The resilience of shrinking communities in rural Japan



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Abstract

As a manifestation of today's unprecedentedly uneven urban agglomeration, shrinkage has become omnipresent in industrialised countries. In spite of geographical focus on urban contexts in shrinkage studies, the primary locations of acute shrinkage are rural areas that are more structurally vulnerable than urban areas. Shrinking rural areas have undergone cultural, economic, environmental and social decline associated with depopulation, and increasing numbers of them are finding their future continuity threatened. In order to explore how modern society can address rural shrinkage, this thesis investigates the dynamic multi-level social responses to rural shrinkage in post-war Japan, where shrinkage is perpetuated and taking place along with nationwide depopulation and ageing. Focusing on the process of social responses, this thesis draws upon panarchy theory from the field of evolutionary resilience as the theoretical framework. Panarchy theory regards resilience as the dynamic ability of self-transformation to adapt to changing circumstances.

This thesis consists of three main parts. Firstly, it traces the development trajectory of rural shrinkage in post-war Japan and investigates the policy measures taken to deal with it. It discusses the constant trade-off of resilience between the national level and the rural regions in the counter-shrinkage policies, and their adverse effect that hampered the capability of the rural regions to autonomously promote contextualised development. It also argues the absence of policy innovation rooted in the centralised governance structure and the nostalgia for the growth period among policymaking actors. Subsequently, the thesis looks at the community-level responses to rural shrinkage through multiple case studies. Delineating the development process of the local revitalisation activities in line with the adaptation phases in panarchy theory, it illustrates the changes of the performances of the activities due to the transitions of socio-economic circumstances. It also emphasises the determinative influence of human capital in shaping the trajectories of the activities, and their impacts on the resilience of the communities, by identifying intermediate organisers and social networks as the primary drivers and apathy among community members as the major barrier. Lastly, it considers whether, and in what way, another local development approach can support the

Japanese rural communities to better address shrinkage. Adopting a case study methodology, it evaluates the effectiveness of the Cittaslow (slow city) approach in rural Japan, based on the local Cittaslow practice in Italy, Germany and South Korea. It argues the high possibility of Cittaslow being reduced to a mere place-branding tool, and its limitation to address structural issues (such as shortage of local employment and youth outmigration) in Japanese shrinking communities.

Offering one of the first studies framed using evolutionary resilience on rural shrinkage in Japan, this thesis represents the drawbacks of applying pre-fix development approaches to address rural shrinkage, and highlights the importance of building local capacity to formulate context-tailored approaches to shrinkage and navigate them with a sensitivity to changes in circumstances. It calls for a major policy turn from the current trade-off approach to a bottom-up approach that focuses on local capacity building of the rural areas, in which human capital improvement is the central element.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACI	Association of Commerce and Industry
CNDP	Comprehensive National Development Plan
FPNR	Foundational Plan for National Resilience
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MBVI	Most Beautiful Villages in Italy
MBVW	Most Beautiful Villages in the World
MIC	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
MLIT	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
NCCN	National Cittaslow Corea Network
NEG	New Economic Geography
NSP	National Spatial Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SFV	Study in Fishing Village
SO	Satellite Office
TPC	Townscape Preservation Centre
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TSR	Tokushima Shūraku Saisei

Chapter 1 Introduction

1-1 Background

Contemporary shrinkage

Shrinkage has been an 'inconvenient truth' in the policymaking and urban planning fields, as their major premise has been growing societies. However, shrinkage has already become the "normal path" of an ever growing number of cities and towns in industrialised countries (Pallagst et al. 2017; Martinez-Fernandez et al. 2012; Haase et al. 2013) as a manifestation of spatially unequal urban agglomeration in contemporary society. The primary symptom of shrinkage is population decline, but it is a far-reaching phenomenon that entails cultural, economic, environmental and social decline, and degrades the entire living environment of the locale. Shrinkage is also a reciprocal process in which the causes and consequences reinforce each other. The more shrinkage proceeds, the harder it becomes to change the downward trajectory. The vicious cycle of shrinkage can even threaten the future continuity of the local life. Shrinkage is a major urban challenge for modern societies in the unprecedented and geographically asymmetrical urbanisation process today.

Despite the global prevalence of shrinkage, modern society is still ill-equipped in terms of culture, knowledge and strategies to deal with it (Hollander 2011). For politicians and policymakers who favour pro-growth discourses, shrinkage is a sensitive subject (Pallagst & Aber 2009) to put on the agenda. For urban planners whose expertise has been growth control, shrinkage is beyond their knowledge and skill set in the conventional planning discipline (Rieniets 2009; Hollander & Németh 2011).

Urban researchers have started to discuss a paradigm shift in planning from growth to shrinkage (Albert 2009; Hollander 2011; Pallagst & Aber 2009; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013), and the literature on shrinkage has grown significantly in the last decade. However, the primary focus of the existing research has been shrinkage in urban contexts, such as old industrial cities and post-communist cities

that experienced abrupt shrinkage after growth (Martinez-Fernandez et al. 2013; Oswalt 2006; Pallagst 2007; Rink et al. 2010; Wiechmann 2008). More gradual and thus less dramatic shrinkage in rural contexts has attracted only minor attention in shrinkage studies. In reality, however, the main locations of acute shrinkage are often rural areas (Weck & Beißwenger 2013; Hospers 2012; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013) that are structurally more vulnerable to shrinkage processes than urban areas (Domhardt & Troeger-Weiß 2009; Wirth et al. 2016). Rural areas play an important role in the national urban system, offering essential services such as: the provision of energy, food and water; conserving the natural environment; absorbing CO_2 emissions; and preserving the cultural diversity of the country (Odagiri 2014). Dysfunctin of rural areas by shrinkage could destabilise the foundation of urban areas and the entire society. In spite of the significant impact it could have on society, there have been very few investigations on rural shrinkage and the means to deal with it. In this thesis I aim to address this neglect in the present shrinkage research to better understand rural shrinkage and explore how modern society can address this global structural process. For this primary goal, I investigate the multi-level dynamic social responses to shrinkage in rural Japan, where shrinkage is occurring alongside nationwide depopulation and ageing and is perpetuated in many places.

Rural shrinkage in Japan

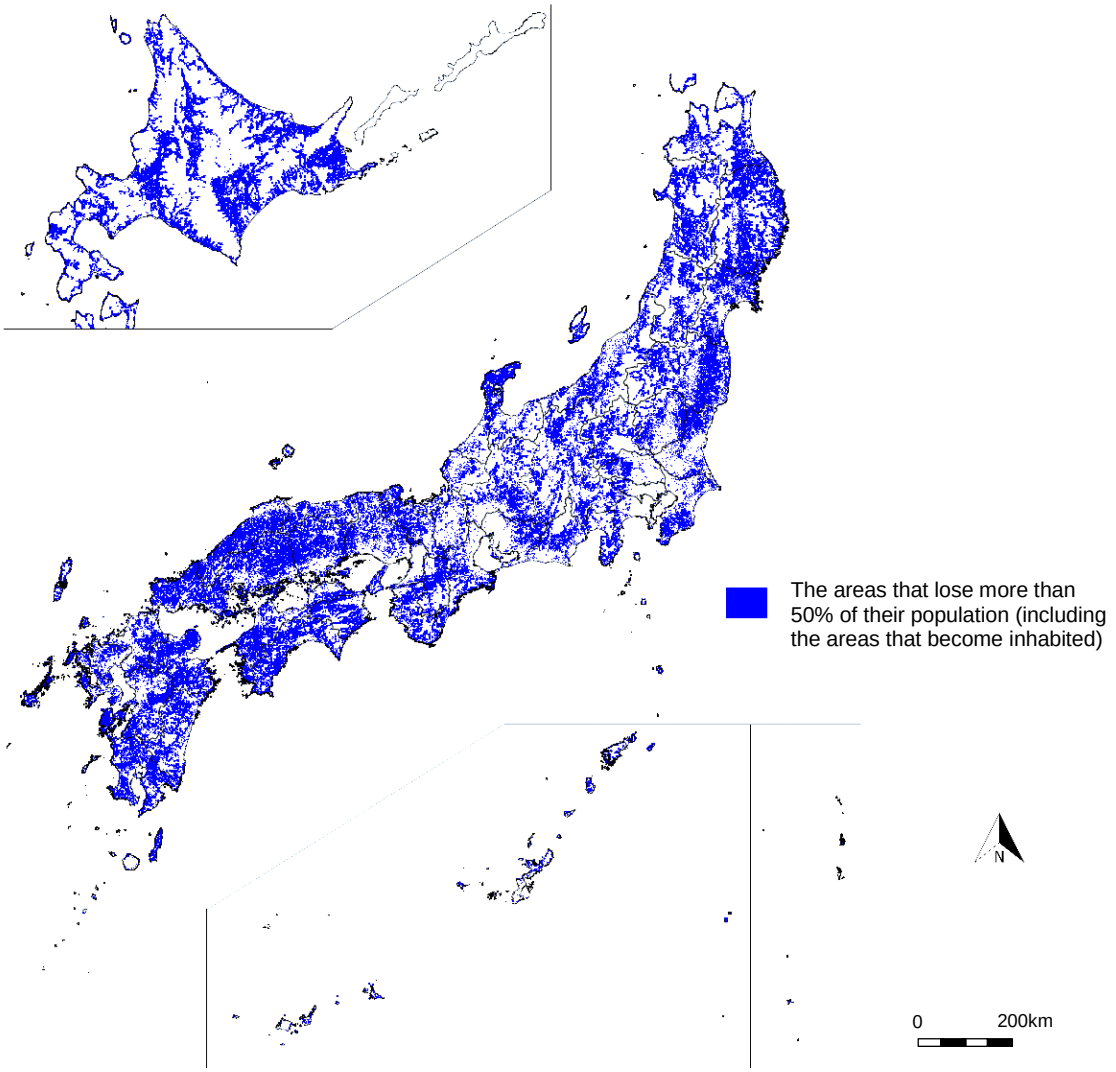
The population of Japan has been rapidly falling after it peaked at 128 million in 2008 (Cabinet Office 2014). The number of foreign immigrants in Japan is too small to impact this national population decline, and Japan's total population is expected to drop to 102 million by 2050, with the sharp rise of the ageing rate from 27% to 38% (Cabinet Office 2017b). Rural shrinkage in Japan is taking place alongside the total population decline and hyper ageing, and Japan offers many ideal locations to see the frontline of the social transitions caused by shrinkage.

