

Setouchi Sustainability and Well-being Research Project Report

Benesse Artsite Naoshima / Setouchi Triennale as a Social Innovation

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1. Question: Can Art Setouchi / BASN be a 'model for local regeneration'?

The author's question for this project is: "Can Benesse Art Site Naoshima (BASN) / Setouchi International Art Festival and related activities (hereunder "Art Setouchi") be a model for regional revitalisation using art? This is an increasingly important question at a time when a number of countries and regions, especially in Asia, are trying to revitalise their regions through art.

The academic perspective used is that of 'social innovation', which studies changes in values, behaviours and systems / institutions in society, or the activities and developments that cause such changes (Aoo 2018; Mulgan 2019). Although detailed discussion is omitted from this report, the author takes the view that BASN / Art Setouchi is one of the prominent examples of social innovation (Aoo 2021; Nonaka et al. 2014). This is due to i) the transformation (innovation) of the ageing and depopulated islands into an international tourist destination centred on contemporary art, ii) the economic and demographic effects this has had, and iii) the resulting change in the mindsets and values of people on and off the islands (from negative values such as "nothing" or "environmental pollution" to positive ones that recognise the "value" of the place) can be seen as a social innovation.

The analytical approach of this study is i) to reconstruct the process of BASN / Art Setouchi over a period of more than 30 years and the involvement of various stakeholders through literature and stakeholder interviews. In addition, in order to relativize BASN / Art Setouchi from different perspectives, it reviews the initiatives with ii) the relationship with local history and culture and various socio-economic 'innovation' initiatives, mainly from the history of Okayama ('vertical' comparison), and iii) a comparison with the case of Bilbao, Spain (Basque Country) as an example of similar initiatives, mainly based on field research ('horizontal' comparison) (Figure 1).

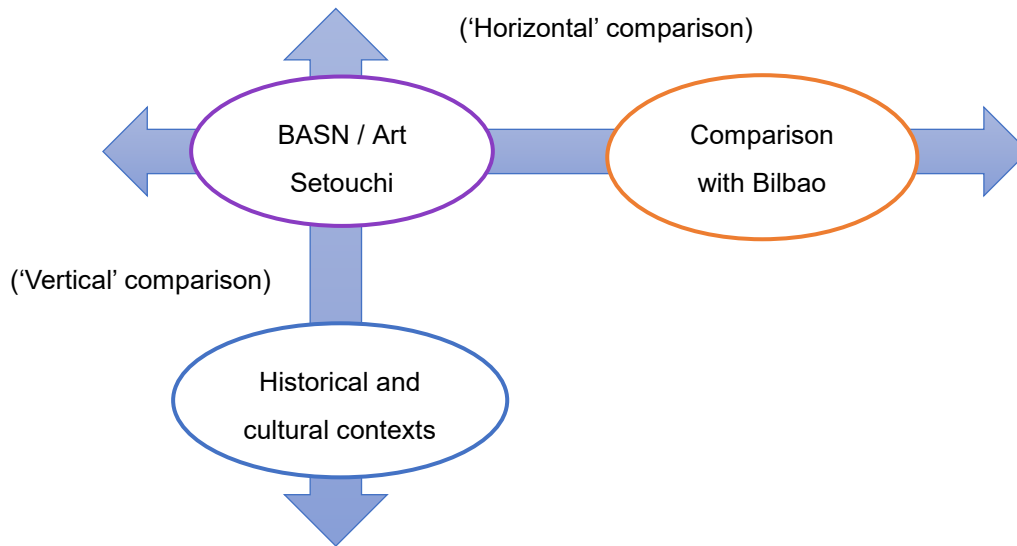


Figure 1: Perspectives of the study ('Vertical' and 'horizontal' comparison)

(Figures all by author, unless otherwise noted)

These research results have already been published, mainly in i) Aoo, K. (2021) "The Role of the Civil Society Sector in the Development of Art-Driven Regional Social Innovation: The Case of Benesse Art Site Naoshima and Art Setouchi", *Sustainability* 13(24), Article number 14061, and ii) Aoo, K. (2022), "How Do Historical and Cultural Contexts Affect Social Innovation Initiatives and Local Ecosystems?: Cases from Okayama, Japan", *Japan Social Innovation Review*, (2), pp. 3-14 (in Japanese). Including some duplication of its contents, this paper aims to organise the contents in the following sections.

2. The history of BASN / Art Setouchi and the involvement of the stakeholders¹

The 'stages' of BASN / Art Setouchi

Even excluding the prehistory of the construction of the International Campsite, and the earlier resort construction by Fujita Kanko, the BASN / Art Setouchi process has already lasted for over 30 years, counting from the opening of Benesse House in 1992. This can be

¹ Please see Aoo, K. (2021) "The Role of Civil Society Sector in the Development of Art-Driven Regional Social Innovation: The Case of Benesse Art Site Naoshima and Art Setouchi", *Sustainability* 13(24), Article number 14061. for details.

broadly divided into several stages / chronological divisions (Figure 2).

