

# Regional revitalization using contents: Relationship between media contents and real space

Takashi WADA

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## 1 Introduction

Japanese media contents<sup>1)</sup> such as those of films, manga, animation, music, and games have been especially noted in foreign countries since the 1990s. In 1999 the animated film *Pokemon: The First Movie* was shown at 3,043 theaters in the U.S., grossing more than \$86 million there (Digital Content Association of Japan 2005). And in 2009 both the feature film *Okuribito* and the animated short film *Tsumiki no Ie* got Academy awards. The Japanese government has therefore defined the content industry as source of soft power and has made efforts to promote Japanese media content abroad. In what is called the Cool Japan Strategy, the government has been purchasing foreign TVs' programs, delivering digital contents, preventing piracy, and developing the human resources needed for content production (The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2012).

On the other hand, the number of local municipalities and commerce and industry groups trying to revitalize tourism and the local economy by using contents has markedly increased since the early 2000s. Sakaiminato city in Tottori prefecture, for example, where the Mizuki Shigeru Museum exhibiting bronze statues of characters in the manga series *Ge-Ge*

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1 Content, defined in Japanese law as the products that are developed through creative human activities and used for culture and/or entertainment (e.g., films, music, theater, literature, photos, manga, animation, computer games, and computer programs).

*Ge no Kitaro* opened in 2003, has seen the number of the tourists visiting Sakaiminato city increase from about 280,000 in 1994 to about 1,560,000 in 2007 (Wada 2011). Japanese media contents have thus been utilized for regional revitalization at the same time their popularity has expanded globally.

In the field of geography, however, there have been many studies on the production of contents but few on their distribution system and utilization for regional revitalization. Many studies have examined the agglomeration and flexibility of the production system (for example, Scott 2005, Hanzawa 2001, 2005, Yamamoto 2007, Masubuchi 2010a). Yamada (2001) pointed out the relationship between the film industry and traditional industries in Kyoto, and Sugimoto (2004) described the economic and cultural diversity of the film industry in India. As for the animation industry, Yamamoto (2007, 2008, 2009) has described its agglomeration in Tokyo and its business relationships in East Asia.

On the other hand, we can find in the field of human geography only a few empirical studies on the utilization of contents. Masubuchi (2010b) showed some cases of content tourism in Japan. He defined it as a new strategy of tourism and pointed out that the cooperation by the contents' copyright holders is critical to its success of revitalization activities. Wada (2011) analyzed the pattern of regional revitalization activities using manga characters through case studies of Tottori prefecture and pointed out that such activities will be unsuccessful if the work world is not reproduced and many fans cannot have chances to interact with one another.

In the fields adjacent to human geography, some studies on regional revitalization using contents have been done recently. Hasegawa and Midorikawa (2005) argued the potentiality of regional revitalization using contents and pointed out four considerations: trigger, continuity, ripple effects, and community. Yamamura (2011) also argued the potentiality of those activities

and discussed ways to ensure their effectiveness. He pointed out that the cooperation of regional entities, copyright holders, and the fans is indispensable for success and that the fans' love of content related to a particular region might change into love for that region. Taniguchi (2009) also pointed out the importance of cooperation by the copyright holders and noted that revitalization activities have been successful even in local areas where the content industry is not prosperous. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (2009) showed those activities have occurred in the regions where the manga or the animation industry is prosperous and in regions where there is a relationship with the creators or the works.

The existing studies have clarified that the content production companies have agglomerated in large cities and made an international division-of-labor system. They also revealed that the activities for regional revitalization using contents often occurred mainly in local areas and had a relationship with the fans in Japan. But distribution and spatial structure of those activities have not been clarified in detail. Considering content as a kind of information, I thought that the relationship between media space<sup>2)</sup> and real space is important and that one also needs to understand the spatial structure of revitalization activities using media contents. When we adopt this viewpoint, we can refer to Castells (1996) and Bakis (2001). Castells (1996) pointed out the importance of the "space of flows," which is supported with ICT, in addition to the "space of places," which emphasizes geographical proximity. Bakis (2001) proposed that we should consider "geocyberspace," which consists of cyberspace and real space, as a new geographical reality. We can analyze the spatial structure of content-using revitalization activities by replacing "space of flows" or "cyberspace" with media space.