Rural shrinkage in Japan first appeared when an extensive rural-urban migration occurred in the high economic growth period of post-war reconstruction. After Japan shifted to the stable growth period, youth outmigration from the rural areas to the urban areas for better employment and/or education opportunities continued. The destination of the migrants gradually converged in the capital zone, as

Tokyo grew into a world-class metropolitan area (MA) and became the dominant centre of politics, finance, and industry. The concentration of economic activity and population in the Tokyo MA continued, relying on increasing returns of scale and representing the emerging process of large agglomeration in new economic geography (NEG) (Krugman 1998; Fisher 2006). Behind the scenes, shrinkage in the rural regions progressed ceaselessly due to the constant outflow of younger people and the decline of agriculture industries. Despite a range of policy interventions from the central government with enormous amounts of public investment, the urban-rural disparities never reduced.

Today, Tokyo is the world's largest megacity (United Nations 2016) in which one third of the national population (38 million) lives; at the same time, 647 in 1,720 municipalities are designated as Depopulated Areas[1] that underwent deep shrinkage (MIC 2017b). The Depopulated Areas, which occupy 60% of the national land (MIC 2017b), suffer a range of symptoms of shrinkage, including outmigration, population ageing, abandonment of farm lands, high vacancy of properties, decline of agriculture, lack of local employment, less public services, and weaker social cohesion. The Grand Design 2050, the current national spatial development vision, has made a map of the population change from 2010 to 2050. The map illustrates the spread of depopulation in almost all rural regions, and the extensive depopulation they will experience in the coming decades (Figure 1-1).

[1] Acutely depopulated and demographically ageing areas that face decline of economy, local finance, infrastructure and social cohesion. Depopulated Areas are designated on the municipality basis by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).
The Depopulated Area is defined based on demographic conditions (either long-term or middle-term) and financial conditions. Long-term demographic conditions are: 1) depopulated by 32% or more from 1970 to 2015; or 2) depopulated by 27% or more from 1970 to 2015 and its elderly ratio in 2015 is 36% or higher in 2005; or 3) depopulated by 27% or more from 1970 to 2015 and its youth ratio in 2015 is 11% or lower in 2005. The middle-term condition is: depopulated by 21% or more from 1980 to 2015. The financial conditions are: the financial capability index is 0.5 or less from 2013 to 2015 and the public racing income is 4 billion JPY or less (MIC 2017b).



Source: The Grand Design 2050, 2014

Figure 1-1 The population change in Japan from 2010 to 2050

The central government predicts that 60% of the current inhabited areas will lose half or more of their population and one third of them will turn into uninhabited areas by 2050 (MLIT 2014b). In terms of intensity and extensiveness, rural shrinkage in Japan is distinctive compared to shrinkage in many other industrialised countries, where it is still mainly at the regional level. Japan is a living laboratory that demonstrates rural shrinkage in a depopulating and ageing society.

Response to shrinkage

Since the shrinkage paradigm is beyond modern planning cultures and strategies (Pallagst, Fleschurz, et al. 2017), the favoured approach to shrinkage has been predominately pro-growth strategies that strive to grow again through entrepreneurial place-making projects (Sousa & Pinho 2013; Panagopoulos 2012). However, this commercial regrowth approach often appears to be ineffective and rather adverse in the long term (Hospers 2013). Recently, a more adaptation-orientated approach is gaining support in places where shrinkage is persistent and regrowth seems unfeasible, such as Eastern Germany and the rural regions in north Europe and Japan (Pyl 2009; Haase et al. 2013; Matanle & Sato 2010). The main emphasis of the adaptation approach is to maintain the well-being and sustainability of the locale through activating site-specific assets.

As an adaptive approach to deal with shrinkage, some scholars and shrinking towns see potential in Cittaslow (slow city) (Hospers 2013; Wirth et al. 2016). Cittaslow is a socio-cultural rural development movement born in Italy at the end of the 1990s. Using the term 'slow' metaphorically, Cittaslow proposes sustainable development for small towns[2] with the holistic slow city vision that emphasises local distinctiveness, an asset-based economy, environmental awareness, social cohesion, and sensory pleasure (Mayer & Knox 2009). The approach of Cittaslow has two functions – the 'title' and 'roadmap' functions – to facilitate local development; the 'title' function gives the town an international slow city certification that is useful for profile building, and the 72 slow city criteria listed in the Cittaslow charter works as the 'roadmap' that guides the town regarding how to make a slow city. Cittaslow movement has rapidly grown into a global network of small towns in 30 countries in and outside Europe.

Cittaslow has divided academia. Some researchers advocate Cittaslow as an useful sustainable local development model (Ekinci 2014; Karabag et al. 2012a; Doyduk & Okan 2016), while others are more critical of Cittaslow for its top-down nature (Hatipoglu 2014; Semmens & Freeman 2012), commercial-orientated practice (Carp 2014) and the risk of gentrification (Nilsson et al. 2011; Ball

[2] Primarily, the membership is limited to the towns with less than 50,000 inhabitants.

2015). Whereas an increasing number of shrinking towns in Europe and Asia are joining the Cittaslow network for local revitalisation (Haase et al. 2012; Karabag et al. 2012), the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach as a way to adapt and address shrinkage is still largely unknown. Empirical studies that examine Cittaslow in less advantageous depopulating towns hardly exist. In this thesis, I assess the Cittaslow approach regarding the extent to which it can help Japanese rural communities better deal with shrinkage through comparing the local revitalisation activities in shrinking towns in Japan and in Cittaslow member towns in Germany, Italy and South Korea. The research findings will offer an evidence-based knowledge on the validity of the Cittaslow approach in revitalising shrinking rural communities.

1-2 Theoretical framework

For the investigation of dynamic social responses to shrinkage, I use evolutionary resilience as the analytical concept. Unlike an equilibrium notion of resilience that seeks a stable state after disturbances, evolutionary resilience emphasises the constant self-metamorphosis to adapt to circumstance changes (Holling & Gunderson 2002; Davoudi 2012). Transformability – a more radical and progressive notion than partial adjustment for an equilibrium – is the essence of evolutionary resilience. Whereas equilibrium resilience has been predominant in policymaking and disaster management practices, evolutionary resilience has been gaining popularity in fields that deal with long-term fundamental socio-environmental transitions, such as climate change, demographic ageing and regional development (Simmie & Martin 2010; Hogarth & Wójcik 2016; Leichenko 2011).

Shrinkage has been enduring and perpetuated in many places including rural Japan. Yet, many of the traditional studies implicitly postulate growth as a normal condition and consider shrinkage as pathology that must be overcome. In this thesis, I take leave from this classic growth-equilibrium notion and regard shrinkage as a new condition to which society ought to adapt, instead of as a disturbance from which it must recover. The evolutionary resilience perspective that focuses on transformation and adaptation offers a suitable analytical framework for this. More specifically, I

employ panarchy theory as the primary theoretical framework to analyse Japanese society's response to rural shrinkage. Panarchy theory, coined by Holling & Gunderson (2002), explains the adaptation process in evolutionary resilience with four phases in an adaptive cycle: growth (γ), conservation (κ), release (or collapse) (Ω), and reorganisation (α). In panarchy theory, the resilience of a system is not static but changes along with the status of the system in these four phases. A shrinking society can refer to a system at the declining release phase (Ω) that suffers from the consequences of shrinkage, and the resilience of the shrinking society is the ability of the system to move out from the Ω phase towards the α phase through self-transformation.

Panarchy theory has several advantageous features for investigating the social dynamics induced by shrinkage. The adaptive cycle model has a nested structure in which the resilience of a system is given as the totality of the performances and the connectivity of the nested adaptive cycles at the smaller levels. If the system is a shrinking society, each of the adaptive cycles represents the action to deal with shrinkage. This nested structure can illustrate multidimensional adaptive actions to shrinkage at multiple levels in one picture. The reinforcing vicious cycle of shrinkage can also be explained as the cross-scale 'revolt' process in panarchy theory; in the revolt process, a system at the Ω phase cannot move to the α phase, and its collapse cascades up to larger scales. On the other hand, as it originates in ecology, panarchy theory struggles to capture social factors such as agency, social capital and power relations brought by human actors (Berkes & Ross 2016). In social systems, the adaptive cycles are heterogeneous human activities that behave based on different interests and purposes, and their relationships are intricate – including cooperation and reciprocity, but also conflict and tension in the power nexus in the system. These complexity and dynamism in and between the adaptive cycles are almost absent in ecology systems.

Empirical studies that apply panarchy theory to urban development studies – in either growing or shrinking contexts – are still scarce, and knowledge regarding the efficacy of panarchy theory as an analytical tool of urban development is at the embryonic stage. In this thesis, I will offer one of the first accounts on the social response to rural shrinkage in Japan drawing upon panarchy theory. The

research findings will contribute to the greater specification of the validity of panarchy theory in investigating phenomena in social systems.

1-3 Research questions

To accomplish the aim of this thesis, I explore the multi-level dynamic responses of Japanese society to post-war rural shrinkage by drawing upon an evolutionary resilience perspective. I also assess the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach in helping to enhance the resilience of shrinking communities in Japan. The main research questions that lead this thesis are as follows:

Q1 a) How has rural shrinkage developed in post-war Japan?

b) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the national and prefectural levels, and to what extent have they contributed to the resilience of the rural regions?

Q2 a) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the community level, and to what extent have they contributed to community resilience?

b) What are the key influencers (i.e. drivers and barriers) that shape the performances of community-level responses?

Q3 To what extent can the Cittaslow approach be effective in improving the key influencers identified in Q2-b and help in enhancing the resilience of the Japanese communities?

The interpretations of 'region' and 'community' vary in countries with different socio-political conditions and histories. In this thesis, 'rural region' refers to the area covered by the prefectures that are not part of the three major metropolitan areas.[3]

1-4 Research method

The methodology chosen to answer the research questions was the multiple case study approach, which is effective in providing in-depth explanations of social phenomena in different contexts, as

[3] The Tokyo MA, the Osaka MA, and the Nagoya MA.

well as the commonalities and differences across the case studies (Zainal 2007; Baxter & Jack 2008). As the main data sources, multiple qualitative methods – documentation surveys, semi-structured interviews, and site-observations – were employed along with statistical analysis.

