Three Pillars of a Sustainable Creative City in ASEAN:

Examples From Thailand, Singapore & Indonesia

Grisana Punpeng[+] (Thailand)

Abstract

This study attempts to critically examine practices towards building sustainable creative cities in ASEAN, particularly Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. The main aim is to identify key factors for sustainable creative cities by means of qualitative data analysis. The results show that to create a sustainable creative city in ASEAN government leaders must not focus on the designation of UNESCO Creative City as a goal for the economy, but as a firm commitment towards sustainable development. Creativity should be reinforced through art education from an early age. The distinction as well as the relationship between the terms "culture" and "creativity" must be made apparent in cultural policies, while the classification of creative activities should be redefined. Diversity and inclusion, not only in culture but also in art forms and genres, must be embraced as it allows for more freedom and possibilities in the development of creativity, especially from the bottom up.

Keywords: *Creative City, ASEAN, Sustainability, Creative Economy, Art Education, Cultural Policy*

+ Grisana Punpeng, Lecturer, Department of Speech Communication and Performing Arts, Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. voice: +66 81 899 7111 email: grisana.p@chula.ac.th.

Received 4/9/20 – Revised 11/12/20 – Accepted 12/2/20

Introduction

Cities around the world today have come to the realization that to be able to effectively respond to the major challenges they face, a culture of creativity needs to be embedded in the process of city-making. Seen as the new currency of the global economy, creativity is more powerful than financial capital, as it can generate the ability to make money, while also help solve problems and develop culture and identity. This driving force for sustainable development must be nurtured in an environment where open-mindedness and imagination are encouraged, and intercultural dialogue and cooperation are promoted (UNESCO 2020).

Before delving deeper into the concept of the creative city, it is crucial to address the meaning of creativity in the context of this research. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, creator of the flow theory[1] and author of *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (2013), asserts that creativity is a product of social systems, not just of individuals. It is cultural, social, and psychological. He further explains that (Csikszentmihalyi, 2006:3-4).

> For creativity to occur, a set of rules and practices must be transmitted from the domain to the individual. The individual must then produce a novel variation in the content of the domain. The variation then must be selected by the field for inclusion in the domain. […] In physics (domain), the opinion of a very small number of leading university professors (field) was enough to certify that Einstein's ideas were creative. Hundreds of millions of people accepted the judgement of this tiny field and marveled at Einstein's creativity without understanding what it was all about.

His theory of creativity is summarized in the systems model of creativity shown below.

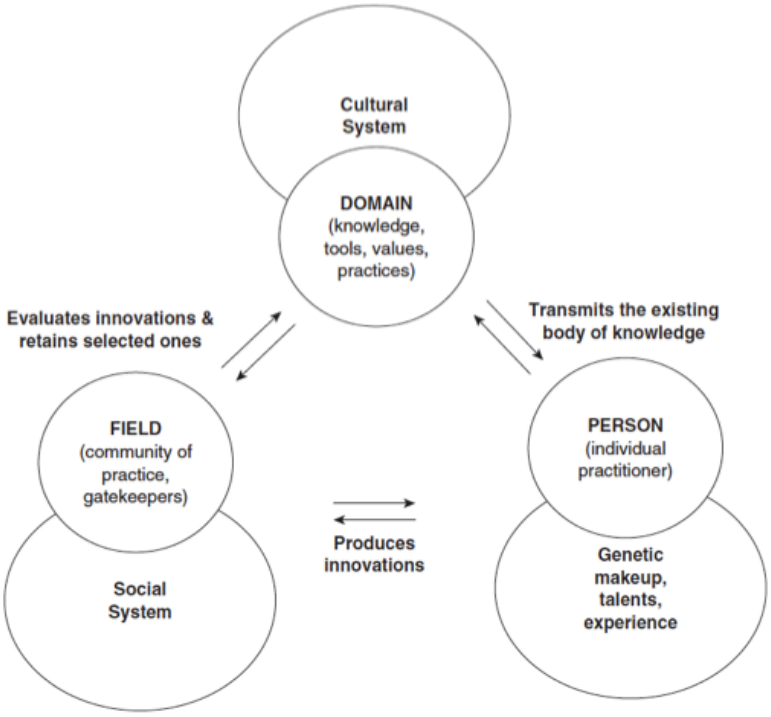

Figure 1. Systems Model of Creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2006:4).

With a goal to explore the concept of a creative city by examining projects and initiatives in ASEAN cities, this study began by looking at the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), which was launched in 2004 with an aim to "strengthen cooperation with and among cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of sustainable development as regards economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects" (UNESCO Creative Cities Network Mission Statement). Recognizing that the prosperity of creativity depends on strong relationships between individuals, domains, and fields, UNESCO encourages cities in the network to share best practices and work collaboratively to promote creativity and cultural industries, making cities "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."[2] Cities in the network are categorized according to seven creative areas: Crafts and Folk Arts, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.

As of November 2020, out of the 246 Creative Cities in the world, there are 11 cities in ASEAN that have been included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. These cities are Bangkok (Design), Chiangmai (Crafts and Folk Art), Sukhothai (Crafts and Folk Art), and Phuket (Gastronomy) in Thailand; Hanoi (Design) in Vietnam; Singapore (Design); Ambon (Music), Pekalongan (Crafts and Folk Art) and Bandung (Design) in Indonesia; and Cebu City (Design) and Baguio City (Crafts and Folk Art) in the Philippines (Ibid.).