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2 Burgess and Gold (1985) pointed out that the media have long been on the periphery of geographical inquiry, and they classified the media studies by geographers as studies on the information flow and studies on the contents.

The study reported in this paper focused on regional revitalization activities using contents. Its purpose was to find out actual conditions of those activities in Japan and relationship between media contents and real space. Factors affecting the development of the activities for regional revitalization using contents in Japan are presented in section 2. Various regional revitalization activities using films, manga, animation, games, and music are presented in section 3 along with the spatial characteristics of those activities. In section 4 the activities are discussed from the viewpoint of the relationship between media contents and real space. Section 5 concludes this paper with a summary of the findings.

## 2 Factors affecting development

There are three types of factors affecting the development of regional revitalization activities using contents: those due to content producers, those due to consumers, and those due to local municipalities and regional enterprises.

The following three factors are due to content producers: scenario and location, digitalization, and merchandising. Content producers need appealing scenarios and opportune sceneries if they are to create artistic or popular contents. Many scenario writers therefore seek good originals including local historical stories and many directors seek opportune sceneries throughout Japan. As a result, we can sometimes watch works based on local historical stories or showing the local scenery. Digitalization of content production has made it easy to copy and edit the content. This has made it possible for producers to supply same content on multiple media in the following order: theaters, satellite broadcasting, cable television, DVDs, the Internet, and television. A producer using this “wing window model” of releasing content can reduce loss when the movie is not sold well and can get earnings through

multiple media, and increase total returns. Recently many content producers consider a region as a new medium. Some producers promote their characters or talents in a particular region in order to get regular customers. For example, the idol group AKB48 has a home theater in Akihabara, Tokyo, and the idol group SKE48 has a home theater in Sakae, Nagoya. Others reproduce their work world at specific point in order to promote their works and characters. Tokyo Disney Resort and the Mizuki Shigeru Museum are typical examples. The content producers have adopted not only the “wing window model” but also the “goodwill model.” They often merchandise the scenes, the characters, the mechanical designs, and the stories of the works and sell them in order to increase their returns. And they often develop the products arranged locally.

The development of ICT has recently strengthened the relationship between contents and real space recently. Since the Edo era, many content consumers in Japan have enjoyed both the content created by professional creators and the content of alternative fiction created by the consumers. That is, the Japanese people enjoy content thoroughly in many ways (Koyama 2009). Recently, for example, some consumers of animation work buy the original work and create a new story using the characters that appear there. These activities are called *coterie activities* (dojin). Since the early 2000s, we can see coterie activities on the Internet. Many content consumers enjoy sharing the work world and commentating on the work through the Internet. In addition to coterie activities on the Internet, the consumers often plan offline meetings and come together at shops that deal in the items pertaining to the contents they love and at event sites. They comment on the contents and show (and sell) their original works to one another. The Tokyo Comic Market is a typical example. About 35,000 groups exhibited their own works at the 76<sup>th</sup> Tokyo Comic Market held in September 2009, and about 560,000 fans visited the event<sup>3)</sup>. Many events like this are held in many other cities and some enthusiastic fans enjoy them.

Content consumers have also begun to enjoy visiting the places shot in films (Ishimori and Yamamura 2009). They try to appreciate the content more deeply by visiting those places in real space. Kon (2004) wrote the following message for readers in introduction of the book *Manga Map of Japan*: “Let’s go on a trip with this book to appreciate manga deeply. I would like you to discover a new way to enjoy manga thoroughly. Let’s enjoy manga more and more.” The growth of content tourism has been accelerated by the Internet communication among content consumers who exchange information about content-related places and then visit those place alone or in groups.

Local municipalities and regional enterprises have focused on the soft power content in order to encourage tours to their territories and revitalize their economies. Since in the boom of machizukuri<sup>4)</sup> in the late 1990s, local municipalities in Japan have been required to win through inter-regional competition. Many of them have laid stress on improving the region image in order to improve visibility, increase number of tourist arrivals, increase the value of products made in the region, and raise the residents’ motivation for machizukuri (Ishimi and Tanaka 1992). As the content industry grew during the 1990s, some local municipalities and regional enterprises began to use the works and the characters in them to improve the region image. They considered the works, the characters, and their creators regional resources they could use to increase the value of the region and the products made there.