I first conducted the documentation surveys through which I analysed the trajectory of rural shrinkage in post-war Japan and the policy responses to it in the past (for Q1-a & b). I then conducted fieldwork in Japan to investigate the adaptive cycles produced to deal with shrinkage at the policy level and the community level, respectively (for Q1-b and Q2-a). For the case sites of community-level responses, I selected four communities in two rural towns[4] in the Shikoku region, Minami and Uchiko, which were acutely shrinking but still had the capacity to respond to shrinkage. Through the site observations and key informant interviews with the local actors who directly or indirectly engaged in the case studies' adaptive cycles, I collected different people's lived experience of shrinkage and community revitalisation activities. In so doing, I examined the development process of the main adaptive cycles of local revitalisation activities and their impact on the resilience of the case communities (for Q2-a). Comparing the results across the case studies, I identified the key social factors that influence the trajectories, performances and the connectivity of the adaptive cycles (for Q2-b). I subsequently conducted fieldwork in five Cittaslow member towns in Italy (Pollica and Altomonte), Germany (Hersbruck and Wirsberg) and South Korea[5] (Jeungdo). I examined the local Cittaslow practice in these towns by means of site observations and interviews with the stakeholders. I assessed the functionality of Cittaslow as a 'title' and a 'roadmap', and the impact Cittaslow had on the formation of the existing adaptive cycles for town regeneration. Based on that, I speculated about the possible form of the Cittaslow operation in the context of rural Japan, and evaluated Cittaslow's effectiveness in providing a positive impact on the key influencers to improve the resilience of Japanese shrinking communities (for Q-3). Furthermore, I organised a workshop on the potential of the Cittaslow approach in shrinking communities in Japan at the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies at the

[4] The meanings of the term 'town' diverge in different countries. In Japan, a town is generally a cluster of small villages that were consolidated in the municipal mergers in the Meiji Era and the Showa Era.
[5] In South Korea, I interviewed the director of the Cittaslow Corea and the ex-coordinator of the local Cittaslow office in Jeungdo in Seoul, instead of visiting some member towns.

University of Oxford. I collected data on Japanese society's perception of rural shrinkage and the adequacy of applying Cittaslow to rural Japan from discussions with the participants in the workshop.

1-5 Chapter structure

This thesis comprises seven chapters. After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides the literature review and Chapter 3 details the research method. Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 are empirical chapters that offer the research findings corresponding to the research questions Q1 to Q3 respectively. They are followed by the conclusion, Chapter 7. The main components of the chapters are summarised as follows:

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 consists of two parts. I first conduct the literature review on the main topics that create the research context of this thesis – namely, economic geography, peripheralisation, shrinkage, the rural development approach, and Cittaslow. I explain how this study is related to these topics and the contributions it will make to the existing knowledge on them. I claim that this thesis aims to address the scarcity of empirical research on rural shrinkage and on the validity of the Cittaslow approach in revitalising shrinking rural communities. In the second part, I introduce panarchy theory from evolutionary resilience as the analytical framework within which to investigate the dynamic social response to rural shrinkage. I review the literature on the strengths and weaknesses of applying panarchy theory to frame phenomena in human systems, and state the anticipated contribution of this thesis to better articulate the applicability of panarchy theory as an analytical concept for social phenomena. I also illustrate how the components for community resilience can be framed by panarchy theory in preparation for the analysis in Chapter 5, in which I examine the community-level responses to shrinkage.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, I explain the main research method employed in this thesis. I explain the data collection and analysis process in relation to the research questions by detailing the specific activities in the documentation surveys and the fieldwork in Japan, Italy, Germany and South Korea (from which most of the empirical data was attained). The selection of the case study sites, the structure of the interviews, interview participants, my positionality, data coding processes, and considerations in terms of research ethic are also described.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 answers the research questions Q1 (a & b) by investigating the policy-level responses to shrinkage. I first outline the demographic and socio-economic transitions in Japan from the end of World War II to the present. I then illustrate how the shrinkage in the rural regions progressed concurrently with the concentration in the Tokyo MA in post-war development in Japan. Subsequently, I look at the features of the adaptive cycles formulated in the counter-shrinkage policies at the national and prefectural levels, and their impact on the resilience of the rural regions. I discuss the basic policy approach of the central government to rural shrinkage, and examine how it changed as the society shifted from the growth period to the post-growth period.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 provides the answer to the research question Q2 (a & b) by investigating the adaptive cycles of community revitalisation activities produced at the community level in Minami and Uchiko for local revitalisation. I explore the development process of the adaptive cycles and their impact on the resilience of the communities, paying attention to the influence of socio-political and cultural factors. Comparing the results across the cases, I identify the key influencers – drivers and barriers – that affected the development trajectories, performances, and connectivity of the adaptive cycles.

Chapter 6

In this chapter, I evaluate the effectiveness of Cittaslow in rural Japan to answer the research question Q3. I first hypothesise the impact of the Cittaslow approach on the key influencers identified in Chapter 5 based on the principles and operational schemes in the Cittaslow charter. I then examine the Cittaslow practices in five member towns, focusing on Cittaslow's functionality as a 'title' and a 'roadmap' and the impact on the adaptive cycles in the case study towns. Based on that, I speculate on the form of the Cittaslow operation in the context of rural Japan, and assess the degree to which Cittaslow can improve the key influencers of the adaptive cycles and the resilience of shrinking communities in Japan.

Chapter 7

In the final chapter, I revisit the research objectives and summarise the main findings in the previous chapters in relation to the key research questions. I then describe the theoretical contributions of this thesis to the literature on rural shrinkage, slow city and panarchy theory. I also offer policy recommendations for shrinkage management and the Cittaslow operation. Lastly, I make some suggestions for the future research agenda, for which this thesis provides a foundation.

Conclusions

To conclude this introductory chapter, I would like to emphasise that rural shrinkage is a global challenge that industrialised countries commonly face today. Shrinkage is a structural phenomenon, where macro-scale factors – e.g. globalisation, uneven urban agglomeration, industrial shift, low fertility rate and population ageing – manifest at the local level. While rural shrinkage in Japan appears in the specific context of Japanese society, it is essentially a universal process experienced by developed countries to greater or lesser extents. Rural shrinkage is still at the regional level in most countries, but an increasing number of countries are entering the phase of total population decline. East Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan have lower

fertility rates[6] than that of Japan and are rapidly following the demographic trajectory of Japan. Several European countries such as Italy, Hungary and Poland have already started to experience a decline in thier total population. Knowledge on how Japan has experienced and reacted to rural shrinkage as a harbinger of a depopulating and ageing society will be a valuable asset to many other industrialised countries in the East and the West to consider the means for addressing rural shrinkage and to prepare for their post-growth paradigm.

[6] In an international survey which compared the fertility rates of 224 countries in 2016, the five least fertile counties were South Korea (1.25), Hong Kong (1.19), Taiwan (1.12), Macau (0.94) and the lowest was Singapore (0.82). Their fertility rate is lower than that of Japan (1.41) ranked at the 22th (Central Intelligence Agency 2017).

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part provides an overview of the literature on topics that create the research context of this thesis. I examine literature on peripheralisation, contemporary urban/rural shrinkage, rural development and the Cittaslow approach, and discuss how this thesis can be located within our existing knowledge. I also identify the gaps and omissions in the literature that I aim to address in this thesis. The second part introduces panarchy theory as the main theoretical framework of this thesis. Exploring the literature on evolutionary resilience and panarchy theory in economic geography, regional development and urban planning, I review the strengths and weaknesses of panarchy theory when applied to social systems. They inform the degree of relevance of panarchy theory in investigating social responses to rural shrinkage.

2-1 Contemporary shrinkage

2-1-1 Peripheralisation

In today's networked global society, the geographically asymmetric concentration of capital, economic growth, people, and information in certain large urban areas is intensifying. New economic geography (NEG), coined by Krugman in the 1990s (Krugman 1998; Fujita & Mori 2005), explains the process of the spatially differentiated agglomeration of economies using a mathematical model assuming imperfect competition and increasing returns. In NEG, under the condition of spatially localised knowledge spillovers, free trade, and free mobility of capital and people, the geographically uneven concentration of economic activity – core-periphery pattern – emerges self-organically as an effective process for the growth of the national economy. This perspective is influential in policymaking and development practice fields. The 2009 World Bank report, Reshaping Economic Geography, advocates spatially uneven economic agglomeration as an optimal growth path and emphasises place-neutral policies that focus on growth in advantageous locations rather than bottom-up policies in less advantageous locations. The report identifies three key drivers (3Ds) for spatial

development – density, distance and division – and encourages the government's efforts to increase density, reduce distance and lower division, which are assumed to contribute to the economic growth of the country and other regions over time (The World Bank 2009). However, in a globally integrated world, economic growth and human assets apparently become more concentrated in metropolitan areas, and socio-spatial unevenness and differentiation processes among places and territories are intensified rather than annihilated (Brenner 2009). The frequent absence of convergence between urban centres and peripheral locations has been found in a number of empirical works (Lu & Wei 2007; Monastiriotis 2011). For instance, Parkinson et al. (2014) analysed 124 second-tier and 31 capital cities across Europe, and concluded that cities with greater autonomy and resources in economically and politically less centralised countries (e.g. Germany, Austria and Nordic states) have better performed and benefited the national economy than cities in more centralised countries. Another counter-evidence is Abenomics, the macro-scale economic revitalisation policy in Japan that consists of 'three arrows' – fiscal stimulus, monetary easing, and structural reforms. The emphasis on global competitiveness in Abenomics improved the performance of large companies in the capital zone, but disrupted the businesses of middle- and small-sized companies in non-metropolitan regions. Despite the central government's expectation of the trickle-down effect, Abenomics enlarged urban-rural economic disparities (Chiavacci & Hommerich 2017).

Growth in the cores and decline in the peripheries are not separate phenomena, but are the different representations of the processes of spatially uneven economic concentration (Weaver & Holtkamp 2015). Peripheries are generated either urban areas or rural areas concurrently with the emergence of large agglomeration. Peripheries are the locations that are not only economically sidelined in the global market, but also socially marginalised with stigmas and made politically powerless by being excluded from agenda-setting and decision-making processes (Kühn 2014).