While the UNESCO designation brings honor, prestige and opportunities for the tourism industry in each of the countries where the Creative Cities are situated, being a member in the Creative Cities Network requires a firm commitment from the stakeholders in the city to work together to place creativity at the core of their urban development. In other words, being designated a UNESCO Creative City should not be considered a prize or an end result, but a public announcement of the city's agreement to work towards the Network's shared goal, which is to develop a sustainable and inclusive society through the use of their creative assets in the form of a creative economy.

Creative Economy

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2010), which has been instrumental in promoting and analyzing creative economy all over the world since 2004 through its Creative Economy Program, described the creative economy as "an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development" (Creative Economy Report 2010: 8). In 2001, John Howkins, British author and strategist on the creative economy, developed this concept and discussed the relationship between creativity and economics in his seminal book *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*. Other scholars have expanded upon this and outlined specific practical paths to implementing these concepts and achieving the associated benefits. Related concepts by Howkins' contemporaries include Allen J. Scott's "Cultural Economy of Cities" (Scott 1999), Charles Landry's "Creative City" (Landry 2000), and Richard Florida's notion of the "Creative Class" (Florida 2002). In the past two decades the concept of the creative economy has had a remarkable impact on social development all over the world. Innovative projects and initiatives have sprung up around the world, particularly in major cities in the US and Europe.

In terms of its development, UNCTAD asserts that "the creative economy is the sum of all the parts of the creative industries" (2010), which are knowledge-based economic activities comprising four large groups: heritage, arts, media, and functional creations. The creative industries encompass both tangible products and intangible intellectual or artistic services, from their creation to their production and distribution. According to the UNCTAD Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles Report released in 2018, many countries, including developing countries such as Thailand, have seen an increase in creative industry exports throughout the last decade. Over the period from 2002 to 2005, the value of the global market for creative goods more than doubled, from US $208 billion to US $509 billion, with China being the biggest force behind the rise, having grown 14% annually during this period (UNCTAD 2018).

The report shows that the creative economy is thriving despite global political and economic challenges. Even during the 2008 financial crisis, the creative economy showed more resilience than other industries. While this growth seems encouraging, UNCTAD notes that policies and regulations are still struggling to keep up. Communication technologies, education and vocational training need to be strengthened and adapted to creative industry trends, so that the industries continue to expand and create more inclusive and collaborative societies (Ibid.).

The Development of Creative Cities in ASEAN

Many countries around the world believe that the development of the creative economy should start by making cities more creative. Cities are seen as actors and partners in socioeconomic and cultural development, connecting diverse communities and stakeholders through collaborative initiatives in the creative industries. The central idea is to convert the cities we live in into living works of art where all citizens can interact and fully engage in the process of urban design and development. The engagement of citizens must be considered a top priority in urban planning, as Jane Jacobs (1961, 238), American social activist and pioneer of urban planning, observes "cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."

In the book *Creative City,* Landry suggests that there are seven groups of factors that contribute to urban creativity. When all of these are present a city can be truly creative. They are: 1) personal qualities, 2) will and leadership, 3) human diversity and access to varied talent, 4) organizational culture, 5) local identity, 6) urban spaces and facilities, and 7) networking dynamics. For each group of factors, he came up with indicators and recommendations supported by evidence from developed countries, mostly in Europe and the United States (Landry 2008).

All ten ASEAN member states have initiated creative city policies and projects to varying degrees, using suggestions offered by writers such as Landry, Howkins, and Florida as guidelines, and documents from intergovernmental agencies UNCTAD and UNESCO as instruction manuals. Collaborations such as the ASEAN Creative Cities Forum and Exhibition, established by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through the Design Centre of the Philippines, and the Southeast Asian

Creative Cities Network (SEACCN), co-created by Bandung (Indonesia); Chiangmai (Thailand); Penang (Malaysia); and Cebu (the Philippines), were launched to generate public sharing of creative knowledge and encourage the discussion and practice of creative economies and the creative industries.

The concepts of the creative city, the creative economy, and creative industries originated in countries with post-industrial economies and technologically advanced infrastructure in Europe, North America, and Australia. Referred to as a "traveling discourse" by cultural critic Jing Wang, these concepts became popular around the world in the early twenty-first century, with several countries appropriating them in a "cookie cutter" approach (Wang 2004). The guidelines, models and toolkits that led to the success of cities in the United Kingdom and the United States, for example, cannot necessarily be directly applied to cities in developing countries, especially those in ASEAN, because of these cities' unique social structures and political climates.