### 3 Utilization methods and their distributions

#### 3.1 Film

The methods of utilizing contents for regional revitalization by local municipalities or regional enterprises differ between media and content genres.

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3 The Mainichi Daily News (16, August, 2009)

4 Citizens’ efforts to make their communities more comfortable and their urban facilities more convenient (Tamura 1987).

This section describes various methods of regional revitalization using content and describes the distributions of the results of those methods. Regional revitalization methods using films are considered first here because films were the first media utilized for regional revitalization in Japan. Since the 1970s some local municipalities, regional enterprises, and nonprofit organizations have held film festivals in order not only to create opportunities for creators to publicize the works but also to create opportunities for residents to enjoy various films and communicate with producers, actors, and fans and to increase number of the tourist arrivals and improve visibility. The Yufuin Film Festival (since 1976) and the Sapporo Film Festival (since 1982) are the pioneers and typical examples, and 224 film festivals were being held in Japan by 2011(see Figure 1).

Only 6 (2.6%) of the festivals started being held before 1980, 20 (8.7%) of them before 1990, 60 (26.0%) of them before 2000, and 138 (59.7%) of them before 2010. This increase in the number of the film festivals held in Japan is primarily due to the larger number of the municipalities holding film festivals and is also due to some municipalities holding multiple film festivals. In Yubu city, for example, after the Yufuin Film Festival started in 1976, the

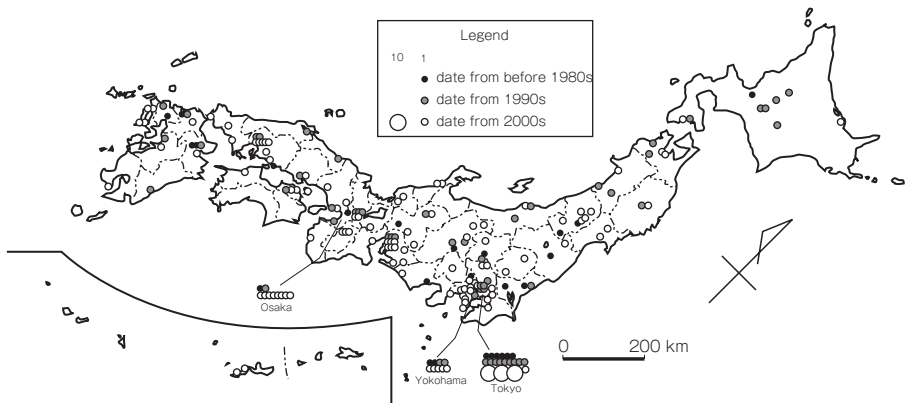


Fig 1. Distribution of local film festivals in Japan (2011)

Source: Websites of the YIDFF and the Japan Community Cinema Centre

Yufuin Children's Film Festival started in 1989 and the Yufuin Culture and Documentary Film Festival started in 1998. As with Yufuin, many film festivals started newly are planned and held by subject. The main subjects of them are women, children, students, peace, Asia, animation, documentaries, and independent films.

More of Japan's film festivals (60, 26.0%) are held in Tokyo than are held anywhere else. 17 (7.6%) are held in Kanagawa, 13 (5.6%) in Osaka, 12 (5.2%) in Aichi, and 10 (4.3%) in Hokkaido. Although many film festivals are thus held in urban areas, many are held in local areas related to historical events or where film directors were born. The Hiroshima Peace Film Festival, for example, is held there because Hiroshima was the site of the first military use of an atomic bomb.

After 2000 many film commissions were established throughout Japan under the leadership of the Ministry of Transportation<sup>5)</sup> (see Figure 2). Each film commission supports shooting by filmmakers and TV stations and seeks to promote the municipalities as sightseeing areas by utilizing the visibility of the films, TV dramas, and other images shot there. The Yokohama Film Commission, Osaka Film Council, Kobe Film Office, and Kitakyushu Film Commission, all of which were instituted in 2000, are the pioneers in Japan. After film commissions were established in those four cities, the number of film commissions increased rapidly: 16 were established in 2001, 33 in 2002, and 27 in 2003. The number of the film commissions established throughout Japan reached 185 in 2011.