2-1-2 The features of shrinkage

As a manifestation of peripheralisation, shrinkage has become globally pervasive in many cities and towns in Europe, the US and Japan (Pallagst et al. 2017; Martinez-Fernandez et al. 2013; Masuda

2014). A common definition of shrinkage or a shrinking place is however still absent despite the ubiquity of the phenomenon. Whether the benchmark of population decline (e.g. period of decline and depopulation ratio) should be defined, and whether the phenomena associated with population decline should be included in the definition are also contested (Bernt et al. 2014). For urban shrinkage, for example, Schilling & Logan (2008) define a shrinking city as a city that has lost at least 25% of its population over a 40-year period. The Shrinking Cities Research Network (SCiRN^{TM}), an international research consortium in the US, specifies a shrinking city as an urban area[7] that has faced population losses in large parts for more than two years and is undergoing economic transformations with some symptoms of a structural crisis. Haase et al. (2013) question setting rigid definitions with benchmarks, and suggest an integrative conception of shrinkage that focuses on its causality and diversity rather than regarding shrinkage as a universal phenomenon. They frame shrinkage as a manifestation of macro-scale social transition forces at the local level that primarily entails population decline, but also other multidimensional symptoms. For rural shrinkage, proposals for definitions are difficult to find due to the small number of the relevant studies. In light of Haase et al.'s argument, I understand rural shrinkage in this thesis as the process in which macro-scale social transitions such as demographic change, globalisation and industrial shift are materialised at the local level in rural areas in the form of depopulation and the associated multidimensional decline of local living. 'Rural area' is also an elusive term with no single definition (Hart et al. 2005). The demographic and socio-economic features of rural areas differ in different countries and regions, and a rural area has been traditionally framed based on what an urban area indicates (United Nations 2017). In Japan, in 1960, the Statistics Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office (the present Statistics Bureau of the MIC) defined the "Densely Inhabited Districts" (DIDs) in municipalities as an area unit that showed features of urban areas. DID is a district that consist of the adjacent area blocks whose population density is 4,000 or more per square kilometre and the total population of the area blocks is 5,000 or more. Rural areas are normally regarded as non-DIDs, and this classification has been widely used for urban planning, regional

[7] The size of the city is an area with 10,000 residents.

development planning, transport planning, environmental hygiene measures, and various other administrative measures in the ministries. Some other ministries describe rural area without specific definition as a place that has a low population density, whose land is mostly used for agriculture and forestry, and is rich in common goods such as nature and water (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries 1997). Based on these criteria, rural area in this thesis is understood as an area with a population density that is lower than that in DIDs, and where the main land-use and the identity of the area have been shaped by primary sector industries.

The cross-scale hybridity of shrinkage as the combination of macro-scale structural forces and micro-scale local conditions defines its basic attributes. First, shrinkage is a diverse and context-dependent phenomenon, and there is no singular form of shrinkage. The primary macro-scale causal factors of shrinkage are: industrial shift, demographic change and outmigration. Structural upheavals (e.g. political regime shift, war and conflict) and environmental disasters (e.g. hurricane, earthquake and flooding) can also be added as less frequent factors (Haase et al. 2014; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013). Shrinkage occurs in the places that failed to reform local industries and thus lost their positions in the new economic landscape. Shrinkage emerged in rural areas that relied on agricultural industries during industrialisation, and appeared in the cities that specialised in manufacturing industries during deindustrialisation. Rural shrinkage is therefore generally more persistent[8] than urban shrinkage. The second demographic transition (Van de Kaa 1987) – i.e. low fertility rate and increasing life expectancy – is another main causal factor of shrinkage. This profound demographic trend, already apparent by the middle of the 1980s, is commonly observed in developed countries in the East and the West. Selective migration is also a major driver of shrinkage. People move from rural areas to urban areas for jobs and education opportunities (urbanisation), and move from urban areas to rural areas (counterurbanisation or suburbanisation) for a greener environment and affordable housing when the living environment in the city declines. The combination of these macro-scale causal factors varies

[8] Alves et al. (2016) categorise the historical trajectories of shrinkage in Portugal chronologically: the rural shrinkage during and after the 1960s that occurred due to industrialisation as “persistent early shrinkage”; the urban sprawl in large cities during and after the 1980s associated with suburbanisation as “metropolitan shrinkage”; and urban shrinkage in industrial cities during and after the 1990s that occurred due to deindustrialisation as “recent shrinkage”.

depending on the history and socio-economic and political settings of the places. For instance, in the cities and rural towns in Eastern Germany, the east-west migration in the 1990s by the German Reunification was the determinant cause of shrinkage (Domhardt & Troeger-Weiß 2009). In rural Japan, the initial trigger of shrinkage was an outmigration during the post-war high-growth period in the 1950s to the 1970s, but low birth rate became another main depopulation factor by the 1990s, together with less intensive but consistent outmigration.

Secondly, shrinkage is a multidimensional and reciprocal process in which causes and consequences reinforce each other. The impact of shrinkage is far-reaching, including: low employment opportunities, the decline of tax revenues, less public facilities (e.g. schools and healthcare facilities), increase in vacant buildings, underused infrastructure, and deterioration of social solidarity and local pride (Haase et al. 2013; Wiechmann 2008; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013). In rural contexts, abandoned agricultural lands, forests encroaching on human settlements, and school closure are also signs of shrinkage (Matanle 2014). The multidimensional symptoms of shrinkage deteriorate the entire quality of life in the place, and this leads to further depopulation. The vicious cycle in which causal factors and consequences reinforce each other makes shrinkage difficult to reverse as it progresses.

2-1-3 Understudied rural shrinkage

Although urban shrinkage and rural shrinkage are a materialisation of the same process of peripheralisation, shrinkage studies that have grown substantially in the last decade explicitly focus on urban contexts. The Shrinking Cities project, one of the seminal research projects led by Philip Oswalt in the early stages of shrinkage studies, compared shrinkage patterns of several middle-sized cities in Europe, the US and Japan (Oswalt 2006). The main EU-funded shrinkage research, such as "Cities Regrowing Smaller" and "Shrink Smart", consist of comparative studies on the regeneration strategies in shrinking cities across Europe (Shrink Smart 2009; Committee et al. 2013). The SCiRN™ (established in the University of California, Berkeley, in 2004) aims to promote urban shrinkage studies in a global context. In reality, however, shrinkage is more pervasive in rural areas than in urban areas (Baris 2012), and small towns in rural regions are structurally most vulnerable to the impact of

shrinkage (Weck & Beißwenger 2013; Beetz et al. 2008; Leetmaa et al. 2015; Domhardt & Troeger-Weiß 2009). The radical social transition caused by shrinkage is often observed in geographically remote rural areas in Europe and Japan (Baris 2012; Hospers 2012b; Beetz et al. 2008; Matanle 2014; Pallagst et al. 2017).

Regardless of its acuteness and pervasiveness, rural shrinkage has not attracted the research interest it deserves. Rural areas are a vital segment in the national urban system, and they provide other territories with essential services such as energy and food supply, water-resource protection, land conservation, CO_2 absorption, and cultural-diversity preservation (Odagiri 2009; Bowns 2013). They play primarily important roles for the effective functioning of urban areas and national security. The collapse of the rural system can lead to the dysfunction of urban areas and the entire society, which depend on basic materials from the rural areas. There is a call for better integration of rural shrinkage in the discourse of shrinkage studies (Bowns 2013), but rural shriankge has been relrgated in academic debates on shrinkage. This thesis aims to contribute to improving this inbalance in shirankge research through investigating rural shrinkage in post-war Japan.

Shrinkage in Japan

Japan provides a good example for studying rural shrinkage because the intensity and extensiveness of the shrinkage that has taken place in rural Japan is distinctive compared with those in many other industrialised countries.

Japan experienced a compressed catch-up modernisation after World War II and has entered to the 'second modernity' in which unintended and often undesirable consequences of modernisation ('first modernity') become visible and uncontrollable (Beck & Lau 2005). Rural shrinkage is a representative phenomenon of the second modernity; it is a materialised form of socio-spatial distortion caused by the compressed first modernity initiated by the state without sufficient attention to its consequences (Chiavacci & Hommerich 2017). In post-war modernisation, the functional centrality of Tokyo as the political, financial and economic capital was significantly strengthened (Waley 1997). Behind the self-organising concentration of industries and population in the Tokyo MA, which relied on increasing

return to scale and spatial proximity, shrinkage in rural regions progressed ceaselessly and became pervasive in entire rural regions. Both concentration and shrinkage are self-reinforcing, and the socio-economic disparities between the Tokyo MA and the rural regions have kept intensifying, producing a highly asymmetrical economic geography. Today, over half of the national land is already designated as the Depopulated Areas (MIC 2017b); they are primarily rural areas with agricultural industries that declined due to the industrial shift and competition from foreign products (Yamashita 2012). Many of the Depopulated Areas have experienced shrinkage for over half a century, and face the significant decline of community functions and quality of living. The decline of the entire population in Japan has been accelerating, and Japan serves as a precedent case of shrinkage in a depopulating society. Through investigating rural shrinkage in Japan, this thesis will offer valuable knowledge on rural shrinkage and how contemporary society deals with it.

2-1-4 Responses to shrinkage

Despite the omnipresence of shrinkage, there has been no consensus among planners, politicians or the public on the methodology to deal with this shrinkage (Hollander et al. 2009). Urban/regional development policies and planning preconditioned a growing society, and shrinkage has been perceived as a taboo or pathology in these fields (Rieniets 2009; Sousa & Pinho 2013; Martinez-Fernandez et al. 2013; Hollander et al. 2009). There has been a rising consensus of the paradigm shift in planning from growth to shrinkage in academic debates (Pallagst 2010; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013; Hollander & Németh 2011), but the planning discipline whose primary role has been growth control has not yet developed theories and methodologies to treat shrinkage (Rieniets 2009). Hospers (2013) identifies four types of policy responses to shrinkage in Europe as: trivialising, countering, accepting, and utilising. They correspond to the categories that Pallagst (2017) applied to the classification of the planning methods in shrinkage cities in the US and Germany: decline as a vicious circle, expansive strategy, maintenance strategy, and planning for decline.

Trivialising shrinkage (or decline as a vicious circle) is simply ‘taking no action’. The governments do not take shrinkage seriously and do not make any effort to cope with it. Trivialising can be found in places that have experienced long-term growth periods.

Countering shrinkage (or expansive strategy) regards shrinkage as a temporary depression that must be overcome. Most of the shrinking cities and towns are missing planning systems, methodologies and cultures to deal with shrinkage (Pallagst, Fleschurz, et al. 2017), and the pro-growth approach to reversing shrinkage is predominantly favoured by many shrinking locations in both urban and rural contexts (Hollander & Németh 2011; Sousa & Pinho 2013; Panagopoulos & Barreira 2012). The main strategy is to attract new residents and businesses through tax incentives and/or place-making projects such as new residential areas and landmark facilities. Gangwon Province, a former coal-mining region in South Korea, developed a large casino for regional revitalisation (Wu & Rii 2017). ‘Smart Growth’ is another pro-growth approach popular in Europe and the US; it aims to promote sustainable economic growth, nature resource management, and a high quality of life through creating an attractive living environment with a strong sense of place. However, similar place-making projects for differentiation often result in erasing local distinctiveness rather than highlighting it. Hospers (2013) questions the efficacy of the place-making projects to counter shrinkage, pointing out their lack of uniqueness, narrow target to a specific group of people, and the overconfidence in the mobility of people and firms.

