankART, said that locating a creative place in the pier is significant in the sense that it opens up the closed space of the port, which is just what late Kitazawa intended in the Plan of National Art Park.

**Koganechō: from a red-light district to a creative neighborhood**

The process described above has its origin in the experimental project. There were many other spillover effects on the development of the creative neighborhoods in and around the downtown. “Koganechō” indicates one of such effects in the inner area.

Decades ago, illegal businesses concentrated under the elevated railway tracks of the Keikyu Line between Hinodechō and Koganechō Stations. Since the elevated structures had to be reinforced against earthquakes, the eating and drinking establishments were relocated to the vicinity. This brought about the spread of the sex businesses, attracting female entertainers from abroad and growing in number. On the other hand, two local neighborhood associations organized the Association for Preventing the Expansion of the Sex Industry in 2002 and, together with a parent-teacher association of the nearby elementary school, they organized the Hatsukō-Hinodechō Environmental Cleanup Association (Kogane-X) in November 2003. In January 2005, the prefectural police cracked down on the illegal businesses in Koganechō. Meanwhile, the security of entertainment districts like Roppongi and Kabukichō has come to be a nationwide issue. In June, the Urban Regeneration Headquarters chaired by the prime minister designated the inner Yokohama as one of the districts that were necessary to rebuild the security and safety of urban areas through policing and collaborating with local residents.

The police cleaned up the brothels, but there remained a lot of small structures for vice. It
was apparent that illegal businesses would have come back if the structures had been left. One solution was to rent the properties and convert them to artistic uses. The Naka ward office of Yokohama City launched a model project for conversion of the vacant brothels to studios in 2005. Local residents also understood that there was no other way to prevent a resurgence of the sex industry than to accept artists.

In 2008, an art event “the Koganechō Bazaar” was held during the period of the Yokohama Triennale 2008 and the Koganechō Area Management Center was incorporated as a non-profit organization in order to manage the properties leased by Yokohama City and to organize the Koganechō Bazaar annually.

Although the ownership relationships of the premises were complex, the number of properties rent by the city increased from nine in 2008 to over sixty in 2012 and most of them are utilized as studios and artistic shops. However, a lot of vacant premises still remain and the fear of a resurgence of illegal businesses does not disappear. Indeed, the public order is maintained by the police operation.

The local residents are likely to hope that the locality will be liberated from the stigma of the red-light district. It is true that the image of Koganechō is improving, but local residents tend to criticize sexual expressions of the artist; Arts being reminiscent of a red-light district are taboo in this neighborhood. Some artists understand the local citizen’s feelings, while others assume an ambivalent attitude to the phrase “environmental cleanup” and to the former mayor Nakada’s strong commitment to it. The strategy of Koganechō for preventing vice and regenerating the locality through arts and police activities gives rise to a complex process in which a variety of forces operate.

**Other cases**

There are some other cases indicating the spillover effects. An obsolete public wedding hall was converted to a lesson hall for theatrical performance since 2006 (Steep Slope Studio); a private warehouse was converted to offices for the creative industry in 2006 (Creative Space Bankokubashi SOKO); and a closed railroad station, Sakuragichō Station of the Tokyu Toyoko Line, was utilized as a temporary exhibition hall from 2007 to 2010 (Creative Space 9001) and so on.
Thus far, I have described how the experimental project of utilizing historical buildings launched in 2003 has brought about BankART1929 as a management body and has attracted a lot of artists, designers, and architects. In short, the creative neighborhoods have spread more than expected.

(2) Image Culture City
The second objective of the creative city initiative in Yokohama was to form an Image Culture City. It implied a plan to attract an image company, SEGA Corporation, into MM21, but the city failed to do so. In February 2007, SEGA released that the company acquired the land in MM21. In March 2008, however, it cancelled its project and the city purchased back the land. The core of the Image Culture City project disappeared at this point. It is not clear, however, that a cluster of the creative industry would have been formed if SEGA had been invited, because the company had planned simply to locate amusement facilities.