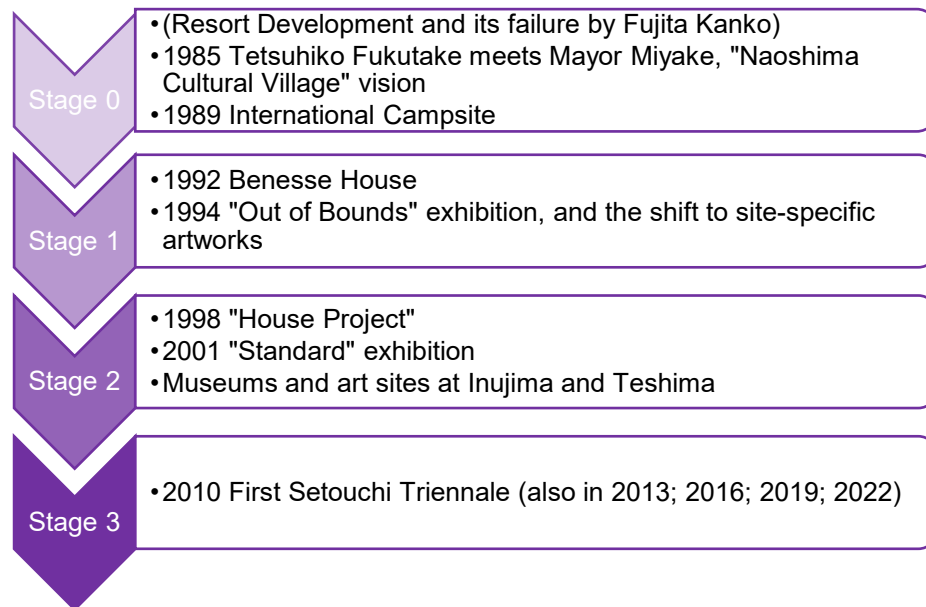


Figure 2: Stages of BASN / Art Setouchi

(From Aoo (2019))

Stage 0 (-1992) is the 'prehistory' including the resort development by Fujita Kanko (1960s-1970s) and the construction of the International Campsite (1989) based on the concept of Tetsuhiko Fukutake (titles omitted in this chapter, hereafter the same). At first sight, these may not seem to be directly linked to BASN / Art Setouchi, but in fact, with the cooperation of Naoshima Town government, a decent-sized plot of land for the development was prepared possible to purchase for Fujita Kanko, which subsequently provided a physical base for BASN. This, together with Naoshima Mayor Miyake's vision ('Naoshima Cultural Village' concept) to introduce development by outsiders other than Mitsubishi Material, laid the foundations for BASN / Art Setouchi, the significance of which should be emphasised.

Stage 1 (1992-1997) was the period beginning with the opening of Benesse House, which was essentially a 'museum' activity. This was the period when BASN, which initially began with the ambiguous positioning of a museum and hotel run by a private company, expanded its scope from exhibitions in Benesse House to site-specific artwork through trial and error, including the 'Out of Bounds' exhibition in 1994.

Stage 2 (1997-2010) was the period when BASN's area of activity expanded from the south of Naoshima to the central part of the island, which is the residential area, with the launch of the 'House Project'; the 'Standard' exhibition was held in 2001 in the Honmura, Miyanoura residential areas and Mitsubishi Material area. This was a time when

BASN spread as 'art in the community'. It was also during this period that the economic basis for BASN / Art Setouchi, which was called 'public interest capitalism' by Soichiro Fukutake, was established, with the expansion to Inujima and Teshima, and the listing of Fukutake Shoten with the consequence of the establishment of the Naoshima Fukutake Art Museum Foundation in 2004 with donations from the Fukutake family.

Stage 3 (2010-) is the period after the Setouchi Triennale started with Fram Kitagawa, and along with the territorial expansion of the festival to many islands and port cities in Kagawa and Okayama prefectures, there was a qualitative shift in art methods, which could be described as 'with the community'. Kitagawa's method of co-creation by introducing art, artists and external volunteers into the local community, as exemplified by the Echigo-Tsumari Art Festival, is a major feature of the current BASN /Setouchi Triennale (or Art Setouchi including outside the festival period).

What 'stage four' will look like remains to be seen. But if this trend deepens, it may be as 'art "of" the community', a state in which local communities feel deeply that art 'belongs' to them, and its ownership.

In understanding this process, it should be noted that this development was not planned from the outset. On the contrary, it was the result of a process of trials and errors, influenced by accidental opportunities and the accumulation of these stages by a number of talented people, methods and personalities, led by figures like Soichiro Fukutake and Fram Kitagawa.

Involvement of Stakeholders

The number of people who have been involved in the 30 years of BASN / Art Setouchi and who have made significant contributions to it is numerous. However, to analyse them, the relationship between governments, commercial enterprises, civil society (including public foundations) and local communities can be summarised as follows (Figure 3).