Literature Review

There are a number of studies that have examined the making of creative cities in the world, with regards to urban planning (Scott, 2010; Taylor et al., 2011; Andersson and Mellander, 2013; Bekkering, Esposito and Goldblum, 2019), sustainability (Robertson, 2012; Ooi, 2005), networking (Sassen, 2016), transnational mobilities (Kong, 2014), and liveability (Ooi and Yuen, 2010; Kallidaikurichi and Yuen, 2010; Tan et al., 2012). Some literature discusses challenges currently faced by ASEAN creative cities, such as ageing population (Chong and Cho, 2018), waste management (Robertson, 2012), democracy (Chuangchai, 2019), and inequality (Gerhard, Hoelscher and Wilson, 2017). Out of all ASEAN cities, Singapore has been mentioned and studied the most, particularly in terms of its cultural and creativity policies (Chang, 2000; Lee, 2003; Kawasaki, 2004; Kong, 2012; Centre for Liveable Cities Singapore, 2017), art education (Choon and Wai, 2015; Lee, 2014; Chong, 2017), and transnational mobilities (Kong, 2014). The topic of city leadership which will be explored later on in this article was studied by Roengtam et al. (2017) and Rapoport, Acuto, and Grcheva (2019), but not in connection with the concept of the creative city. While discussion on the creative industries is not the main focus of this study, their relationship with culture will be briefly reviewed. Studies related to this aspect include those by Garnham (2005), Galloway and Dunlop (2007), and Throsby (2008). This study is intended to cover perspectives and practices not touched on before in the literature mentioned above.

Results and Analysis

This study attempts to critically examine practices and initiatives towards building sustainable creative cities in ASEAN, particularly Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. While the seven groups of factors proposed by Landry mentioned previously are essential in expanding the creative capacity of a city, the data collected in this research suggest that some factors are more important than others. In the following sections, three crucial foundations (pillars) for sustainable creative cities in ASEAN are presented, along with examples gathered from the research conducted from September 2017 to October 2019, with some updates made in

October 2020. The argument laid out forthwith is that three pillars require greater emphasis than other factors in the present time, not that they are the only factors needed to achieve a sustainable creative city.

Three Pillars of a Sustainable Creative City in ASEAN

Pillar 1: Leadership and Enforcement of Art Education

While the differences among ASEAN cities in terms of their social systems and political and economic backgrounds need to be acknowledged and honored, the research findings show that one common factor is the most crucial in the effective enforcement of creative city and creative industry policy; these cities have visionary leaders who value art education and understand the power and purpose of creativity.

In Singapore, the People's Action Party (PAP), the political party that has been in power since the general election in 1959, has been using art education and activities to promote social unity among Singapore's four main ethnic groups. From 1991, when the National Arts Council of Singapore (NAC) was founded, the role of art education was transformed into a tool to boost creativity which was seen by the government as one of the most important qualities of future leaders, as well as a vehicle for economic growth. Subsequently, a substantial budget was allocated to drive the city-state towards becoming a "Global City for the Arts" (Chang 2000; Lily 2012). The Pre-Tertiary Education Masterplan (2012) for arts and culture was initiated with an objective to provide children with art appreciation activities in the core curriculum and other enrichment programs, while existing art institutions, such as Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and LaSalle College of the Arts, received more financial support from the government (National Arts Council 2018). Furthermore, in 2008, the School of the Arts (SOTA) was opened as Singapore's first national pre-tertiary specialized arts school, where students take a six year integrated arts and academic curriculum, leading to the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma or the career-related program. Even though more than 70 per cent of graduates have gone on to pursue non-arts related courses at university,[4] reflecting the society's view of the arts as secondary or complementary to courses in business or science, the government's utilization of arts and creativity as tools to build social unity, develop creative leaders and contribute to a sustainable economy should be commended.

Bandung, another UNESCO Creative City in ASEAN that joined the network in 2015, also benefits from a visionary leader who places art and creativity at the center of urban development. In 2008, Muhammad Ridwan Kamil, an architect, lecturer and the winner of the British Council Creative Entrepreneur of the Year in 2006, became the first chairman of Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF), a not-for-profit organization promoting the development of creative projects in Bandung. Bandung has always been full of creative potential because of its cooler climate, close proximity to Jakarta, and young population, but the city's creativity could not prosper until Kamil won the mayoral election in 2013. Many initiatives aiming to improve the quality of life in the city were implemented shortly thereafter. As a leader, he did not sit in his office and come up with a plan to make the city more

creative, but visited the local communities and asked them directly what creative activities they would like to create and participate in. He also developed a system that is horizontal, inviting creative groups in the city to collaborate on projects to enhance creativity and respond to the needs of the people of Bandung. His projects have been well received by the public as everyone in the city is given opportunities to utilize their creative potential and help create a more comfortable and productive place to live. Kamil also strives for open communication and transparent governance, with various online channels through which citizens can suggest ideas for improvement and monitor the city government's performance. He has gone on to become the Governor of West Java of Indonesia since September 2018 (Rustiadi, Sastrawan & Maryunani 2018).

The two examples above reflect the leaders' recognition that it is crucial to build the communities as well as nurture creative individuals, or the "field" and "person" components of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity. While art education can equip individuals with qualities necessary for innovations, such as curiosity, divergent thinking, and problem solving, it is the community such as the one in Bandung that manifests creativity and subsequently allows new ideas to be implemented and retained (Csikszentmihalyi 2006). Moreover, the two cases also demonstrate the quality of successful leadership that Landry (2008, 109) believes necessary for a creative city. He says "successful leadership aligns will, resourcefulness and energy with vision and an understanding of the needs of a city and its people. […] Leaders must develop a story of what their creative city could be and how to get there."
Conversely, the lack of a clear vision and understanding about art and creativity from the government is a contributing factor to the limited and patchy progress in developing Bangkok as a creative city over the past 10 years. Creative economy and creative industries policies have been formulated as solutions to escape the middle income trap and strengthen international competitiveness. The implementation, however, has been neither effective nor productive due to discontinuity in political leadership, the deeply rooted bureaucracy that is resistant to innovation, and the top-down approach initiated by a small group of senior politicians and bureaucrats with a lack of knowledge and the inability to view creativity beyond its commodification (Parivudhiphongs 2018).