Film commissions have been established in all prefectures (see Figure 2). There are 18 in Saitama, 11 in Kanagawa, 11 in Niigata, 11 in Shizuoka, and 9 in Hokkaido. Those first four prefectures have two common

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5 The Ministry of Transportation was reorganized in 2000 as the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism.



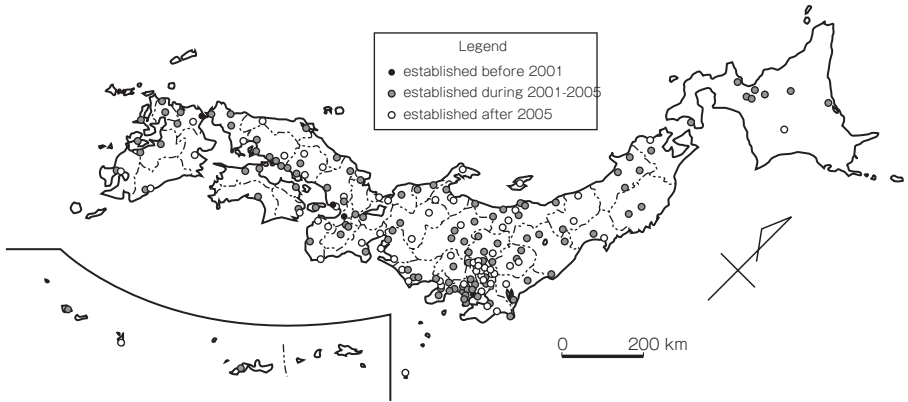


Fig 2. Distribution of film commissions in Japan (2011)

Source: JFC website

points: one is that they have various locations (e.g., beaches, mountains, rivers, temples, wooded areas, and cities) and the other is that they are not far from Tokyo, where many filmmakers and TV stations are located. Therefore, the filmmakers and TV stations can shoot various scenes without heavy expenses if they have a film commission near Tokyo as a business partner.

If the film or the TV program shot in a particular region is a big hit, many tourists who watched the film or the TV program might visit the region. These tourists might come to the region not only from everywhere in Japan but also from abroad. For example, when the Chinese film *Fei cheng wu rao* (If You Are the One) was shot in the east of Hokkaido and shown in China, number of the Chinese tourists who visited Akanko lake, where the film was shot, increased 13-fold (The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2012). Some local municipalities struggle to encourage local shooting by foreign filmmakers or TV stations in order to increase the number of the tourists from abroad and develop the content industry. For example, the Sapporo city council has, with the cooperation of the Central Government of Japan, tried to attract shooting from the U.S. and Asian countries and to develop content production

and distribution at Sapporo city. The Central Government certified Sapporo city as a special zone for the content industry in 2011. Under the certification the Central Government can ease restrictions on the use of the public facilities in Sapporo city and the Government of Sapporo city can support shooting by foreign filmmakers or TV stations widely.

Some local municipalities and regional enterprises have also put efforts into creating various images for themselves and utilize those images in the promotion of local products, shopping districts and so on. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has supported these activities since the late 2000s and in 2009 created guidelines for local municipalities and regional enterprises creating images and using them to promote local products. Since 2011 the METI has supported 6 projects in which regional enterprises put efforts into using contents to promote their products in cooperation with university teachers, content producers, and directors (The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2011). The aims of these projects are not only to promote local products and shopping districts but also to develop human resources for the content industry in each area.

### 3.2 Manga and Animation

Since the 1970s many local municipalities and regional enterprises have, in cooperation with copyright holders, established museums, installed statues, and have held various events using the characters drawn in manga or animation works. Most of those projects have been conducted in the areas drawn in the works or where the works' creators were born or have lived.

The oldest manga museum is Saitama City's Manga Hall, which was opened in 1966. The Japan Manga Museum in Narashino, Chiba, was then opened in 1970, and the Contemporary Manga Library in Tokyo was opened in 1978. The directors of these museums recognized manga as a cultural resource

and exhibited or lent them to citizens. The Museum of Machiko Hasegawa in Tokyo was opened in 1985. This was the first museum exhibiting the works and profile of a particular creator. All the museums opened before the late 1980s were located in Tokyo metropolitan area. But since then many have been opened throughout Japan as results of the pioneering efforts of Ichiro Tominaga and Osamu Tezuka. Ichiro Tominaga established 8 manga museums since 1989 at the cities or towns he was born or had visited, and Osamu Tezuka established the first animation museum in cooperation with the Government of Takarazuka city in 1994. Since then many local municipalities and regional enterprises have recognized creators born in the area and their works as resources for regional revitalization and have competed with each other in regional revitalization by establishing manga or animation museums. There were 29 manga or animation museums in Japan by 2000 and 53 by 2011 (see Figure 3). In these museums the creators' carriers are exhibited and the work worlds are reproduced for fans and other tourists. Since the late 2000s not only local municipalities and regional enterprises but also copyright holders have established manga or animation museums. The Suginami Animation Museum and Tokyo Anime Center are