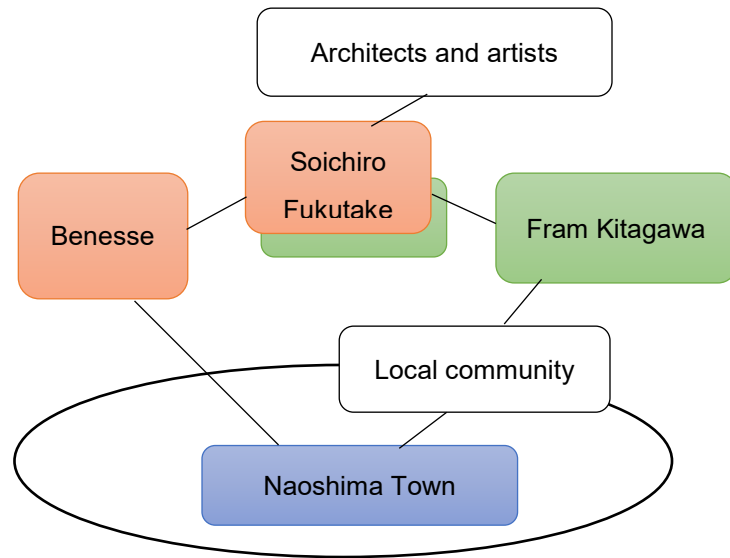


Figure 3: Major stakeholders in BASN / Art Setouchi

(From Aoo (2019): Blue: government; Red: business; Green: civil society)

As already mentioned, Naoshima Town (and later also Kagawa Prefecture) provided the framework and infrastructure to enable the activities of BASN / Art Setouchi in both tangible and intangible ways, such as by organising the land on which BASN would be based and setting up a development plan. Benesse, as a for-profit company, contributed in a double way by directly contributing to the activities through the business activities and human resources of the company and its subsidiary (Naoshima Cultural Village), as well as by providing dividends on its shares to fund the foundation. In terms of civil society, it can be said that the methods of Fram Kitagawa, who has a background in civic activities (and Koebitai, a non-profit and a group of volunteers who put these methods into practice), have given *Setogei* / Art Setouchi a unique character that involves the local community. Soichiro Fukutake, the head of both a for-profit company and a public interest foundation, has organised a diverse range of talents, including Kitagawa, and produced BASN / Art Setouchi itself, in a sense using both characteristics. It can be said that Fukutake was the 'institutional entrepreneur' who made social innovation a reality by providing resources and gathering and mobilising various talents.

Thus, 30 years and the contributions of a diverse range of actors (sectors) have made BASN / Art Setouchi possible as a social innovation. Whether it will expand and develop further or enter a qualitatively different 'stage' remains unknown at this stage. However,

it is likely to contain rich references for other countries and regions. At the same time, the contextual 'uniqueness' of BASN / *Setoge*, represented by the presence of such idiosyncratic individuals as Fukutake, Kitagawa and Mayor Miyake, also suggest the danger of simply generalising about them. The possibilities and limitations of BASN / Art Setouchi as a 'model' will be discussed later in section 5.

3. 'Vertical' comparison: From the history of Okayama²

A major question when creating innovations, not only social innovations, is whether they could (and did) happen anywhere, which leads to the question of how much innovation is dependent on the surrounding environment and contexts. With his 'structuration theory', sociologist Anthony Giddens pointed out the interaction and duality of actors (agents), who are constrained by the structure (system), the aggregation of rules and resources in which they are placed, but through their actions reproduce and create change in the structure. This article examines the local context, including local history, culture and environment, from the genealogy of social innovation in Okayama.

Genealogy of social innovation in Okayama.

Since ancient times, Okayama (Kibi) has developed as an important iron production and shipping route. During the Edo period (17th to 19th Century), the area was divided into the Okayama domain, the Kurashiki town ruled by the shogunate and other small and medium-sized domains, during which time various measures were taken by both the public and private sectors to deal with natural disasters such as floods, famine and epidemics. The best known of these is the Shizutani school, built by clan technocrat Shigejiro (Nagatada) Tsuda on the orders of the feudal lord Mitsumasa Ikeda of the Okayama clan, which developed a distinctive academic content as a school for both ruling samurai class and commoners. Furthermore, in the context of this paper, it should be noted that Tsuda established the *Shaso-ho* to financially support Shizutani school. This was a domain-run microcredit scheme, which served as a safety net for farmers to receive low-interest loans, and also incorporated Tsuda's desire for the school to have financial independence from the domain, and to even continue without the Ikeda clan.

In Kurashiki town, where there was a strong tradition of self-government among the

² See Aoo, K. (2022) "How Do Historical and Cultural Contexts Affect Social Innovation Initiatives and Local Ecosystems?: Cases from Okayama, Japan", *Japan Social Innovation Review* (2), pp.3-14 (in Japanese) for details.

townspeople in the shogunate rule, the *Kurashiki Giso* was operated by influential townspeople from the Edo period to provide relief aid to victims of natural disasters and to assist in the operation of the local school. One of these rich merchants, the Ohara family, developed a modern spinning industry and diversified its business in the generation of Magosaburo Ohara, and amassed enormous wealth. At the same time, as local philanthropists, they supported scholarship projects, urban development projects, charities such as Juji Ishii's Okayama Orphanage, and a number of academic research and cultural projects such as the Ohara Museum of Art, which still exists today, partly under different names and forms, the Ohara Agricultural Society, Kurabo Central Hospital, the Ohara Institute of Social Problems, the Kurashiki Labour Science Institute, the Japan Folk Crafts Museum, and others, as well as providing the financial basis for the foundations to support these institutions. His eldest son, Soichiro Ohara, was also involved in the expansion and development of various projects inherited from his father, as well as community development by the Takahashi River Basin Federation and the preservation of Kurashiki townscape from an early stage after the Second World War.