Instead of the image industry, the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts was attracted to the Bashamichi and Shinkō districts. The University decided to locate three department of the school there due to the activity of the creative neighborhoods. In April 2005, the Department of Film Production opened in the former Fuji Bank premises, as described above. In April 2006, the Department of New Media launched in the Shinkō district, and in April 2008, the Department of Animation was set up in Bankokubashi, the site between Bashamichi and Shinkō. As a result, not the image industry but a graduate school of the image related arts was invited in the neighborhood. This would transform the meaning of the Image Culture City later.

(3) National Art Park
National Art Park was a spatial planning of Creative City Yokohama and intended to reshape the waterfront of the downtown area as a national project. This plan was revised and elaborated in 2006 as discussed in the next section. As planned, a green space, Zou-no-Hana Park, and a free rest station, Zou-no-Hana Terrace, were built in 2009 in time with the 150th Anniversary of the Opening of the Port. The architect who won the design competition was Masao Koizumi, an associate professor of Tokyo Metropolitan University. He has been a resident of the Kitanaka BRICK, the Honchō Building, and the Utoku Building and understands the concept of the Park well.

Yokohama City delegated the management of Zou-no-Hana Terrace to Wacoal Art Center Co. in order to utilize it for a venue of art events. The director, who was born in Yokohama, also understands Kitazawa’s plan and run the Terrace as a base of international cultural
“commerce.”

Zou-no-Hana Park is only a part of the Plan, however. The rest has never realized until now. In order to understand the situation, we have to look at the revision of the plan.

3. Revision of the Creative City Initiative

Plan of National Art Park 2006

In January 2006, Proposals for the Plan of National Art Park was released by the Committee for the Plan of National Art Park chaired by Takeru Kitazawa. As this committee was organized in September 2004, eight months later than the release of Proposals for the Creative City Yokohama, Kitazawa seems to have intended to develop his strategy by elaborating a spatial planning of the Creative City Yokohama. Indeed, some items described in the revised plan had been put into practice by 2009: the activity of BankART1929 was concentrated on the NYK warehouse; the premises of the Dai-ichi Bank was utilized for the Yokohama Creative City Center in order to promote the creative activities; a park with a facility of displaying arts were built in the Zou-no-Hana district.

However, the plan simply juxtaposed the creative neighborhoods and the creative industry on the zoning map and had no consideration for their socio-economic relationship. The failure of attracting SEGA may partly explain the void of concreteness. Also the plan gave little consideration on the civic participation in the creative city, except for suggesting a scheme of something like a town management organization. These weaknesses in the spatial plan have a lasting effect on the subsequent processes.

Revised Plan of Creative City Yokohama 2010

In July 2007, the Association for Promoting Creative City Yokohama was organized as a
mother body of a town management organization and began to revise the plan for the next step. Unfortunately, the conditions supporting the initiative changed during their discussion. The mayor Hiroshi Nakada suddenly resigned from office in July 2009 and Fumiko Hayashi endorsed by the Democratic Party of Japan was elected mayor in August. Last but not least, Takeru Kitazawa passed away at fifty six in December. In such a critical phase, January 2010, the association submitted to the new mayor the proposal, *Toward the New Deployment of Creative City Yokohama: A Direction from 2010*.

The proposal set a slogan, “every resident in Yokohama City is an artist,” and suggested “new five projects.” The first, “urban renaissance in the downtown by the trinity of arts, urban development, and the creative industry,” showed an essence of the original initiative. The proposal straightforwardly pointed out that there had been a weakness in industrial development. The second, “reinforcing the international cultural exchange” and the third, “the improvement of creativity in the city as a whole” were newly added. The fourth, “Image Culture City nurturing human resources” implied that the proposers acknowledged the failure of attracting firms and changed the goal of “the Image Culture City” in response to the existence of the University of the Arts. The last project was “extending the Yokohama Triennale citywide,” which explicitly mentioned the triennale as a leading project of the creative city initiative. The first Yokohama trinennale was held in 2001 by the Japan Foundation, Yokohama City and others, and the Creative City Headquarters of Yokohama City has been in charge since 2005. Now, the triennale was explicitly recognized as one of the projects of the creative city initiative.