The resurrection of the Creative Economy Agency (Public Organization)[5] in 2018 has propelled Bangkok (along with Sukhothai) to being designated a UNESCO Creative City. Nevertheless, with the long-standing issues mentioned and without clearly defining the concepts of creativity, the creative industries, art, and culture within the Thai context, it is difficult for urban creativity to be sustained.

Pillar 2: Clear Understanding of Creativity and Its Relationship With Cultural Heritage

While there have been numerous debates and discussions around the use of the terms "cultural" and "creative" in policy-making in Europe since the concepts of creative economy and creative industries were implemented (Garnham 2005; Galloway & Dunlop 2007), confusion over the terms is clearly present in

official documents released by the government in Thailand. In the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan of Thailand (2007-2011) created by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), Thailand's creative industries were divided into 4 major groups and 15 subgroups as follows:

1. Cultural heritage: Thai crafts, Thai food, traditional medicine, and cultural tourism
2. Arts: visual and performing arts
3. Media: film and video, publishing, broadcasting, and music
4. Functional creation: design, fashion, architecture (general architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, interior design, and fine art), advertising, and software (Howkins 2010; Sermcheep, Srisangnam, & Anantasirikiat 2015; Parivudhiphongs 2018)

This classification was adapted from that proposed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which aims to "facilitate an understanding of the cross-sectoral interactions as well as of the broad picture. [It] could also be used to provide consistency in quantitative and qualitative analysis" (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report 2010). When John Howkins, the British author and strategist on the creative economy, was hired to analyze Thailand's potential for developing the creative industries, he pointed out confusion and ambiguity already in the model. For example, food, traditional medicine, and cultural tourism (as opposed to other forms of tourism) are considered creative activities, but fine art is subsumed under architecture. Despite this feedback, no revisions were seen. Without any explanations, the groups of creative industries were renamed in 2020, and the subgroups reshuffled as follows:

1. Creative originals: Thai crafts, music, performing arts, and visual arts
2. Creative content/media: Film and video, broadcasting, publishing, and software
3. Creative services: Advertising, design, and architecture
4. Creative goods/products: Fashion industry
5. Related industries: Thai food, traditional medicine, and cultural tourism (Creative Economy Agency 2020)

In the revised grouping of Thailand's creative industries, the arts are combined with music and Thai crafts under the heading "creative originals." Thai food, traditional medicine, and cultural tourism, previously considered cultural heritage, are now merely "related industries," and fashion is the only industry under a broad term "creative goods/products." While this revision offers a more simplified overview of the creative industries, the new group titles (originals, content/media, services, goods/products, and related industries) are even more vague than before. Questions that come up include: why are film and video not originals? Is it because "creative originals" are limited to traditional forms and subject matter? Does it mean that "performing arts and visual arts" in this case refer only to forms such as *Khon* (masked dance drama) and painting depicting

Thai culture and traditions, and not contemporary ones? Why are Thai crafts and food not considered goods or products? And are "related industries" not creative industries?

The classification has also proven to be impractical and inconsistent. In an article published in the Journal of Communication and Innovation NIDA, the contents of the monthly free magazine Creative Thailand (published by the Creative Economy Agency, previously Thailand Creative & Design Center) was examined. The study shows that the cover stories presented in the first four years of the publication focused heavily on design activities, followed by fashion. Other cultural industries seem to have been neglected by this government agency, as other creative practices are represented far less. Upon reading Chiangmai Creative Mapping: a Report on the Creative Diversity of Chiangmai (2019-2020) and Creative Hubs Mapping: Bangkok (2019, produced by the British Council), a similar observation can be made. Emphasis is placed on design activities, while sub-groups such as Thai food, traditional medicine, cultural tourism, broadcasting, and advertising are absent. It is also worth noting that the selection of spaces and practices are targeted at a specific demographic, excluding other age groups and social classes without the same interest in design.

Moreover, rather than redefining what constitutes "cultural heritage" in the context of creative industries, this group title has been changed to "creative originals" in the 2020 revised grouping. This could be due to the Thai people's perceptions of culture and heritage as traditions that should only be preserved, and therefore cannot be "creative." This contrasts with Landry's assertion that "cultural heritage is the sum of our past creativities. […] The resources of the past can help to inspire and give confidence for the future. […] Creativity is not only about a continuous invention of the new, but also how to deal appropriately with the old. […] [It] is the method of exploiting these resources and helping them grow" (Landry 2008:7).

It seems like the easiest solution is to remove the term completely from the grouping, but cultural heritage has been included in the UNCTAD classification of creative industries because it is considered "the soul of cultural and creative industries […] the starting point of [the] classification. It is heritage that brings together cultural aspects from the historical, anthropological, ethnic, aesthetic and societal viewpoints, influences creativity and is the origin of a number of heritage goods and services as well as cultural activities" (UNCTAD Creative Economy Report 2010). As a country with five UNESCO World Heritage Sites and one Intangible Cultural Heritage (*Khon*), not to mention other ongoing nominations, Thailand's government policymakers seem to overlook the influences of heritage on creativity and provide inadequate support for innovative practices related to the nation's wide range of cultural heritage.