It can be seen that since the Ohara Museum of Art, it has become a kind of 'pattern' for entrepreneurs in Okayama to collect artworks and build (or donate) museums, such as the Hayashibara Museum of Art, the Yumeji Art Museum and the Orient Museum, and that the Ohara Museum of Art is a 'reference' to be imitated. In this environment, the cultural and artistic activities of Tetsuhiko Fukutake and Soichiro Fukutake, while influenced by past projects such as the Ohara Museum of Art, did not stop there and further developed new activities. Furthermore, as activities of the next generation, new movements are emerging, such as the collection of conceptual art by Yasuharu Ishikawa, who was influenced by BASN and Art Setouchi, the Okayama Art Summit and the establishment of the Ishikawa Foundation to support these activities.

Analysis

There are multiple linkages between these social innovations / innovators in Okayama. Magosaburo Ohara, for example, was born out of the tradition of Kurashiki's '*Machishu*', or influential merchants, and also studied at Shizutani-Ko, the successor to Shizutani School, in his younger days. Soichiro Fukutake received the name Soichiro Ohara because of his grandfather, who was a teacher of workers at Kurashiki Spinners. Yasuharu Ishikawa also talks about the great impact of seeing the changes brought about by the Ohara Museum of Art, the museum on Inujima and the Setouchi International Art Festival since he was a child. The relationships and connections between them are illustrated in Figure 4.

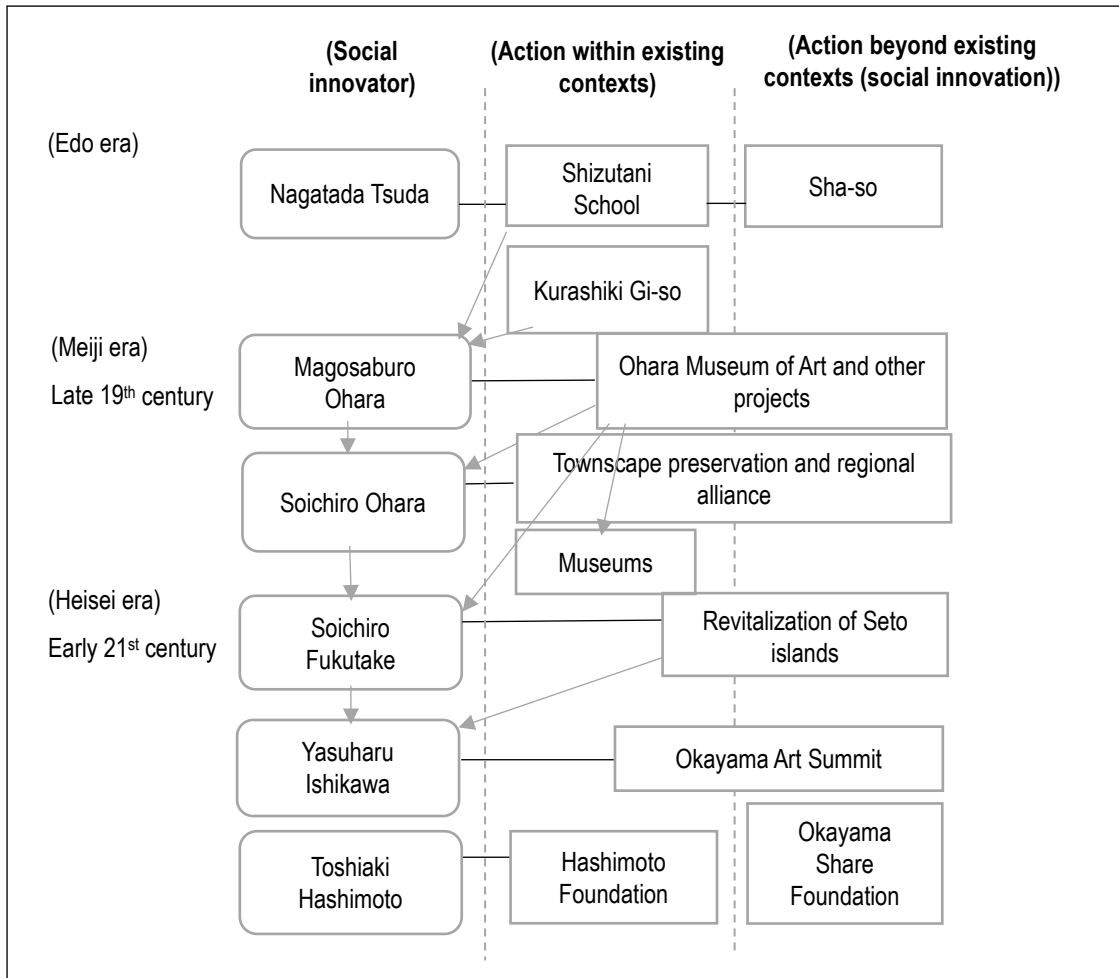


Figure 4: Lineage of social innovators and social innovations in Okayama
(From Aoo (2022))

Furthermore, it can be pointed out that the following parties in this connection are consciously trying to create 'something new' on the basis of 'what already exists (past social innovations)'. This can be seen in the cases of Ohara Museum of Art (The first private art museum in Japan focusing on Western Paintings), BASN / Art Setouchi (Art in nature and community), and the Ishikawa Collection (collection of conceptual art). These are examples of initiatives that have been built on existing projects, but which are expanding and adding 'new things' (or innovations) beyond them. The process is an accumulation of innovations.