Accepting shrinkage (or maintenance strategy) and utilising shrinkage (or planning for decline) both acknowledge shrinkage as the given condition, rather than as an impermanent phenomenon. The difference between them is the degree of positivity to the circumstance set by shrinkage. Hospers (2013) explains that accepting shrinkage perceives shrinkage as the new context and aims to improve urban facilities mainly to retain the residents. Using shrinkage, on the other hand, considers shrinkage more constructively as an opportunity for new types of development and enhances the quality of life. Both approaches can be categorised as ‘adaptive approaches’ that focus on transforming the place to accommodate shrinkage.

An adaptive approach is supported in locations where persistent shrinkage is an undeniable reality, such as old industrial cities in the US, Eastern Germany, and rural peripheries in Northern Europe and Japan. In an urban context, Youngstown, a Rust Belt city that grew with the steel industry, publicly announced that the city was shrinking in the master plan "Youngstown 2010". The emphasis of the plan is right-sizing the city by converting dilapidated buildings into public green space and shifting the local economy to service industries, including healthcare and education (Pyl 2009). In a rural context, Frederikshavn, a small rural city in the North Denmark Region, has applied the experience-economy initiative, which consists of: enhancement of the local cultural and leisure assets; innovation of the traditional food industry; and refurbishment of urban fabric (Lorentzen 2013). Lieksa, a forestry town in Finland, has promoted green tourism and the use of local timber as fuel for bioenergy for the better use of local natural resources (Kotilainen et al. 2013). Sado Island in rural Japan has set the town vision as '*sumiyasui tokoro*' (place for comfortable living), aiming to establish Sado Island as an eco-island with eco-tourism based on the local forest. The island also created a post-secondary institution that provides vocational education relevant to local needs, such as environmental management and welfare for the elderly, to mitigate the outmigration of young adults (Matanle 2017). These adaptive approaches in the rural contexts commonly focus on the well-being and the use of site-specific assets. They are more realistic than seeking to overcome shrinkage, but only indirectly address structural issues such as selective outmigration and low local employment opportunities (Kotilainen et al. 2012). The effectiveness of the adaptive approach to cope with shrinkage is still uncertain due to the scarcity of empirical studies on rural shrinkage.

As a proactive adaptive approach to shrinkage – i.e. utilising shrinkage – Hospers (2013) introduces Cittaslow, the international network of the slow city movement that pursues the sustainability, well-being and conviviality of small communities. Cittaslow has attracted an increasing interest from shrinking towns in the EU as their town regeneration strategy, and several of them have joined the network (Hospers 2012). Some studies on rural shrinkage also regard Cittaslow as a viable local revitalisation option that decouples growth and development (Wirth et al. 2016).

In this thesis, I investigate the multi-level responses to rural shrinkage in Japanese society and the Cittaslow practice in less advantageous member towns through multiple case studies. The research findings will provide evidence-based knowledge on the effectiveness of various social reactions to rural shrinkage in Japan. By comparing Japanese approaches and Cittaslow practice, this thesis will also offer a perspective on the validity of the Cittaslow approach to support the revitalisation of shrinking communities in Japan. I will further discuss Cittaslow in section 2-3. However, prior to that, I look at the argument on the rural development approach outside of shrinkage studies in the next section.

2-2 Rural development approach

Whereas the debates on rural shrinkage are at the very initial stage in shrinkage research, rural decline and rural development approaches have long been discussed in other fields such as rural geography, sociology, agricultural economy and rural planning (Terluin 2003). I examined rural development literature on post-war rural development models. These studies argue that the main rural development methods in Europe can be categorised into three types, namely, exogenous development, endogenous development, and neo-endogenous development as a mix of exogenous/endogenous development. In this section, I introduce the sequential transition of the three approaches in Europe and the similar trajectory of rural development approaches in Japan.

Exogenous development initiated by the central government and external planners was the predominant development model in Europe until the 1970s. The exogenous approach focused on the modernisation of agricultural industries through place-neutral external methods, ignoring local contextualities (Ward et al. 2005). The limitation and adverse effect of exogenous development for sustainable rural development became apparent by the 1980s.

With the discourse of "reconnection" to the locale, endogenous development that centres on local cultural, environmental, human and social assets appeared to be an alternative re-territorialisation approach (Horlings & Marsden 2014). The endogenous approach aimed to reconfigure context-

specific assets and skills autonomously for place-based stable socio-economic rural development. However, the discrepancy between the self-contained vision of endogenous development and the reality of rural areas that were increasingly integrated into globalised society and economy became too large to ignore by the 2000s. Explicit emphasis on the endogeneity of the locale can translate into a negligence of its connectedness to and interdependencies with external society (Martin & Sunley 2014), and rural areas will remain susceptible unless they are well situated within the wider economy and society (Bosworth & Atterton 2012).

Neo-endogenous development appeared as a combination of exogenous and endogenous development that aims to mobilise local assets through interacting with wider society and incorporating external assets that support local initiatives (Ray 2006). The defining feature of neo-endogenous development is a dynamic interplay between local and external elements and forces that expand the resource base for local strategies, while retaining decision-making power with the local actors (Terluin 2003). The scale and intensity of interaction varies, and external resources can be financial, human and knowledge assets. For Ray (2006), local-external interaction in neo-endogenous development can empower localities to be more resilient against external macro-scale political and economic factors.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) advocates neo-endogenous development as the 'New Rural Paradigm' for rural regions that face the vicious cycle of decline (OECD 2006), and the EU's LEADER programme is a prime example of the new rural paradigm. The programme provides funding for bottom-up community-led strategies to promote innovative asset-based rural development initiatives. The external commitment is to sustain community initiative without giving up the autonomy of local decision-makers (Petrick 2013). Sonnino et al. (2008) argue that sustainable rural development today needs to be understood in terms of the dynamic interactions that traverse conventional boundaries in networks, and local-external interplay is necessary for the innovation and diversification of the rural economy that correspond to the wants and expectations of the society at large. Calling neo-endogenous development "networked development", Shucksmith (2012) emphasises the importance of cultivating not only local capacity but also external institutional

capacity – especially that of states – to stimulate and support local innovation to realise neo-endogenous development.

There has been a similar transition of rural development approaches in Japan. The concept of endogenous development emerged in tandem with the term *chīki-zukuri* (area creation) in the early 1990s as a response to the state-made exogenous regional development strategy that tended to create off-the-shelf resort-town projects in the bubble economy. Miyamoto (1989), who led the endogenous development debate in the 1990s, advocated the shift from economy-focused development to more comprehensive development in which rural municipalities autonomously improved their socio-economic environment. Miyaguchi (1998) argues that *chīki-zukuri* is a process of creating the rural place's value – i.e. creating its worth for wider society – through mobilising local assets. He suggests promoting rural-urban exchange in place-based development. Miyaguchi's argument represents a shift from endogenous development to neo-endogenous development. This shift was reflected in the new rural development policies in the late 2000s. A series of human-resource exchange programmes were launched, including *syūraku-sien-in* (hamlet supporters), *chīkiokoshi-kyōryokutai* (area revitalisation assistants) and *inaka de hatarakitai* (want to work in rural areas). In 2007, the rural regeneration strategy programme adopted the principle of 'subsidiarity' and 'independence', highlighting that the role of the central government was not leading but backing bottom-up initiatives formulated by local civic and business sectors. This devolutionary turn in rural development policy is a result of the central government's fiscal austerity, but was still epoch-making in Japan, which had a long tradition of exogenous regional development in the centralised urban governance structure (Sekiya 2007). Although they have not specifically termed it as neo-endogenous development, there has been a rise of studies that claim the necessity of local-external exchange for place-based sustainable rural development in the academia from the 2000s as well (Odagiri 2013).

There are different socio-political backgrounds behind the neo-endogenous development discourses in Europe and Japan. The debates in Europe have been implicitly shaped by the existence of the EU, a major external resource provider. Such influential supra-national institution does not exist in Japan,

and the prominent external actor in rural development is the central government. Therefore, the rise of neo-endogenous development in Europe and Japan cannot be easily equated. Nevertheless, the simultaneous trend towards the neo-endogenous approach in the East and the West represents the criticality of local-external interaction for effective place-based rural development in the present networked society.

A main challenge in implementing neo-endogenous development is building human and social capacity at the local level (Katona-Kovacs 2014; Ray 2006). The main difficulty in the application of the LEADER programmes is the lack of community capacity to promote cooperation within and across different levels of governance (Tolón-Becerra & Lastra-Bravo 2009). Acquiring resources from broader society through the neo-endogenous approach is vital for resource-scarce shrinking places to cope with the structural shrinkage process. However, most of the shrinking places are short of human and social capital due to constant youth outmigration and the decline of social cohesion. Whether the shrinking place can hold, attain, or build the initial capacity for promoting local-external interaction will decide whether it can adapt to neo-endogenous development or not.

2-3 Cittaslow

After the investigation of Japanese soceity's response to rural shrinkage, this thesis explores whether and to what extent a rural development approach created outside Japan could help raising resilience of Japanese shrinking communities. I considered several local development models in Europe including Local Agenda 21, Cittaslow, Transition Town and the most Beautiful Villages of the World (Les Plus Beaux Villages de la Terre, MBVW) as potential alternatives, with the criteria of policy comprehensiveness and focus on rural context. Local Agenda 21 is a policy initiative in Agenda 21[9] that aims to encourage local authorities to promote more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable communities. Local Agenda 21 is multidimensional but does not necessarily focus on rural

[9] Agenda 21 is a global action plan for sustainable development established by the United Nations at a conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

areas. Transition Town is a grassroots movement started in the UK that envisions realising communities that are resilient to peak oil and climate change by reducing fossil oil dependency (Hopkins 2008), and the approach is not specific to rural contexts. Cittaslow and MBVW emerged as sustainable community development movements in small rural places in Italy and France, respectively. Their community visions are multifaceted including cultural, economic, environmental and social domains, but MBVW has an explicit focus on the preservation of 'beautiful' pastoral sceneries and cultural assets of the locale. I chose to assess the effectiveness of Cittaslow in shrinking rural communities in Japan, because Cittaslow preconditions rural context and its development vision is less specific than those in Transition Town and MBVW. In the following section, I outline the characteristics of Cittaslow and look at the different views on the effectiveness of Cittaslow to promote community development.