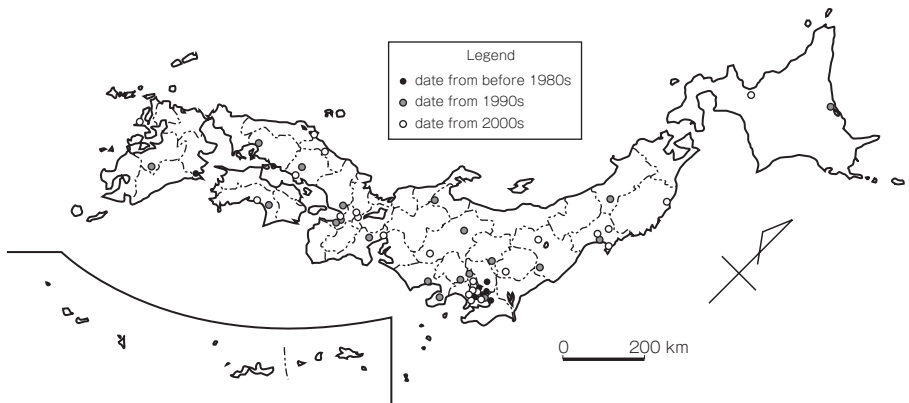


Fig 3. Distribution of manga and animation museums in Japan (2011)

Source: Kon, 2004 and Website search in December, 2011

typical examples. Those are the symbols of the agglomeration of the animation industry and those attract many fans of animation and general tourists. Some copyright holders have also opened character shops in the Tokyo metropolitan area and other large cities. Pokemon Center and the Anpanman Children's Museum are typical examples.

The work worlds have been reproduced not only in the museums but also at shopping districts and in sightseeing areas. For example, bronze statues of monsters drawn in *Ge-Ge-Ge no Kitaro* were installed at Mizuki Shigeru shopping street in Sakaiminato city, Tottori prefecture, and many tourists enjoy seeing them. Sakaiminato city is one of the local municipalities that has led a project in cooperation with the copyright holder. On the other hand, the case that fans of the work create a new trip to the region drawn in the work has appeared. The active trip to Washimiya town, Saitama prefecture, by the fans of *Rakisuta* is a typical example. When the TV program *Rakisuta* started in 2007, some its enthusiastic fans visited Washimiya shrine, which was drawn in the work. When this activity was reported in newspapers, magazines, and on the Internet, then number of the visitors to Washimiya increased rapidly. Commerce and industry associations of Washimiya noted this activity and began to utilize *Rakisuta* for regional revitalization. The associations have held various events for the fans of *Rakisuta* and have developed souvenirs in cooperation with the copyright holder and the fans.

The characters drawn in manga or animation works have also been utilized for regional revitalization, and one of the ways that has been done is by using the characters as ambassadors. Examples of manga or animation characters who have been appointed government ambassadors are listed in Table 1. The first was Norakuro, who in 2003 was appointed a cultural and goodwill ambassador of Koto ward, Tokyo prefecture. Later that year Astro Boy (Tetsuwan Atomu) was appointed an ambassador of Shinjuku ward,

Table 1. Manga and animation characters appointed government ambassadors(2011)

Government	Year of appointment	Character	Role
Koto ward, Tokyo	2003	Norauro	culture & friendliness
Shinjuku ward, Tokyo	2003	Astro Boy	future & friendliness
Kasugabe city, Saitama	2003	Crayon Shin-chan	friendliness
Mie prefecture	2003	Crayon Shin-chan	tourism
Tottori prefecture	2006	GeGeGe no Kitaro	tourism
Saga prefecture	2006	Barbapapa	family tourism
Shimane prefecture	2007	Yoshida-kun	friendliness
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2008	Doraemon	animation culture
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	2008	Atashinchi's mother	food & friendliness
Yamaguchi prefecture	2009	MaiMai Shinko	friendliness
Takatsu ward, Kawasaki city	2011	Shogun Vamp	friendliness
Govt. of Finland	2011	Moomin	friendliness

*Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, 2008 and website search in December 2011.*

Tokyo prefecture. In both cases, the creators of these characters were born in each ward. So the governments of both ward appointed their characters as ambassadors. Another ambassadors have appeared in local areas of Japan since 2003. Japanese government agencies have also appointed as ambassadors the characters drawn in manga and animation. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed Doraemon as an ambassador of the animation culture of Japan in 2008.

Another use of drawn characters for regional revitalization has appeared recently. Many local municipalities and regional enterprises have created original characters and used them to increase their visibility and promote local products and sightseeing points. These local characters are often called yuru-chara because of their charming appearance and behavior. They are less famous than the characters drawn in the hit works, but local municipalities and regional enterprises can utilize them more freely because in most cases they hold the copyright. The oldest yuru-chara is Dotaku-kun, created and published in 1988 at Yasu city, Shiga prefecture. After the birth of Dotaku-kun, the number of local characters has increased rapidly.

On the website “The picture book of yuru-chara” I found 970

characters in December 2011. As we can see in Figure 4, where the numbers of local characters originating in a prefecture is indicated by the size of the circle shown in that prefecture, there are characters in all prefectures. Some prefectures have many characters and others have few. The prefecture that has most characters is Tokyo, which has 79 characters. Kyoto has 64, Hyogo 62, Aichi 53, Osaka 50, and Shiga 47. On the other hand, Shimane and Miyazaki have only 6, Yamanashi has 7, and Ehime, Saga and Okinawa each have 8. The ratio of number of characters a prefecture has to the number of municipalities in that prefecture is highest for Shiga (2.47) and that for Kyoto is the second highest (2.46). Next is that for Hyogo (1.51), followed by that for Tokyo (1.27) and that for Osaka (1.16). On the other hand, this ratio is only 0.20 for Okinawa and is only 0.23 for both Miyazaki and Nara. Thus the number of the characters is relatively large in Tokyo and the Kinki district (except Nara) and relatively small in peripheral areas. The reasons for the relatively large number of characters in Kinki district is the existence of successful examples and organizational dissemination activities. For example, Hikonyan, created

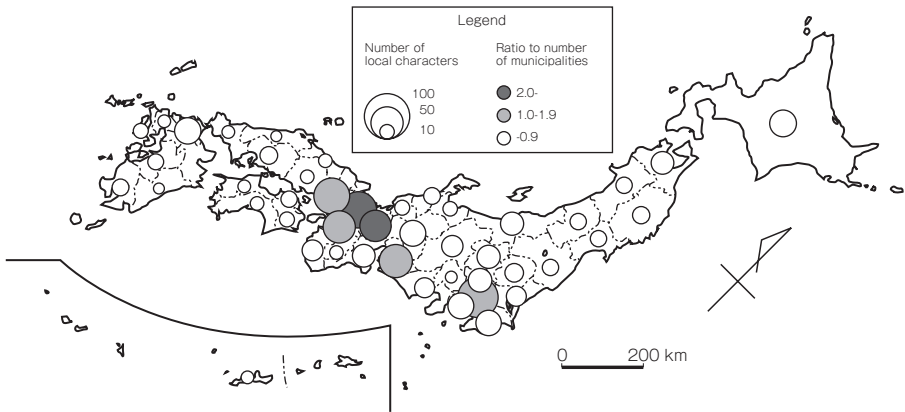


Fig 4. Distribution of local characters and the ratio of local characters to number of local municipalities (2011)

Source: Minnano Yurukyara's website (seen in December, 2011)

in Hikone city, Shiga prefecture, is most famous yuru-chara in Japan and the earnings from sales of the related items in 2008 were estimated to be over 1 billion yen. The Hikone city council organized The Society of Organized YURU-CHARA in 2009, and the society had 125 members by January 2012. 11 characters created and published in Shiga and 11 created and published in Hyogo are registered in this society.

### 3.3 Games

Professionals have long provided games designed to let users enjoy fictional worlds regardless of the place they live, and offline meetings regarding such games can be found in local areas (Wada 2007).