In the light of Giddens' theory of structuration, this can be seen as a manifestation of 'duality', where the 'agent' is constrained by the 'structure' and reproduces it through 'imitation', while the structure changes in response to the novelty of the act (Figure 5).

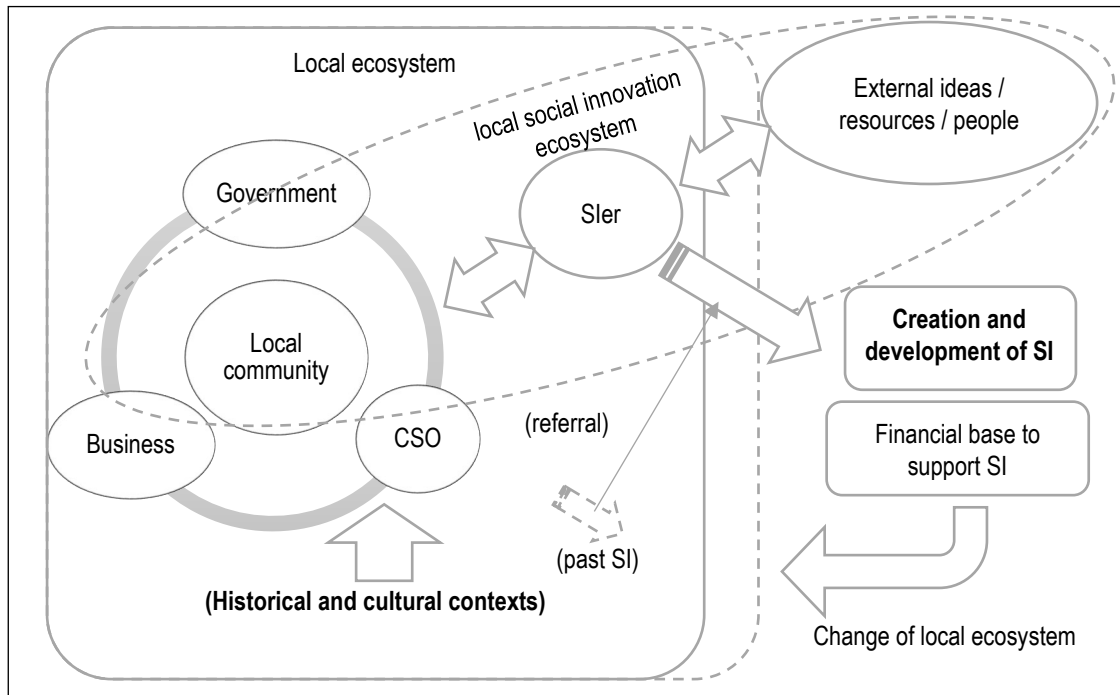


Figure 5: Local ecosystem and local social innovation ecosystem

(From Aoo (2022))

The characteristics of social innovation in Okayama can be summarized as follows:

- i) a tradition of private-sector-led public interest activities that do not rely on the government / rulers to build communities and society, ii) a large number of talents and supporters gathering around innovators who have a vision and playing a major role in realizing it, and iii) the economic foundations placed at the same time by these innovators to undertake these social innovation projects, such as the *Shaso* supporting the Shizutani School, the foundations established by Magosaburo Ohara to support social projects, and the 'public interest capitalism' that supports BASN / Art Setouchi..

Of course, Okayama is not alone in having such a 'history of social innovation', but other regions and cities also have their own traditions, and it will be important to understand and adapt the historical and cultural context and 'ecosystem' of the region in order to expand the BASN / Art Setouchi 'model' to other countries and regions.

4. 'Horizontal' comparison: Focusing on the 'Bilbao Effect'

'Bilbao Effect'

In addition to BASN / Art Setouchi, there are many other examples in Japan and other

countries / regions of regional regeneration through art. In this section, as a 'horizontal' comparison with BASN / Art Setouchi, the case of Bilbao in the Basque Autonomous Community in northern Spain, known as one of the most prominent examples, is discussed.

The story of how the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (hereafter GMB, Figure 6), which opened in Bilbao in 1997, transformed Bilbao from a run-down industrial city in northern Spain into a centre of cultural and artistic tourism has been called the "Bilbao Effect " (*The Economist*). Bilbao, which had flourished in the modern era with steelmaking and shipbuilding, suffered a major crisis in the 1980s, when traditional industries were no longer viable.

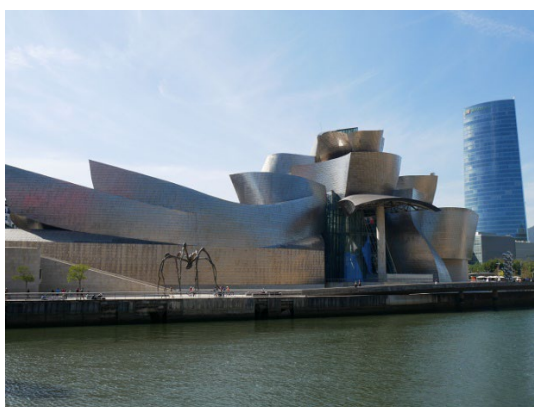


Figure 6: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB).