2-3-1 The development of Cittaslow

Cittaslow started at the end of the 1990s as a socio-cultural movement for rural development. The idea of slow city was introduced by Paolo Saturnini, the mayor of Greve in Chianti, Tuscany, together with the mayors in the towns of Bra, Orvieto, and Positano. They aimed to protect local distinctiveness and authenticity from the homogenisation effect associated with globalisation, and foster healthy, sustainable and convivial community life in small towns (Mayer & Knox 2009). Cittaslow was inspired by Slow Food, the predecessor movement that also originated in Italy in the 1980s and proposed sustainability and enjoyment regarding food production and consumption.[10] The slow city movement developed the Slow Food philosophy into a sustainable town development vision, and was institutionalised as Cittaslow in 1999. The headquarters of Cittaslow was set in Orvieto. Cittaslow and Slow Food are institutionally linked, and supporting the Slow Food activities is part of the slow city criteria set by Cittaslow. The association of the two movements is reflected in their logos: the snail of

[10] The main principles of Slow Food are: local, sustainable, and environmentally friendly production of food; the preservation of traditional regional cuisine; and the enjoyment of food culture.

the Slow Food logo (a symbol of the slow philosophy) is used in the Cittaslow logo with a town on its back (Figure 2-1).



Figure 2-1 The logos of Cittaslow and Slow Food

Starting as a domestic movement among the small culturally affluent towns in Italy, Cittaslow soon attracted international recognition and towns in other European countries, such as France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK; they all joined the network by the early 2000s. The Cittaslow network further extended to Australia, Turkey, the US and several East Asian countries such as China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Today, Cittaslow has become a global network of about 240 towns in 30 countries in the East and the West (as of December 2017). Cittaslow emerged as a resistance to the homogenisation effect of globalisation, but the trans-cultural circulation of the slow city philosophy that supported the rapid growth of the Cittaslow network was enabled by globalisation.

The association of Cittaslow is a non-profitable organisation consisting of several operational bodies: the International Assembly, the International Coordination Committee, the President Council and the International Scientific Committee. The International Assembly is constituted by all the representatives or their delegates of the member towns. The Assembly is held annually and deliberates annual goals, strategies and promotional activities, as well as the international coordination of Cittaslow. The International President and members of the International Coordination Committee are

all elected in the Assembly. The International Coordination Committee[11] is the main decision-making body. The committee members meet at least twice a year and deliberate on issues including: membership certification and exclusion; initiatives for implementing the International Assembly decisions; management of mutual funds and budgets; operations of the association members; and the structure of Cittaslow. The International Scientific Committee, which consists of academic scholars and professionals in disciplines including urban planning, tourism, economics and geography, provides scientific input to the association of Cittaslow.

2-3-2 Joining Cittaslow

The Cittaslow Charter articulates the vision of a slow city with 72 criteria classified in seven categories: energy and environmental policies, infrastructure policies; quality of urban life policies; agricultural, touristic and artisan policies; hospitality, awareness and training policies; social cohesion; and partnerships. The vision embraces cultural, economic, environmental and social dimensions, and the term 'slow' is used metaphorically as an alternative concept to modern pro-growth development in which speed and fastness are core values. The 72 criteria are the appraisal items for certification and, at the same time, the practical guidelines for implementing the slow city projects (Mayer & Knox 2009). The membership of Cittaslow is primarily limited to towns with less than 50,000 residents based on the idea that the slow city vision is best realised in small-sized towns. But the association regards the slow city philosophy as essentially universal, and accepts larger towns and cities that support the slow city principles as Cittaslow Supporters. Cittaslow is a highly institution-based network, and applications for membership need to be made by the leaders of local administrative authorities (which are town mayors in most cases). To join Cittaslow, an applicant town first submits a self-assessment form regarding the slow city criteria. After this, there is a site visit by the delegates[12] appointed by the association of Cittaslow, who inspect the self-assessment report. If the town meets

[11] The committee consists of: International President; 10 Vice-Presidents (four from Italy and six from Austria, Germany, Denmark, the UK, Holland and South Korea); 15 Cittaslow town representatives (seven from Italy and one from France, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Turkey, Austria, the USA and Brazil); one representative from Slow Food; three Honorary Presidents (all from Italy).

[12] The countries with more than three member towns are to create national Cittaslow offices, which are regarded as the branch associations of Cittaslow. They can conduct site inspections on behalf of the Cittaslow head office.

over half of the criteria, it is authorised as a slow city. The slow city certification is reassessed every five years, and the town needs to produce self-assessment reports on their progress of attaining their slow city goals periodically.

2-3-3 The varied interpretations of Cittaslow

Cittaslow has two main characteristics to facilitate local development. First, Cittaslow is a 'title' that certifies the town as a slow city. This 'title' gives the town an attractive identity and the membership in the international Cittaslow network, in which the town can exchange ideas and experiences with other member towns regarding local development. The slow city 'title' also enables the town to advertise local assets to the regional, national and global markets as their slow city elements. The access to external knowledge resources and wider marketing opportunities through cross-level interaction make the Cittaslow approach neo-endogenous. The other feature of Cittaslow is the 'roadmap' function. The 72 criteria in the charter works as a 'roadmap' – i.e. an action guideline for the towns to implement their slow cities. Member towns are expected to improve the number of criteria they meet so that they can keep their slow city 'title'. The 'title' function and 'roadmap' function complement each other and encourage member towns' continuous slow city making.

The evaluations of Cittaslow in the studies about tourism and local development are rather contested. Some studies highlight the effectiveness of Cittaslow's 'title' function in enhancing the town profile and developing local tourism (Hatipoglu 2014; Ekinci 2014; Park & Kim 2015; Karabag et al. 2012a; Presenza et al. 2015; Doyduk & Okan 2016). Karabag et al. (2012) claim that Cittaslow is a strong place-making tool to promote cultural tourism in small underdeveloped towns in Turkey in terms of their socio-economic development. Ekinci (2014) stresses Cittaslow's potential to implement "systematic and rapid" sustainable tourism in rural Turkish towns – although 'rapid development of a slow city' is an oxymoron. These studies frame Cittaslow mainly as a 'title' for town branding.

Other studies pay more attention to the 'roadmap' function of Cittaslow, discussing Cittaslow as a sustainable development model (Miele 2008; Mayer & Knox 2006; Presenza et al. 2015; Pink 2009;

Pink & Lewis 2014). Cittaslow is seen as "fluid technology" (Miele 2008) that provides systematic guidance for sustainable local development with sensitivity towards the interdependence between economic development, environmental protection and social equity; such development is otherwise difficult to implement autonomously by local governments (Mayer & Knox 2009; Presenza et al. 2015). Servon & Pink (2015) identify the common emphasis of well-being, local identity and sustainability between Cittaslow, Agenda 21, and the Transition Town movement, and claim that Cittaslow offers policymakers an alternative to conventional pro-growth development. Cittaslow is not an anti-growth movement, but the idea of decoupling development and growth is often interpreted as a form of the degrowth approach and has attracted increasing interest from shrinking communities.

Some studies are more critical of Cittaslow's potency in terms of promoting sustainable town development. Semmens & Freeman (2012) criticise the top-down regulative nature of Cittaslow that puts weight on the mayor and the local government. Hoeschele (2010) indicates the little attention given to social cohesion and equity in the slow city criteria; whereas there are detailed requirements for local tourism development, spatial quality development, and environmental consideration, only key topics are listed in the social cohesion category in the Cittaslow charter. Studying three Italian Cittaslow towns,[13] Nilsson et al. (2011) highlights a dilemma between the non-commercial slow city vision and the focus on commercial tourism development in the practice of Cittaslow. The concept of Cittaslow can be easily manipulated by importers to signify a mere branding 'title' for the survival of the member towns (Still 2015), and thus lead to contradiction between the philosophy and practice of the Cittaslow approach (Carp 2014). Some scholars also raise the risk of gentrification caused by the slow city 'title' such as: change of local characteristics due to middle-class newcomers, rise of property prices, and the displacement of deprived social groups (Semmens & Freeman 2012; Nilsson et al. 2011; Ball 2015). Some assets of Cittaslow – a beautiful place with relaxed conviviality, healthy and high-quality foods, and attention to taste and aesthetics – coincide with the middle-class lifestyle (Carp

[13] Brá, Abbiategrasso, and Lévanto.

2014). Tomlinson (2007) interprets Cittaslow (and Slow Food as well) as a representation of the interests of certain spatio-cultural constituencies rather than as a movement for the transformation of modern society, implying that Cittaslow is a selective 'slow oasis' in fast-paced modern life.

Apart from these criticisms, shrinkage studies have certain expectations from Cittaslow. Hospers (2013) understands Cittaslow as an approach to adapt and utilise shrinkage for not quantitative but rather qualitative development of the local community. Investigating the rural towns in Germany and Japan, Wirth et al. (2016) suggest that Cittaslow's focus on liveability, deceleration and well-being can be a viable development option for shrinking communities. However, empirical studies that investigate Cittaslow's validity in revitalising less advantageous towns hardly exist. In this thesis, I examine the Cittaslow practice in several member towns in Europe and South Korea that are losing their populations, and estimate the potential performance of Cittaslow to improve the situation of shrinking communities in Japan. This will provide empirically grounded evidence for the validity of Cittaslow as a local revitalisation approach for less advantageous towns, through specifying the benefits and limitations of Cittaslow.

2-4 Panarchy theory

2-4-1 Evolutionary resilience

I draw upon the perspective of evolutionary resilience as an analytical concept to investigate multi-level societal responses to rural shrinkage. Resilience was initially a factual term in physics to express the ability of an object to bounce back to its original form after having received external shocks (Davoudi 2012). The meaning of resilience has proliferated significantly since being used in ecology in the 1970s and the term has become a popular concept that transcends different disciplines, from human health and psychology to economic geography, sociology, regional development and policymaking (Wilson 2012; Standish et al. 2014; Shaw 2011). The interpretations of resilience vary in different academic strands, agendas and foci, but there are three main strands: engineering resilience, ecological resilience, and evolutionary resilience (Seelinger & Turok 2013; Davoudi 2012; Simmie &

Martin 2010). Prior to further discussing evolutionary resilience, I briefly introduce the nature of each resilience notion to explain why evolutionary resilience was chosen in this thesis.