Thus, the 2010 proposal revised the Creative City Yokohama initiative in order to adjust the gap between the achievement of the creative neighborhoods and the weaknesses in clustering the creative industry and involving the general public. The Plan of National Art Park has been taken over as the “area strategy” but the Image Culture City has changed its meaning from signifying an industrial policy to a cultural one.

**Reorganization of the Bureaus**

When the mayor Hayashi received the 2010 plan in January 2010, she prepared to reorganize the bureaus of the administration. In April 2011, the APEC-and-Creative City Headquarters was reorganized as a new Bureau of Culture and Tourism. The headquarters was tentative, but it was organized across the bureaus and given the priority of its projects, which was quite important because the former mayor Nakada was a fiscal populist and devoted into fiscal retrenchment; He gave top priority to the creative city policy.

The new bureau is equivalent to other bureaus in the vertically integrated government
organization. In 2004, when the creative city initiative was proposed, the experimental project was under the control of the Bureau of Urban Planning. Now, the creative city policy is under the Bureau of Culture and Tourism, which is likely to de-emphasize a spatial dimension of the policy such as National Art Park and inclined to produce entertainment events of popular culture such as “music festival” and “smart illumination.”

4. Achievements and Problems in the Creative City Initiative

Thus far, we have looked at the mixed processes of the Creative City initiative in the first decade. The City of Yokohama launched the experimental project for utilizing the historical buildings in 2003 and officially started the initiative in 2004. The immediate cause was the decline of the central area due to the globalization of economy and the spatial restructuring in central Tokyo, which gave rise to the necessity of utilizing the premises of former bank branches and preserving the symbolic value of urban space of downtown Yokohama as a port city.4)

The objectives of the initiative were to attract artists and designers in the Creative Neighborhoods, to form the Image Culture City by clustering the creative industry, to reshape the waterfront of the downtown area as National Art Park, and ultimately to make a creative city led by the general public. The policy was suggested by an urban designer who was appointed by the mayor of the day.

In the first decade, the initiative has been quite successful in attracting artists, designers, and architects, but failed to form a cluster of the creative industry. The restructuring of the waterfront, the Plan of National Art Park, has partly been achieved as Zou-no-Hana Park, and the role of the general citizens in the creative city remained to be defined. Meanwhile, the initial plan was elaborated in the Plan of National Art Park in 2006 and then revised in the proposal of 2010 in order to adjust to the existing conditions. Meanwhile the mayor resigned from office and the urban designer passed away. After the advent of the new mayor, the Creative City Headquarters was reorganized into the Culture and Tourism Bureau. How the mixed processes are explained?

Why have the Creative Neighborhoods formed?

The success in attracting artists and designers was caused by several factors. First, the city government recruited excellent leaders of non-profit organizations and delegated to them the management of the historical buildings. They have become a magnet of artists, designers, and architects and extended its field to the central area. Particularly the Kitanaka B&W project proposed by Mori Building Co. had a great impact on forming a core of the social
networks among the artists and the Kitanaka Open House had made them close-knit and visible to the general public. Its experience has been taken over by the “Kannai-gai Open!” an annual open house event held in the central area.

Second, the city officials in charge of the creative city policy have maintained a good relationship with the artists despite the confusion of inviting the University of the Arts. It is partly because they have had a great affinity for artists due to the fact that they have adopted and implemented urban design and cultural policies from the 1960s onward (Tamura 1983, 2006; Matsumoto 2011). Also, the leaders of art NPOs understand their mission to connect the arts to urban regeneration adequately. In addition, the architects attracted to the creative neighborhoods have played a significant role in connecting artists to the city officials.