(Photos by author unless otherwise noted)

The Basque Country signed a basic agreement in 1991 with the New York, USA-based Guggenheim Museum (Foundation), which was considering developing a worldwide franchise. As a result, the Guggenheim Foundation provided some of its holdings and operational know-how, while the Basque side contributed approximately USD 100 million for the construction of the museum (designed by Frank Gehry) and USD 50 million for the purchase of artworks, mainly from the Basque Autonomous Community, with further subsidies for regular operating costs and special exhibitions (Plaza and Haarich 2015).

The GMB was often criticised for its huge expenditure on art, but since its opening it has brought an average of one million visitors per year (almost half of them from outside the country) and a significant associated economic impact (approximately EUR 300 million per year according to GMB estimates) (Plaza and Haarich 2015). On the other hand, there are indications that economic growth was already on the upswing in the 1990s and that many tourism-related jobs are precarious (Baniotopoulou 2001; Yoshimoto 2004).

There is also persistent criticism of the GMB as being merely a branch of an American museum and having a weak connection to Basque culture (Baniotopoulou 2001;

Yoshimoto 2004). In fact, only a limited number of the works on display are by Basque artists, and even then, only by internationally renowned artists such as Eduardo Chillida.

However, Professor Marta Enciso of Deusto University looks back on the process over the last 30 years and says that although there was strong suspicion before the GMB opened, many people now realise its benefits and recognise its value. She points out that the GMB also pays attention to the community by inviting local people and organising educational extension activities for children. Furthermore, as she points out, the shape of the pavilion, which resembles a ship, and Richard Serra's *The Matter of Time* (2005), a steel work installed in a large space on the ground floor, show the GMB's respect for Bilbao's history as an industry and make the museum rooted in the local area (Fig. 7).

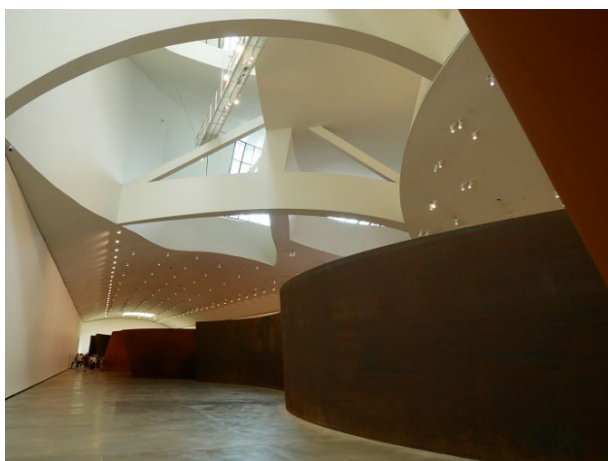


Figure 7: The Matter of Life / Figure 8: Puppy

Another point of contact between the GMB and the local community is the presence of *Puppy* (Figure 8, by Jeff Koons, pronounced 'Poo-py' in a Spanish accent), installed in front of the museum. A 12 meter high terrier-shaped sculptural work, *Puppy* is entirely planted with flowers and requires regular replanting. The *Puppy*, which was a temporary exhibition piece, has become a permanent exhibition at the request of the local community and has gained popularity, with local children participating in the seasonal replanting. Through this process, it can be said that the GMB, which was often seen as an 'American cultural invasion' when it first opened, has been accepted by the community after 25 years of operation.

Analysis

This development has been made possible by the unique settings of the Basque Autonomous Community. Although the Basque Country has a population of only about 2 million (of which about 300,000 live in Bilbao), the Basque Country differs from Spain ethnically and linguistically, and reflecting its historical background, the Autonomous Community has strong discretionary powers (including tax collection, finance and urban development) that are more privileged than those of other provinces. There are also unique socio-economic traditions, such as a large presence of co-operatives and social enterprises.

Although only the GMB is well known for the 'Bilbao effect', large-scale infrastructure development has continued behind the scenes. These include the re-development of the old industrial area along the river that serves as the city centre, and the construction of transport infrastructure such as the metro, tram (EuskoTran) and new airport (Lus-Arana 2017). Professor Enciso recalls that, as a result of these improvements, the flow of people from the city and suburbs, including those on foot, bicycles and electric kickboards, has changed completely, whereas once it was the car to get anywhere (Figure 9). In fact, looking at the roads, there were many examples of wide footpaths and self-propelled carriageways, while there was only one lane of carriageway (Fig. 10).



Fig. 9: EuskoTran - re-introduced trams removed decades ago



Figure 10: Bilbao's roads, with wide pavements and bicycle roads

Bilbao's industrial industry, once dominated by manufacturing, has also changed over the past two decades to one based on 'advanced services, ICT, manufacturing, commerce and tourism' (Plaza and Haarich 2015). It has also been noted that after the 'Bilbao effect', the number of non-tourism-related jobs for artists, designers and creators increased, and the government also encouraged entrepreneurship within the city (Gonzalez 2004).