The primary difference between engineering resilience, ecological resilience and evolutionary resilience is their relation to the equilibrium state – i.e. whether it seeks a singular equilibrium or multiple equilibria, or defies the existence of equilibrium. Engineering resilience is the ability of a system to 'bounce back' to its prior stable state after external disturbances, with maintaining core functions of the system (Holling 2000). The emphasis of this notion of resilience is resistance against disruptions and the retrieval of the previous equilibrium in a short period of time (Walker & Cooper 2011). Engineering resilience is predominant in emergency planning to deal with natural and human disasters such as flooding, earthquakes and hurricane, as well as banking crises, terrorism and war (Manyena 2006; Seelinger & Turok 2013). The primary agenda in these fields is to restore urban functions to their original condition as fast as possible. The faster it returns to the previous equilibrium, the more resilient the system is.

In contrast to engineering resilience, ecological resilience regards equilibrium as multiple entities. Returning to the previous steady state is neither always possible or a desirable option in ecological systems (Davoudi 2012), and ecological resilience is the ability to 'bounce forward' to another equilibrium state that better fits the new environment. Davoudi (2012) introduces the Charter of Athens as an example of a multi-equilibria perspective in urban planning and development. The charter launched by Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in 1933 defines "a good city" as a city in an equilibrium state, and optimistically preconditions the existence of orderly equilibria in different circumstances. Ecological resilience is less rigid and more interactive with the external world than engineering resilience, but both conceptions postulate systemic equilibrium/equilibria as the basis for resilience.

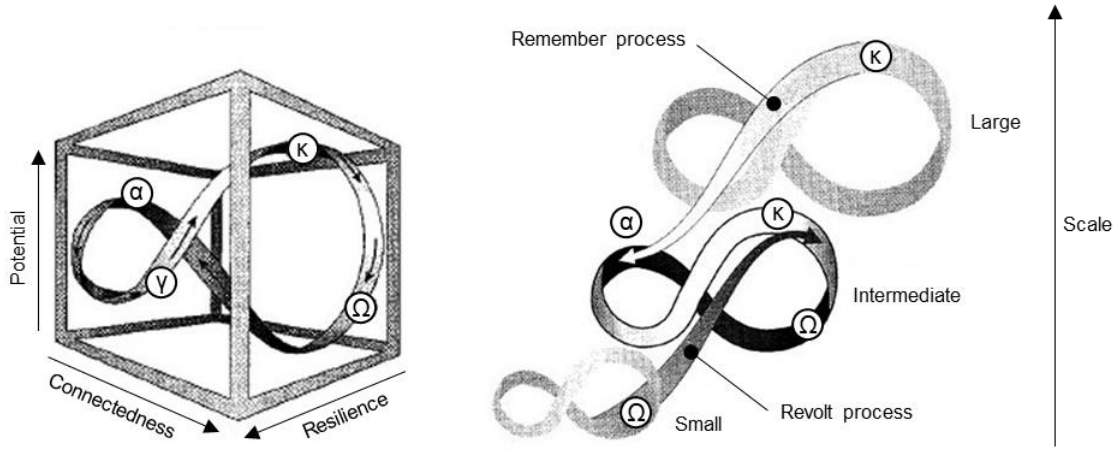
Evolutionary resilience leaves behind the equilibrium notion in engineering resilience and ecological resilience. Evolutionary resilience focuses on the process of continual metamorphosis through dynamic interaction with internal and external disturbances (Scheffer (2009) as cited in Davoudi

(2012)). Evolutionary resilience can be defined as the ability of constant self-transformation to adapt and co-evolve with changes in circumstance (Berkes & Folke 1992). This is a shift in the world view from an orderly and predictable system to a chaotic, unforeseen, and uncontrollable existence in which a myriad of entwined human and non-human constituencies behave based on different rationales and motivations (Davoudi 2012). Evolutionary resilience is achieved through the dynamic interplay of persistence, adaptation and transformation.

Equilibrium resilience (i.e. engineering resilience and ecological resilience together) is useful in disaster management studies in which short-term recovery of urban functions is the primary agenda (Seelinger & Turok 2013; Scott 2013); however, it cannot frame long-term fundamental phenomena such as climate change and demographic change, by which society transitions to another paradigm. Rural shrinkage is also a slow-burn process and rather a given condition than a temporary disturbance in the context of rural Japan, where shrinkage is perpetuated. What I seek in this thesis is not the solutions to recover from shrinkage, but the means to adapt and cope with it. Evolutionary resilience, which emphasises systemic transformation and adaptation to new circumstances, provides an appropriate framework for this.

2-4-2 Panarchy theory in evolutionary resilience

Holling & Gunderson (2002) explain the self-transformative adaptation process in evolutionary resilience with an infinity-shaped adaptive cycle model called ‘panarchy’. Panarchy theory classifies a system’s adaptation process into four phases: growth (γ), conservation (κ), release (Ω), and reorganisation (α) (Figure 2-2).



Source: Holling (2010, p.394)

Figure 2-2 The adaptive cycle model in panarchy theory

The growth phase (γ) is a period of growth. The system develops through increasingly adapting to the circumstance and accumulating resources in it. The resources can be tangible and intangible, including knowledge and skills. The growth gradually slows down and enters the conservation phase (κ), where the system has highly adapted to the circumstances and resources are stored to maintain the built structure of the system. In this κ stable phase, the system loses its flexibility to different circumstances. When the system becomes too rigid and cannot accommodate circumstance change, it moves on to the release phase (Ω). This phase is a chaotic period of system decline and collapse, in which the built structure is dissolved and the accumulated resources are released. If the system is capable of rearranging the released resources into new combinations that fit to the new circumstance, it can move forward to the reorganisation phase (α), and novel opportunities are generated to proceed to the growth phase (γ) again. In panarchy theory, the resilience of a system changes constantly as the system transitions in the four phases. Resilience declines during the γ to κ phase in which the system becomes more rigid and less flexible and the connections between the accumulated resources are fixated. It bottoms out between the κ to Ω phase, and grows again in the Ω to α phase through exploring and rearranging released resources with latitude. The adaptive cycle model shows that optimising a system to the circumstance perpetually without self-reorganisation is impossible, and that resilience is

the transformative capacity to successfully navigate the phases from growth to decline and metamorphoses. When the system is at the declining Ω phase, resilience is the ability to rearrange the released available resources into new configurations to move forward to the α phase (Holling & Gunderson 2002).

There are two significant features to mention in panarchy theory. Firstly, panarchy has a multi-level nested structure, and an adaptive cycle at a level nests multiple adaptive cycles on smaller scales. The status of the large adaptive cycle is shaped by the behaviours and relationships of the nested various adaptive cycles. Each nested adaptive cycle acts semi-autonomously and, at the same time, interacts within and across the scales. Scondly, the four phasing is not necessarily sequential or fixed. Holling & Gunderson (2002) introduce two cross-scale interactions between adaptive cycles: the "remember process" and the "revolt process". In the remember process, the resources accumulated in a larger and slower scale in a system facilitate the resource reorganisation process at the α phase and navigate the adaptive cycle to the γ phase. The resources can be the knowledge and wisdom that were obtained from past experiences or accumulated over time. The adaptive cycle remembers the stored resources and utilises them to facilitate resource rearrangement. As a social example, the tradition of the self-governance spirit in Leipzig enabled the city to implement unconventional urban renewal programmes for shrinkage management independently from the national policies; Leipzig succeeded in improving the living environment in the city and reversed the population trend to a modest growth (Plöger 2007). On the other hand, in the revolt process, a system without sufficient capacity to adapt to new circumstance deviates from the path to the α phase and falls into a more vulnerable stage. For instance, the housing demand in Liverpool dropped due to a set of cumulative factors, such as population loss, economic decline, the expansion of higher education, and the memory of rioting. The incapability of the city government to apply effective mitigation measures aggravated the situation and resulted in housing abandonment in the city (Coaffee & Lee 2016). Moore & Westley (2011) call it a "poverty trap" in which a system without adequate resources and skills to deal with the problem undergoes continuous setbacks in the Ω phase.

2-4-3 Applying panarchy theory to the study of rural shrinkage

Panarchy theory has both strengths and weaknesses in its application to social systems. In this section, I provide an overview of the main advantages and disadvantages of panarchy theory to investigate complex social responses to the rural shrinkage phenomenon.

Strengths of panarchy theory

Interventions to shrinkage are varied in their durations, fields and scales. The nested structure of panarchy theory can treat such a multi-level and multifaceted adaptive mechanism of a social system by encompassing a range of responses from small-scale instant responses to large-scale gradual transformations. Resposes to shrinkage from national policy measures to community revitalisation activities can be signified as adaptive cycles at the macro level to the micro level nested in the adaptive cycle that refered to a society. The relationships between the interventions are represented as interactions of nested adaptive cycles across and within levels. I previously identified the neo-endogeneity as a key property for rural development, and panarchy theory can frame the neo-endogeneity attained by local-external communication as a form of cross-level interaction of adaptive cycles. Additionally, the vicious self-reinforcing nature of shrinkage can be explained with the revolt process, in which the declining process incrementally cascades up to a larger-scale crisis. The nested structure and cross-scale revolt process of adaptive cycles in panarchy theory provides an integrative framework that captures complex and dynamic social responses to rural shrinkage.

Weaknesses of panarchy theory

On the other hand, there are several challenges in the application of panarchy theory to human systems (Davoudi 2012). A frequently discussed limitation is its weakness in portraying social factors such as agency, social capital and power relations, which rarely exist in ecological thresholds but are influential elements in human society (Berkes & Ross 2016). Agency – intentional, purposeful and meaningful actions or strategies of individuals and groups that work for desirable situations (Bristow & Healy 2015) – adds less predictable and different types of dynamics to the configuration of the

adaptive cycles (Fath et al. 2015). Together with structural conditions and technologies, human agency is a key element from which resilience of a social system arises; but it has not yet been fully explored in evolutionary resilience perspective (Bristow & Healy 2014). Agency is beyond the current notion of the adaptive cycle model.

Social capital refers to trust, collective norms, network, reciprocity and collaborative activities (Bjørnskov 2006; Putnam 1993). It is a primary resource for key actors' agency (Olsson et al. 2004) and for the capacity of the locale to effectively adapt to new circumstance (Adger 2003). Introducing the notion of social resilience, Adger (2003) argues that social capital has public and private faces. 'Public' social capital (such as institutional linkages and affiliations) is mostly evident, but 'private' social capital is an informal and nuanced entity (Li 2007) that is rather invisible in panarchy theory.