There are many examples where cultural heritage and creativity coexist; and it has been proven that cultural traditions can be kept alive, not by freezing, but by revitalization. In Europe, 2018 was the European Year of Cultural Heritage,[6]

funded by Creative Europe, the European Commission's framework program. Nearly 27 million euros were dedicated to heritage-related projects, which included workshops, exhibitions, showcases and digital archives, created by groups of artists and local communities, with an objective to engage people with their cultural heritage and encourage knowledge-sharing, inspiration, and collaboration. A wide range of projects were conducted from 2014-2018 including, for example, "Ephemeral Heritage of the European Carnival Rituals (CARNVAL)," a project that formed a network of festival organizers and academics across Europe to examine their shared experiences of carnival rituals and strengthen cross-border collaborations; and "Sharing a World of Inclusion, Creativity and Heritage (SWICH)," a project that invited institutions, researchers, and citizens to reconsider the role of ethnographic museums and the stories they should tell in the present time. These museums were established during the European colonial period to inform the European citizens of the various cultures in the colonies and some of their exhibitions were outdated and inappropriate (Creative Europe 2018).

In Asia, the ASEAN Cultural Heritage Digital Archive (ACHDA)[7] is an ASEAN-Japan collaboration which allows the public online access to some of the museum artifacts in ASEAN countries. Currently featuring collections from 6 institutions in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, ACHDA aims to "raise greater awareness and appreciation of the shared ASEAN cultural heritage" (ASEAN Cultural Heritage Archive 2020). A similar project, ASEAN Culture House, is situated in Busan,[8] where UNESCO World Heritage Sites in ASEAN can be experienced using a VR headset (Phoak 2019).

The classification of creative industries reflects not only the national policies, but also the understanding of the concept of creativity and what its activities look like. The Bangkok Creative City theme was implemented nine years ago in Thailand, but until recently there had not been any substantial development of the concept (Parivudhiphongs, 2018). One of the reasons for this delay could be the confusion and ambiguity in the grouping of creative industries in Thailand, even after the classifications were revised. If the Thai government were to be more precise about what the nation's creative assets are, it could support the growth of creative industries across the country, in individual cities, and as standalone industries. In the systems model of creativity, each creative industry acts as a "domain" that attracts talents from diverse cultural backgrounds to contribute to the exchange of ideas and discoveries. It is in the domain where the creativity occurs and where an individual offers a novel idea or a solution (Csikszentmihalyi 2006).

Additionally, the examples drawn from Europe and the collaborations between ASEAN and Japan and South Korea above demonstrate that cultural heritage-related activities can be creative, and therefore it must be included as one of the creative industries. Cities with cultural heritage have "inbuilt advantages" (Landry, 2008:118). They can project their uniqueness and foster strong local identity much more easily than newer cities, which is one of the factors of urban creativity according to Landry. Instead of turning cultural heritage to their advantage, the Thai government has chosen to avoid it altogether in both policy and practice.

Pillar 3: Diversity, Inclusivity and the Bottom-up Approach

Richard Florida, an American urban studies theorist, believes that there are three vital components for creative city development: talent, technology, and tolerance (Florida 2005). The first two Ts are quite straightforward, while the last, tolerance, refers to a climate where people (communities, organizations, and peers) are open to different perspectives, lifestyles, and values. He asserts that creative workers honor diversity in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other social identities (ibid.).

In Singapore, the simplified racial categorization (CMIO model – Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Eurasian or Others) employed in national policies since 1824 makes it convenient to embrace diversity in creative city policies. For instance, the National Arts Council's Arts Housing Scheme, which provides housing support for artists, is systematically divided into racial quotas as well as traditions and artistic styles.[9] Within the category of "Indian performing arts" both traditional and contemporary forms can be observed, as well as performers from a variety of age groups and with varying years of experience. However, there are some limitations in terms of creativity and public perception of art forms. Maya Dance Theatre, for example, expressed concerns that if it dissociated itself from Indian traditions it would risk losing support from the government. Therefore, it has to conform to the image of "Indian tradition," which in many ways hinders the artist's full creativity and ability to reach a wider audience (Krishnan 2018).

Landry states that "The most important condition for creativity is open mindedness and the capacity to listen" (Landry, 2008:xxv). It should be added that the act of listening has to take place between diverse social and cultural groups. Contrary to popular belief, Thailand, and particularly its cities such as Bangkok, Chiangmai and Phuket (all of which are UNESCO Creative Cities), is not a homogeneous society; despite the government's attempt to promote unity and homogeneous thinking. Looking into the history of Bangkok, the city has been multicultural from the beginning. Since the Thon Buri and early Bangkok periods, Lao, Khmer, Malay, Mon and Vietnamese refugees were welcomed to settle in the kingdom to act as guards or provide goods and services to the royal and aristocratic elite. From the mid-19th century a large number of Chinese and a small but influential community of Europeans who were merchants and traders, arrived and contributed to the growing economy. It was only when the royal elite adopted Western-inspired modernity from the last quarter of the 19th century that the concept of single Thai ethnicity was enforced, and other ethnicities had to assimilate (Van Roy 2017).