Finally, the development of the Creative Neighborhoods has been supported by the depreciation of land value. In the first decade from 2003, the land price was basically falling. The Kitanaka urban redevelopment project was suspended due to worsening economic conditions even after the Kitanaka B&W project had closed. The relative devaluation of real estate in downtown Yokohama has been a hidden factor that could afford to convert office buildings to studios. The reflational policy under the Abe administration may change the condition of urban land market after 2013.

Revision of the Image Culture City and the Creative Industry
The success in attracting artists has never yielded a cluster of the creative industry nevertheless. Originally, the plan expected to attract the image industry to MM21, but it was not realized. Instead, the Graduate School of Film and New Media, the Tokyo University of the Arts, has moved into the waterfront of the old downtown. Ironically, this was due to the existence of the Creative Neighborhoods. Therefore, the proposal in 2010 has changed the meaning of the Image Cultural City from an industrial policy to a scheme for human resource development. As a result, the plan for clustering the creative industry becomes ambiguous.

It is suspicious that the cluster of the image industry would have formed even if the image-related company had been attracted to MM21. The creative neighborhoods and the cluster of the creative industry were only juxtaposed in the spatial plan of the creative city as already mentioned. It is obvious that the creative city initiative in Yokohama City has a weakness in the industrial policy.

National Art Park Slowing Down
The third pillar of the Creative City Yokohama initiative was the Plan of National Art Park, which was to reshape the waterfront space of the port. The plan of 2006 indicated the spatial
dimension of Creative City Yokohama, which resulted in building Zou-no-Hana Park and Zou-no-Hana Terrace in 2009. However, this spatial planning had no consideration for socio-economic relationships of the artist’s studios to the creative industry, only to juxtapose them on the zoning map. It is questionable that the sheer concentration of “creative class” promotes the growth of the new industry (Florida 2002, 2005).

The Plan of National Art Park in 2006 was essentially taken over by the area strategy of the 2010 proposal. Notwithstanding, the advent of the new mayor and the reorganization of the city administration weakened the spatial dimension of the creative city. Since the early death of the urban designer Kitazawa in 2009, the plan might have slowed down. Under the new administration, the initiative is turning from a comprehensive strategy to an ordinary cultural policy and diminishing its spatial perspective. Nevertheless, as showed in Hammer Head Studio in the Shinkō Pier, some participants in the creative city initiative take over the will of the deceased.

Citizens Participation as an Agenda

The role of the general citizens is still ambiguous, too. The creative city policy in Yokohama set a goal to making a creative city led by the general public. However, it was not easy to attract over three millions people’s attention. The 2010 proposal adopted “every resident in Yokohama City is an artist” as a slogan and suggested “increasing creativity of people and communities in the whole city” as one of four goals. At present, however, one of the most popular programs for the general citizens is working as volunteers for the Yokohama Triennale. It is not clear how contemporary art affects people’s creativity.

Certainly, small conferences and workshops on town development as well as arts are sometimes held in BankART NYK and Koganechō, and professionals and technical workers including public officials are involved in them. But they are quite far from the public sphere of citizens (Habermas 1990) embedded in the urban community.

Since 2013, some projects of large-scale urban redevelopment restarted in downtown Yokohama under the reflationary policy of the Abe administration. Yokohama’s creative city policy made from the viewpoint of urban design will be tested whether it has the ability to control the dynamics of political economy of the urban arena.


2) Thereafter, Proposals for the Plan of National Art Park (2006) and Inner Harbor Plan (2010) were suggested by committees chaired by Kitazawa.
3) Kitanaka WHITE has been demolished due to the redevelopment, but its construction work has been suspended for at least five years due to the financial crisis in 2008 and the plan was revised in 2013.

4) For symbolic value, see Firey (1945) and Baudrillard (1972).

References