Games whose contents are related to real space have also become available in Japan, where such games are called Ichi-Ge (location games). “Colonial Life Plus”<sup>6)</sup> is a representative example. Players can own virtual colonies in the website and get virtual currency and some items depending on travel distance in real space measured by GPS. Then they can enjoy decorating their colonies with those items. The number of “Colonial Life Plus” players reached 1.5 billion in 2011 (Miyoshi and Seki 2010). In addition to games coupled with real space of national scale such as “Colonial Life Plus,” games coupled with real space of local scale have recently been being developed rapidly. “Fuku-bura”<sup>7)</sup> created and published in Fukuoka and “Hiro-tan”<sup>8)</sup> created and published in Hiroshima are typical examples. IT companies in each of those cities developed the games and fund with revenue from corporate advertizing.

### 3.4 Music

Live houses and coffee shops have been important arenas for

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6 <http://pc.colopl.jp/pages/wl/welcome.html>

7 <http://elements-soft.com/fukubura/>

8 <http://www.hirotangame.net/>

development of music and for the interaction of music fans in local areas (Masubuchi 2011a). For example, the live house Showa opened in Fukuoka in 1970 is known as an incubator of famous musicians such as Kaientai, Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi, and Yosui Inoue as well as an interaction site for the musicians and their fans. The development of TV programs and ICT, especially the Internet, however, has made it possible for many fans to enjoy music not only in a group in real space but also alone (via TV and the Internet). As a result, music companies have agglomerated at Tokyo and since the 1960s have by TV supplied music to every part of Japan.

On the other hand, corresponding to the diversification of taste in music, some musicians began to enjoy their musical activities in local areas with the fans mainly since the 1990s. The activities at Shimokitazawa, Sendai, and Okinawa are typical examples (Masubuchi 2010a). Given this situation, not only local musicians but also the producers at Tokyo began to adopt a strategy of localization since the last part of the 2000s. AKB48 and SKE48 are typical examples. The producer Yasushi Akimoto and his company built dedicated theaters in particular locations such as Akihabara, Tokyo, and Sakae, Nagoya, and provided live performances for members of fan clubs, who could get tickets at the idol's official website. At those performances they can enjoy music and dance and communicating with the performers. The producers in particular regions also present idol groups locally.

The theaters of these idols are located at shopping districts in large cities. For example, the theater of AKB48 is located at Akihabara, Tokyo, and that of SKE48 is located at Sakae, Nagoya. These shopping districts are in the hearts of the cities and are known as towns of subculture, or hobby towns. There are electronics stores, computer shops, CD and DVD shops, game shops, coffee shops with maids, and theaters in these towns. The fans of the idol groups can not only enjoy the live performances but also buy related items and



communicate with the salespersons and one another.

#### 4 Relationship between contents and real space

This section discusses the relationship between contents on the media and particular regions in real space. Figure 5 shows relationship between contents and real space observed in the activities for regional revitalization using contents. The relationship can be roughly divided into three patterns.

First, the contents created by the professionals are screened and performed at theaters in cities in real space (see center of Figure 5). And the consumers can enjoy games created by the professionals at game centers in real space. The producers also sell related items at the shops in real space. These theaters, game centers, and shops are often located at shopping districts in urban areas, especially in large cities. The consumers living in the cities and their suburbs come to the shopping districts and enjoy shopping and communicating with salespersons, idols, and one another.

Second, the contents on the media are sometimes exhibited or reproduced at museums and streets and in events in real space (see right side of Figure 5). Before the early 1990s, the contents were often exhibited as historical records but, since the late 1990s, the contents are often utilized as regional or copyright holders' resources for attracting visitors. In these