In Bangkok, one of the reasons that creative city projects in the past have not been well-received by local communities could be the tendency of policymakers to overlook diversity and the importance of inclusion when designing and implementing their urban development plans. For example, Co-Create Charoenkrung,[10] a collaboration project in 2015-2016 between the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) and Thailand Creative and Design Centre (TCDC) to develop Charoenkrung district into a creative district, faced obstacles

and resistance from the local communities.[11] The changes brought about by the project, including improving landscape and architecture, building creative hubs, and hosting activities such as Bangkok Design Week (in Charoenkrung Creative District Project), might have been deemed beneficial only to certain business owners and tourists who live outside the district.

Furthermore, the Institute of Islamic Art Thailand[12] is a perfect example of a creative hub that serves as a domain for Islamic art in Thailand but seems to have been overlooked by the field of Thai creative city policymakers. Founded in 2017, this institute hosts regular workshops, exhibitions, and lectures to promote the appreciation of Islamic aesthetics. It provides a space for students and artists (Muslim and non-Muslim) to produce their craft and offers opportunities for them to build connections with other artists. While these activities can build creativity and encourage artistic development and collaboration, the Institute seems to have been excluded by government policymakers in the Co-Create Charoenkrung project, as well as in the ongoing Charoenkrung Creative District campaign,[13] in favor of spaces and centers that are more trendy and well-suited for a particular group of urbanites.

Viriya Sawangchot, in his paper *Creative City and the Sustainable Life* (2016), identifies another key group of agents of change for the development of creative cities as "creative class subcultures." They are usually culturally marginal and their creative spaces are often not included in the creative city model created by the government, even though they could make a substantial positive impact to the city. Along with the Institute of Islamic Art Thailand, Teater Garasi/Garasi Performance Institute[14] in Yogyakarta, Indonesia is an example of a creative class subculture that has succeeded in gaining recognition and securing funding locally and internationally. Described as a "collective," Teater Garasi strives to generate discussion and public engagement with regard to changes and social issues in the world today. In the beginning, members of the collective had to pay for their own expenses in their works or take cuts from the ticket sales, but in 2000 a new, more systematic fundraising plan was established when they began to tour to other countries, including Singapore, Germany, Japan, USA, and the Netherlands. Subsequently, they have been financially supported by organizations such as Open Society Foundations, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and the Ford Foundation. With little support from the local government, Teater Garasi has become an important actor in the boosting of creativity in the city of Yogyakarta through their perseverance, effective management, and fundraising strategies, as well as their drive to create a sustainable, creative, and socially engaging environment for the city.

To build a creative city and attract creative workers, Florida believes that a culture of tolerance is essential. To enhance vitality, participation, interaction, learning, and understanding in a city, Landry states that cultural diversity is needed. As in the case of Singapore, having diverse cultures coexisting is not enough. The citizens need to be allowed to exercise their creativity beyond the confinement of specific artistic forms or ethnic traditions. All groups, whether ethnic, religious,

or by social class and no matter how big or small, must be acknowledged and included in discussions of creative city policies, plans and projects. They play an important role in the development of creativity from the ground up, as can be seen in Bangkok and Yogyakarta.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The three pillars presented in this paper offer a concise framework for the development of a sustainable creative city in ASEAN. First, government leaders must not focus on the designation of UNESCO Creative City as a goal for the economy or tourism, but as a starting point and a firm commitment towards sustainable development. The Singapore government's utilization of art education as a tool to nurture the creativity of future leaders is a good example in this regard. Arts courses and programs need to be carefully designed in such a way that students are able to extensively exercise their creativity and apply their skills in other areas, including sciences. Secondly, as the terms "creative economy," "creative industries," and "creative city" have only been introduced and implemented in ASEAN in the past ten years, there is still much confusion and ambiguity regarding the meaning of 'culture' and 'creativity'; and whether or not cultural heritage should be included in the creative industries. The classification of creative activities should be studied and redefined, particularly in Thailand, to better support the development of creative workers within all domains, both collectively and individually. Finally, cultural and social class diversity and inclusion must be embraced and honored. This allows for more freedom and possibilities in the enhancement of creativity, especially from the bottom up, as seen in this paper through examples drawn from Bangkok, Singapore, and Yogyakarta. Additionally, for the purpose of further investigation, the results and analysis of the study are summarized in the table below.

Country	Drawbacks	Potential
Thailand (Bangkok)	• Lack of a clear vision and understanding about art and creativity from the government • Confusion and ambiguity in the grouping of creative industries • Policymakers tend to overlook diversity and the importance of inclusion when designing and implementing their urban development plans	• Rich in cultural heritage • Four cities have been designated UNESCO Creative Cities: Bangkok (Design), Chiangmai (Crafts and Folk Art), Sukhothai (Crafts and Folk Art), and Phuket (Gastronomy) • Bangkok's population is made up of diverse cultures and ethnic groups
Singapore	• The society's view of the arts courses as secondary or complementary to those in business or science • Fixed racial template in government's policies towards the arts	• Singapore is a UNESCO Creative City of Design • Government leaders who value art education • Utilization of art education as a tool to nurture creativity • Singapore is a multicultural society
Indonesia (Bandung & Yogyakarta)	• Little support from the government	• Example of a leader who recognize that it is crucial to build the communities as well as nurture creative individuals (Bandung) • Creative groups help boost creativity through their community-building initiatives • (Yogyakarta)

Figure 2. Drawbacks and potential for building a sustainable creative city in Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia, based on the data collected in the study.