A symbol of Bilbao as a 'Creative City' is Azkuna Zentroa (AZ), a converted wine

and oil cellar built in the early 20th century, which in 2010 the City of Bilbao spent EUR 7 million (approximately USD 10 million) to renovate and transform into a modern space. Alongside cultural facilities such as a library, cinema, exhibition hall and gymnasium, it also has a section selling Basque designer goods, a statement of the city's commitment to the creative industries (Figures 11-13). In this sense, Bilbao's 'social transformation' is not just about building museums, but is broader, extending to people's lives, industry and transport.

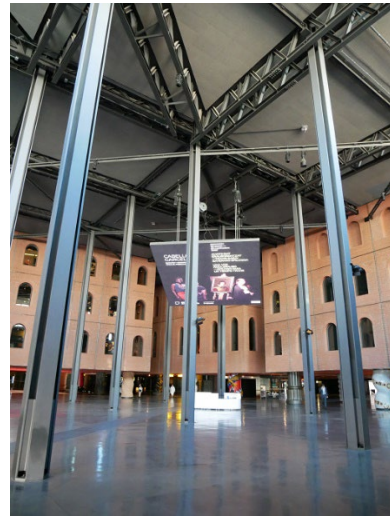


Figure 11: Azkuna Zentroa exterior / Figure 12: Interior



Figure 13: Shop selling Basque designer goods in Azkuna Zentroa.

The above features of Bilbao compared with those of BASN / Art Setouchi can be summarized as follows (Table 1).

	BASN／瀬戸芸	ビルバオ
Background	Islands (rural) De-industrialisation	Urban De-industrialisation
Artsite	Scattered	Museum-focused
Accumulation of local art assets (artworks)	Few	Rich
Funder	Benesse and Fukutake family	Basque government
Connection with local history and culture	Strong	Moderate
Local participation	Moderate	Weak (mainly business)

Table 1: Comparison of BASN / Art Setouchi and Bilbao

(By author)

The first major difference is that Bilbao is a city with a history dating back to the 14th century and a population of several hundred thousand, whereas BASN / Art Setouchi is mostly practised on islands (rural areas) with limited populations. Not only in Bilbao, but also in Europe, there are numerous attempts to revitalise former industrial cities in decline through art and 'creative industries', such as Nantes in France and Glasgow in the UK (Scotland). This difference has led to a significant difference in the nature of the two, and although BASN / Art Setouchi is at a disadvantage in terms of transport and accommodation infrastructure, it has also led to BASN / Art Setouchi's unique global appeal as the art in nature.

In terms of the way in which artworks are displayed, Bilbao is characterised by a single museum, the GMB (apart from another museum in the city, the Bilbao Museum of Art), whereas BASN / Art Setouchi has a number of museums and art sites, such as the Chichu Art Museum, but they are scattered in different locations and artworks, including house projects, are dispersed.

Furthermore, there is a concomitant huge difference in the amount of (tangible) cultural assets, such as old buildings, paintings, and other works of art. Even Bilbao, which is only a regional city in Europe, has a vast accumulation of cultural assets such as bishopric churches, palaces and the labyrinthine old town, which is difficult to compare with Japanese cities and regions, including islands, which have been exposed to disasters, war damage and uncontrolled development. Although the paintings and sculptures in the Bilbao Museum of Art may not as rich as those in the top museums in Europe and the USA, they are of considerable quantity and quality.

Another major difference between the two is that the majority of the major investment in BASN / Art Setouchi was covered by Benesse-Fukutake, a for-profit company / philanthropy, whereas in the case of Bilbao, it was led by the government - the Autonomous Regional Government of Bilbao and the City of Bilbao. This is also a feature of the Bilbao process, as it is more 'top-down' in Bilbao, including the decision-making process, and (apart from political support) can be museum-led without the involvement of the local population.

BASN / Art Setouchi differs significantly from Bilbao in its emphasis on local history and culture and the participation of local people, partly due to the influence of Fram Kitagawa's methods. Bilbao's characteristics is that the local connection is shown through its collections, which remain 'visible' to local people and visitors, something that BASN / Art Setouchi could also consider (e.g. in the form of a permanent exhibition of Setouchi Triennale works). Community participation also requires the active involvement of local residents, whereas Bilbao is mostly an outreach activity by museums, which is a relative strength of the former.

Needless to say, there is little point in discussing the superiority or inferiority of the two due to these differences. They merely illustrate the different approaches and processes and the resulting appeal of both. However, a comparison of the two can illustrate the range of approaches that can be used in different local contexts.

5. Can BASN / Art Setouchi be a 'model for regional regeneration'?

Based on the above discussion, we now attempt to answer the question of this paper, "Can BASN / Art Setouchi be a model for regional regeneration?". The author's conclusion is that BASN / Art Setouchi (the 'Naoshima method' as Soichiro Fukutake calls it) is not THE 'model' that other countries and regions can imitate, but it does offer many 'clues' for reference.

The above analysis of the BASN / Art Setouchi process and the people involved shows that the new stages emerged from a process of trials and errors, making use of the many people involved (including by chance) and their resources and strengths. It also shows that this is not something that exists in isolation, but is an outcome of process of innovations, based on the work that has been carried out in Okayama up to now, and attempting to go beyond it. Furthermore, through the case of Bilbao as an object of comparison with BASN / Art Setouchi, the following can be said.