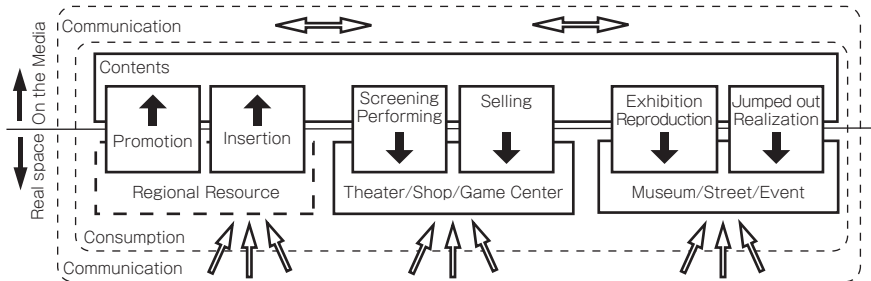


Fig 5. Relationship between Contents and Real Space

Source: Present author

activities, cooperation with regional entities and copyright holders, reproduction of the work world, and chances for fans to exchange information are important for success. And the characters drawn in the works often jump out of the works into real space. In this pattern, the characters are often utilized by governments as ambassadors in real space. The fans of the works and the characters drawn in the works visit the museums, streets, and events and enjoy the work world and communicating with one another.

Third, the contents are often created using regional resources in real space (see left side of Figure 5). The producers sometimes shoot films and TV programs at particular regions in real space in order to enhance the attractiveness of those films and programs. Local municipalities and regional enterprises welcome the shootings and support them in order to raise their visibility and obtain economic benefits. As a result, the regional resources such as the scenery of the territory appear in the films and TV programs. Local municipalities and regional enterprises, with the corporation of video production companies located in the region, often create original images in order to promote their natural environments, sightseeing points, and local products. And these activities have for the past few years been supported by the METI, which tries to encourage the development not only of manufacturing and tourism in the local areas but also the content industry there. These activities sometimes made fans of the films and the area visit the area and buy local products.

The fans of the contents on the media enjoy consumption of the contents and communicating about the contents both in real space and on the media. In real space, they visit theaters, shops, and game centers to enjoy the contents, buy related items, and communicate with salespersons and one another. And to relive the work world they visit places where the work world is reproduced or realized and places whose scenery appears in the works. They also enjoy communicating with one another through the Internet. They

often post and communicate—on bulletin boards, weblogs, social networking services, and twitters—about the contents themselves, the shops, the museums, the events, and so on.

## 5 Conclusion

I clarified actual conditions of the regional revitalization activities using contents on the media in Japan and also clarified the relationship between the contents and real space. The major findings are as follows.

The factors affecting development of regional revitalization using content are classified into three types: those due to content producers, those due to consumers, and those due to local municipalities and regional enterprises. The content producers have begun considering regions as a shooting point, a new medium, and a secure market. They have also approached local entities. The consumers of the contents have begun not only to enjoy the contents on the media but also to appreciate the contents deeply by visiting content-related places. Furthermore, local municipalities and regional enterprises have begun using the contents on the media in order to increase the visibility of the local area and local products in the era of decentralization and interregional competition.

The methods of utilizing the contents and the spatial characteristics of the contents differ in media-dependent ways. Film festivals have been held in various parts of Japan since the 1950s. Many major festivals have been held in urban areas such as Tokyo, but some have been held in local areas for the purpose of cultural exchange and economic benefits. After 2000, film commissions were rapidly established in various part of Japan in order to increase the visibility of the region and derive economic benefits. Manga and animation have been exhibited at the museums in urban areas as a historical records since before the 1980s. Since the 1990s, manga and animation have

been utilized as regional resources attracting visitors to regions in various parts of Japan. Some of the characters drawn in the works or created by local municipalities or regional enterprises act as ambassadors in real space. While earlier we could find only games enabling us to enjoy fictional worlds, now we can find games with contents related to real space. Many music fans have become able to enjoy music alone with electronic devices, but the number of idols that fans can easily approach at theaters in real space has also increased rapidly.

The relationship between the content on the media and the particular regions in real space can be roughly divided into three patterns: (a) the contents created by professionals are screened and performed at theaters in cities in real space, and consumers can at game centers in real space enjoy games created by professionals; (b) the contents on the media are sometimes exhibited or reproduced at museums, on streets, and in events in real space, and the characters drawn in the works often jump out of the works into real space; and (c) the contents are often created by using regional resources in real space.

In conclusion, the results of the present study clarified the actual situation of regional revitalization using media contents and showed the framework of relationship between the contents and particular regions in real space. With this framework, one can analyze some of the regional revitalization activities using contents. It is hoped that this study will contribute to development of such activities in various part of Japan, but I could not conduct detailed case studies. Additional case studies of regional revitalization activities using contents are strongly suggested.

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