Acknowledgements

This study is part of a research project entitled "ASEAN Cities in Transition: Towards Livable Smart Communities," funded by Chula Unisearch, Chulalongkorn University. The author would like to thank Assistant Professor Dr. Jirayudh Sinthuphan for his encouragement and support.

Endnotes

1 "'Flow' is the way people describe their state of mind when consciousness is harmoniously ordered, and they want to pursue whatever they are doing for its own sake." (Csikszentmihalyi 2008, 6)

2 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Why Creativity? Why Cities? N.d. https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/content/why-creativity-why-cities (accessed February 28, 2020).

3 Qualitative data were collected by observations, interviews, and document analysis from September 2017 to October 2019.

4 Winnie Tan. "More Sota students go on to pursue non-arts related fields." The Straits Times, May 15, 2017. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/education/more-sota-students-go-on-to-pursue-non-arts-related-fields (accessed 28 February 2020).

5 https://www.cea.or.th/.

6 https://eych2018.com/.

7 https://heritage.asean.org/.

8 https://www.ach.or.kr/user/main?lang=en.

9 https://www.nac.gov.sg/whatwedo/support/arts-spaces/art-housing-scheme.html.

10 http://www.tcdc.or.th/projects/co-create-charoenkrung/?lang=th.

11 Karin Kungwankitti (Senior Knowledge Management Officer, Creative City Development, Creative Economy Agency), interview by author, Bangkok, June 12, 2019.

12 https://www.facebook.com/mushafthailand/.

13 https://www.facebook.com/CharoenkrungCD/.

14 http://teatergarasi.org/?lang=en.

References

Andersson, David Emanuel, Åke E. Andersson, and Charlotta Mellander, eds. *Handbook of Creative Cities*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013.

ASEAN Cultural Heritage Archive. "About ACHDA." N.d. https://heritage.asean.org/about (accessed November 2, 2020).

Bekkering, Henco, Adèle Esposito, and Charles Goldblum, eds. *Ideas of the City in Asian Settings*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

British Council. "Creative Hubs Mapping: Bangkok." May 2019. www.britishcouncil.or.th/sites/default/files/creative_hubs_mapping_compressed.pdf (accessed February 28, 2020).

Centre for Liveable Cities Singapore. *A City of Culture: Planning for the Arts, Urban Systems Studies*. Singapore: CLC Publications, 2017.

Chang, Tou Chuang. "Renaissance Revisited: Singapore as a 'Global City for the Arts.'" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24, no. 4 (2000): 818-831.

Chong, Keng Hua, and Mihye Cho, eds. *Creative Aging Cities: Place Design with Older People in Asian Cities*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2018.

Chong, Terence. "Arts Education in Singapore: Between Rhetoric and Reality." *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 32, no. 1(2017):107-136.

Choon, Chua Lian, and Lim Kok Wai. 2015. "The Ambiguities of Singapore's National Arts Council – Arts Education Programme (NAC-AEP)." *International Journal of Education and Research* 3, no. 7 (2015):81-90.

Chuangchai, Phitchakan. "The Problem of Democracy in the ASEAN Creative City: The Cases of Chiang Mai, Bandung, Cebu, and George Town." *Journal of Law, Social Justice and Global Development* 24, S1 (2019):43-68.

Creative Chiangmai. "Chiangmai Creative Mapping: A Report on the Creative Diversity of Chiangmai." March 2019. www.creativechiangmai.com/ reports/(WEB) %20Creative %20Mapping %202019-2020%20(19%20March%202019).pdf (accessed February 28, 2020).

Creative Economy Agency. "About CEA." 12 June 2020. https://www.cea.or.th/th/about. (accessed November 2, 2020).

Creative Europe. "2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage." January 2018. http://kultur.creative-europe-desk.de/fileadmin/2_Publikationen/EYCH_Creative_Europe_Rediscovering_our_cultural_heritage.pdf (accessed February 28, 2020).

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. London: Harper Perennial, 1997.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. "A Systems Perspective on Creativity." In *Creative Management and Development*, edited by Jane Henry. London: SAGE Publications, 2006. 3-17.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.

Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Florida, Richard. *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Galloway, Susan and Stewart Dunlop. "A Critique of Definitions of the Cultural and Creative Industries in Public Policy." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 13, no. 1 (2007):17-31.

Garnham, Nicholas. "From Cultural to Creative Industries: An Analysis of the Implications of the "Creative Industries" Approach to Arts and Media Policy Making in the United Kingdom." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11, no. 1 (2005):15-29.

Gerhard, Ulrike, Michael Hoelscher, and David Wilson, eds. *Inequalities in Creative Cities: Issues, Approaches, Comparisons*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Howkins, John. *Thailand's National Strategy on Creative Economy: Developing Thailand's Creative Economy*. National Economic and Social Development Board and United Nations Development Programme, 2010.

Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

Kallidaikurichi, Seetharam, and Belinda Yuen, eds. *Developing Living Cities: From Analysis to Action*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2010.

Kawasaki, Kenichi. "Cultural Hegemony of Singapore among ASEAN Countries: Globalization and Cultural Policy." *International Journal of Japanese Sociology* 13, no. 1 (2004): 22-35.

Kong, Lily. "Ambitions of a Global City: Arts, Culture and Creative Economy in 'Post-Crisis' Singapore." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 18, no. 3 (2012):279-294.