- i. Different approaches need to be taken, reflecting the historical background and context of each area or the capacities and resources of the actors present there.
- ii. Essential to this are a) a presence that provides the necessary (and in some cases significant) investment (including both initial investment and working capital) and b) a

presence that can make the local population feel connected to and involved in the art themselves, whether through participation in the activities or psychological attachment through the work ("either Fram Kitagawa or Puppy"?), and further c) the presence and support of the government / public administration to ensure the (in many ways) foundation and legitimacy of the activities.

- iii. The process of 'regional revitalisation' is not something that happens overnight (or not even in a few years time), however, is something that takes decades of trial and error to demonstrate its value. And it will probably be a process of 'transformation' of society as a whole, including local industries and livelihoods, people's values, lifestyles and behaviours, and not just art- and tourism-related activities.

6. Appendix: Reflection from Europe

Although the author is not an art expert, he had the opportunity to visit a number of museums in London, Bilbao and Venice as part of his research in Europe this time, and during the visit he had a number of impressions, even if they are not directly related to this project. The following are miscellaneous and personal impressions, but some of them are described below with the hope that it may be useful for someone.

Enjoying the arts: 'anything goes'

This time, together with the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, the author visited another museum in the city of Bilbao, the Bilbao Museum of Art. It was heard that the main focus of the museum was the paintings from the 'old masters' (classical Western paintings), but in fact each gallery exhibited one old master or impressionist painter and one contemporary art work together. It was very interesting to see the synergy between the different textures and messages of, for example, baroque painting and contemporary art, even if the themes of the two did not necessarily mesh (Figs 14-15).



Figure 14 / Figure 15: Exhibitions in the Bilbao Museum of Art
(Old Master and Late Impressionists and Contemporary Art)

In Venice, the next city visited, the author also found the Accademia Gallery, known for its collection of classical paintings (Figs 16-17), or the former customs house Punta della Dogana, renovated by Architecture Tadao Ando (Figs 18-19), the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, the Ca' Pesaro International Museum of Modern Art and the furthermore, the Arsenale, the second venue of the Venice Biennale (figs. 20-21), all with the collaboration of historical buildings and works of art with contemporary art is no longer 'exceptional' but becoming extremely 'normal' thing to happen.



Figure 16 / Figure 17: Museo dell'Accademia and Anish Kapoor exhibition



Figure 18 / Figure 19: Punta de la Dogana and Bruce Nauman exhibition



Figure 20 / Figure 21: Arsenale (former shipyard), the second venue of the Venice Biennale, and interior

When Monet's Waterlilies was exhibited together with contemporary art at the Chichu Art Museum in Naoshima, some people asked why they are exhibiting Impressionist water lilies when their main focus was contemporary art, but what the author saw this time was an even more unusual combination, but with a strange impact. In Japan, it would be like the combination of castles, temples and shrines, old mansions and contemporary art³. The author was again struck by the fact that in the art world, "anything goes" or rather, "the one who did it first wins".

In addition, Japanese museums and art exhibitions generally give the impression

³ We may say that the "House Project" in islands and other museums (like Inujima Seirenscho Art Museum) are the example of co-existing of the 'old' and the 'new', as Soichiro Fukutake mentions as "Creating the new thing by utilizing the old thing". It may also be seen as the (otherwise destroyed) old things preserved by becoming a part of the artwork.

that a 'studious' or 'serious' attitude is good, with no photography allowed, no deviation from directions and no conversation allowed, but at the museum visited this time, many visitors moved around freely, talking with each other. Photography was also permitted (as long as flash was not used), as a matter of course. It gave the impression that there should be a more natural way to 'enjoy' art in Japan, rather than as a 'study' called 'art appreciation'.

Local pride and 'Kibi Country' independence?

Next is the historical and cultural uniqueness of the Basque Country, which is different from Spain, and the sense of pride that comes from this uniqueness. The city of Bilbao in the Basque Country, which took the big decision to invite the Guggenheim Museum and redevelop the city (even though, of course, it could have ended in disaster), seems to be very different from Japanese municipalities and regions that only look at national policies and budgets. If the Basque Country, with a population of two million people, can do this, then perhaps different regions of Japan, if not the old fiefdoms, can also develop the region with the same spirit of independence as the 'Kibi Country' (corresponding to present-day Okayama and eastern Hiroshima prefectures) before it was ruled by the Yamato kingdom.

What felt in Guernica

Furthermore, the author had the opportunity to visit Guernica, known for the Picasso's painting. It is a small town with few tourists, although it is a place with important historical traditions for the Basque (Biscayan) region, with an Oak tree where the lords took an oath to obey customary law. Even there, even at noon on a weekday, the sight of mainly elderly people chatting with acquaintances over a glass of wine or coffee in the town squares (Figure 22) was everywhere, making the author think about what it means to 'enjoy life'. Even if one tries to forcibly create a food and beverage industry or related industries 'for the sake of tourism', without the use of local residents, the base of such industries will be narrow and vulnerable to blows such as the recent new coronavirus. It may be necessary for society as a whole to change its values and ideas, so that we, the 'local residents', can afford to enjoy our lives first, and then tourists can also enjoy themselves 'on the side'.



Figure 21: Local people enjoying themselves at a café in Guernica

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