Kong, Lily. "Transnational Mobilities and the Making of Creative Cities." *Theory, Culture & Society* 31, no. 7/8 (2014): 273-289.

Krishnan, Kavitha. Interview by author. Tape recording. Singapore, July 20, 2018.

Landry, Charles. *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*. 2nd ed. London: Earthscan, 2008.

Lee, Terence. "'Inculcating' Creativity: Culture as Public Pedagogy in Singapore." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 35, no. 5 (2014):718-732.

Lee, Wai Kin. "Creating a "City of Art:" Evaluating Singapore's Vision of Becoming a Renaissance City." Master of Science in Urban Studies and Planning, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003.

National Arts Council. Our SG Arts Plan (2018 - 2022). N.d. www.nac.gov.sg/aboutus/Our-SG-Arts-Plan-2018-2022.html (accessed February 28, 2020).

Ooi, Giok Ling. *Sustainability and Cities: Concept and Assessment*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2005.

Ooi, Giok Ling, and Belinda Yuen, eds. *World Cities: Achieving Liveability and Vibrancy.* Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2010.

Parivudhiphongs, Alongkorn. "Creative Industries Policy in Thailand: A Story of Rise and Demise." In *Routledge Handbook of Cultural and Creative Industries in Asia,* eds. Lorraine Lim and Hye-Kyung Lee (Oxon: Routledge, 2018), Kindle edition.

Phoak, Kung. "Bringing People Together through Arts and Culture," *ASEAN Focus*, April 2019.

Rapoport, Elizabeth, Michele Acuto, and Leonora Grcheva. Leading Cities: A Global Review of City Leadership. London: UCL Press, 2019.

Robertson, Mélanie. *Sustainable Cities: Local Solutions in the Global South.* Rugby: Practical Action Publishing, 2012.

Roengtam, Sataporn, Achmad Nurmandi, David N. Almarez, and Anwar Kholid. "Does Social Media Transform City Government? A Case Study of Three ASEAN Cities: Bandung, Indonesia, Iligan, Philippines and Pukhet, Thailand." *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy* 11, no. 3 (2017): 343-376.

Rustiadi, Sonny, Savitri Sastrawan and Salfitrie R. Maryunani. "Creative Industries as Tool for Cultural Resistance in Indonesia." In *Routledge Handbook of Cultural and Creative Industries in Asia,* eds. Lorraine Lim and Hye-Kyung Lee (Oxon: Routledge, 2018), Kindle edition.

Sassen, Saskia, ed. *Global Networks, Linked Cities.* Abingdon: Routledge, 2016.

Sawangchot, Viriya. "Creative City and the Sustainable Life: A Study on the Making of Cultural Spaces in Osaka and Bandung." *Journal of Urban Culture Research* 12 (2016):54-69.

Scott, Allen J. "The Cultural Economy: Geography and Creative Field." *Media, Culture & Society* 21, no. 6 (1999):807-817.

Scott, Allen J. "Cultural Economy and the Creative Field of the City." *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 92, no. 2 (2010):115-130.

Sermcheep, Sineenat, Piti Srisangnam and Seksan Anantasirikiat, "A Comparative Analysis of Creative Economy Policies of Thailand and South Korea." *International Review of Korean Studies* 12, no. 1 (2015):45-74.

Tan, Khee Giap, Wing Thye Woo, Kong Yam Tan, Linda Low, and Ling Grace Aw Ee, eds. *Ranking the Liveability of the World's Major Cities: The Global Liveable Cities Index (GLCI)*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2012.

Tan, Winnie. "More Sota Students Go On to Pursue Non-arts Related Fields." *The Straits Times,* May 15, 2017. www.straitstimes.com/ singapore/ education/ more-sota-students-go-on-to-pursue-non-arts-related-fields (accessed February 28, 2020).

Taylor, Peter J., Pengfei Ni, Ben Derudder, Michael Hoyler, Jin Huang, and Frank Witlox, eds. *Global Urban Analysis: A Survey of Cities in Globalization.* London: Earthscan, 2011.

Throsby, David. "The Concentric Circles Model of the Cultural Industries." *Cultural Trends* 17, no. 3 (2008): 147-164.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). *Creative Cities Network Mission Statement.* N.d. https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/creative-cities/files/Mission_Statement_UNESCO_Creative_Cities_Network_1.pdf (accessed Feb-ruary 28, 2020).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). *Why Creativity? Why Cities?* N.d. https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/content/why-creativity-why-cities (accessed February 28, 2020).

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). *Creative Economy Report.* 2010. https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationArchive.aspx?publicationid=946 (accessed February 28, 2020).

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). *Creative Economy Outlook: Trends in International Trade in Creative Industries.* https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2328 (accessed Feb-ruary 28, 2020).

Van Roy, Edward. (2017). *Siamese Melting Pot: Ethnic Minorities in the Making of Bangkok.* Singapore: ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 2017.

Wang, Jing. "The Global Reach of a New Discourse: How Far Can 'Creative Industries' Travel?" *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7, no. 1 (2004): 9-19.

โกยทอง, โกษม. "การสื่อสารเนื้อหา 'อุตสาหกรรมสร้างสรรค์' ในนิตยสาร Creative Thailand." **วารสารนิเทศศาสตร์และนวัตกรรม นิด้า** 2, no. 1 (2015): 135-154.