Another challenge in the application of panarchy theory in social systems is its weak recognition to power. Borrowing the perspective of Alford North Whitehead, Schwanen (2015) claims that the resilience of a social system emerges from an intricate interplay between change and persistence in the given power nexus that involves symbiosis, friction and contestation (Schwanen 2015). Wilson (2014) points out cross-level power influences of political, macro-structural, macro-economic and ideological powers that decisively constrain resilience at the community level as lock-ins.[14] Wilson names the structural power nexus created by these forces a "transition corridor" within which the potential development directions of the lower levels are restricted.

> Local communities and individual decision-making pathways are therefore embedded in nested hierarchies of scales, with transitional corridors representing the sum total of scalar interconnections between the community and the regional, national and global levels. (Wilson 2014, p.47)

[14] Political lock-ins include political systems, governance structures, and political orientations (e.g. conservative or liberal). Macro-structural lock-ins are associated with macro-scale social circumstances, such as demographic trends and transport networks. Macro-economic lock-ins involve globalisation, the spread of capitalism, and asymmetrical urban agglomeration. Ideological lock-ins are social preferences, moods, norms and values, such as the rise of neo-liberal ideologies.

More informal power relations within the local level also shape the behaviours of engaged actors as micro-dynamics. Formal and informal power relations set framing within which the possible forms of agency and social networks, and the transformation process of human systems is a complex power game of myriad constituencies. Panarchy theory cannot fully express such intricate dynamics.

Related to power relations, the notion of resilience has been assimilated to neoliberal forms of governing practice. Resilience has gained popularity across the policy literature and national and international organisations as a consequence of its fit with neoliberal policy discourse that emphasises the roll-back of government and individual responsibility (Joseph 2013). MacKinnon & Derickson (2013) argue that when the criteria of resilience are framed by government and experts, resilience discourse is used to normalise the devolution that responsibilises local communities to manage social degradation and disaster prevention with the ideas of self-determination. The neutral notion of 'self-organisation' in ecological resilience has been reductively interpreted as 'self-reliance', a favoured term in neoliberal governance (Coaffee 2013; MacKinnon & Derickson 2012). The concept of resilience is less factual and socially constructed in human systems. Who is involved or excluded in framing residence, whose notion of resilience is perceived as normal, and whose resilience is prioritised or neglected can be arbitrary, reflecting the power structure underlying society (Fabinyi et al. 2014; Wilson 2013).

Resilience is thus traded-off in social systems according to the power hierarchy when objectives are competing (Fabinyi et al. 2014; Wilson 2013; Nelson et al. 2007); Some groups and places bear the costs of the adaptation and restructuring of others who are given higher priority. Nation states are often decisive actors in framing and prioritising resilience (Pike et al. 2010), and withdrawal of the central government in contemporary devolution is a form of 'resilience trade-off' between the national level and the lower levels. The concept of resilience originating from ecology is not inherently discriminative or detrimental, but it can be co-opted by neoliberal decentralisation, depending on how the term is framed in policy making and governing practice. Any community is at the risk of responsibilisation in the process of devolution, but resource-scarce rural places are particularly

susceptible. Investigating the self-help discourse in Australia's rural policies, Cheshire et al. (2015) are concerned that such responsibilisation of rural communities ignors the uneven distribution of resources required for resilience building; it can hamper the local-external interaction for neo-endogenous rural development, and leave behind rural areas in disadvantaged positions. In Japan, rural communities that have experienced decades-long shrinkage and lost human resources and economic vibrancy can be even more vulnerable to such devolution of responsibility and resilience trade-ofs.

Scholars argue that framing and trade-offs of resilience in human systems should be at least transparent and negotiated in participatory processes in which all stakeholders, including the most affected groups of people, can have a voice (Fabinyi et al. 2014; Bahadur et al. 2010). Lebel et al. (2006) stress that the decisions regarding the priorities of resilience should be politicised and not left to experts making decisions in closed rooms. However, post-political social arrangements that are characterised as foreclosure of political choices and the elimination of political debates with faith in technocratic management are pervasive in modern societies (Swyngedouw 2009; Flinders & Wood 2014).

In order to better integrate social factors in the resilience concept, Seelinger & Turok (2013) suggest incorporating vulnerability theory, which can complement resilience perspectives with its greater attention to the agency of stakeholders, existing power structures, and politics in decision-making. In the same vein, Fabinyi et al. (2014) propose dialogue with social anthropology and political ecology to better focus on social diversity and macro and micro power dynamics. Attempts to reinforce social domains in the resilience perspective have emerged, but they are still at the embryonic stage.

In summary, panarchy theory has several strengths in terms of providing an integrative framework to analyse multi-level and multidimensional social responses to rural shrinkage. However, the current adaptive cycle model is weak in capturing social factors such as agency, social capital, and power relations in the dynamics of the adaptation process of human systems. In the following section, I look at the application of evolutionary resilience perspective and panarchy theory to urban/rural development studies in the existing literature.

Panarchy theory in urban/rural development studies

The attention to evolutionary resilience has increased in regional development studies both in urban contexts (Martin et al. 2015; Shaw 2011; Boschma 2014) and rural contexts (Scott 2013; Cheshire et al. 2015). In structurally resource-scarce rural areas, neo-endogeneity – dynamic networking of local assets and various extra-local resources – is a critical quality for rural development, which is non-linear, non-predictable, and continuously emergent through the multifaceted actions of diverse local and external actors and elements (Shucksmith 2010). An evolutionary resilience perspective provides a relevant conceptual lens to frame such dynamic dialogue between rural areas and circumstances in contemporary networked society. For Cheshire et al. (2015), the concept of evolutionary resilience is useful to understand how rural societies adapt to ongoing change and disruption in the form of increased climate variability, depopulation, and industry closure.

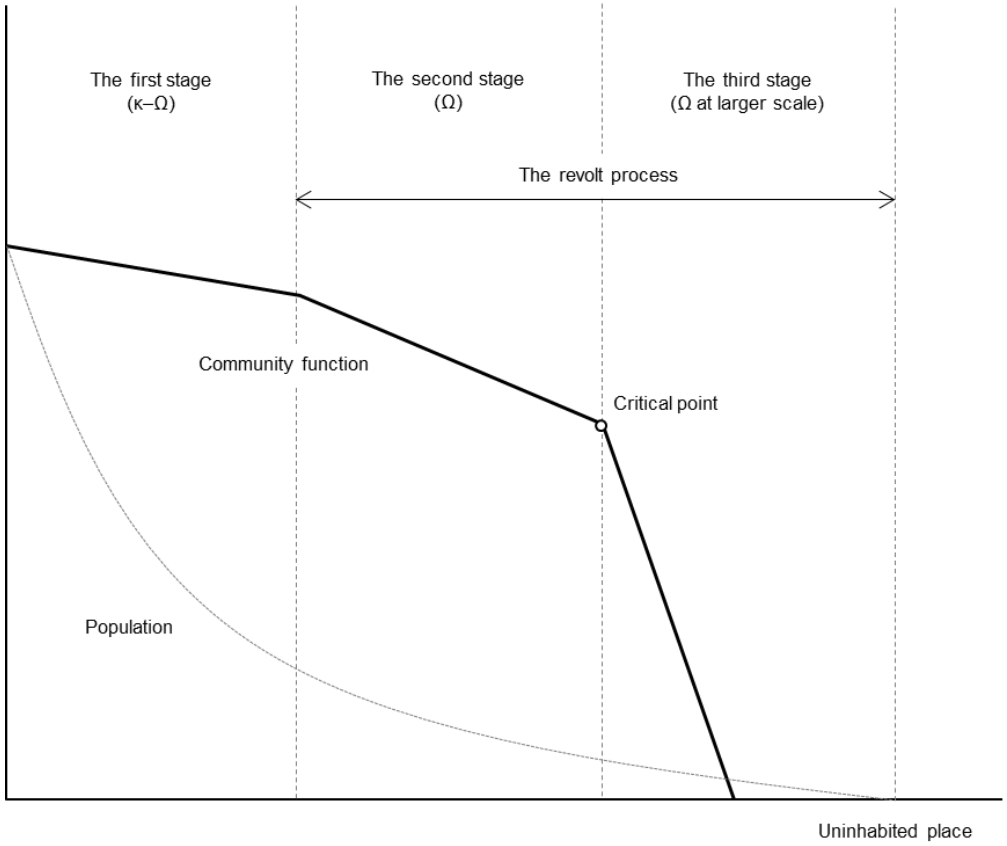
However, empirical case studies that apply panarchy theory to development studies are still very scarce. As one of the few precursory works, Simmie & Martin (2010) analysed the different trajectories of the economic development in Cambridge and Swansea by applying the adaptive cycle model. Their attempt set a foundation stone, but only focused on the adaptive cycle at the city-region level without investigating the nested adaptive cycles underneath it. The influence of socio-political power relations on the behaviour of the adaptive cycles was also disregarded. Berkes & Ross (2016) applied panarchy theory to investigate the resilience of seven rural communities with different socio-ecological issues, and analysed the community resilience in consideration of cross-level agency, social capital and power relations. Their work is more advanced in exploring the nested structure of the adaptive cycle model and in highlighting the impact of social factors. The analysis however paid only little attention to the temporal dimension of how these social elements affected the trajectories of the adaptive cycles of the case communities.

In this thesis, I aim to address the previous studies' omissions in the use of panarchy theory in social systems. I investigate the Japanese society's dynamic response to rural shrinkage from the national policy level to the community level through exploring the multi-level nested structure of the adaptive

cycles. I also examine the development processes of local revitalisation activities – i.e. the adaptive cycles at the community level – in accordance with the adaptation phases in panarchy theory. I articulate the main factors that influence the trajectories of the adaptive cycles by paying attention to agency, social capital and power relations. The results of this study will provide empirical evidence about the impact of these social factors on the behaviours of the adaptive cycles, and the degree to which they are depicted in the adaptive cycle model. These findings will contribute to better specify the appropriateness of panarchy theory to frame social dynamics under shrinkage or other phenomena.

2-4-4 Panarchy theory and community resilience

Kasahara explains the degradation process of a shrinking community in Japan with three key stages (Odagiri, 2009). In order to frame the process of community shrinkage with panarchy theory, I made the following diagram that illustrates which phases in the adaptive cycle model correspond to the three shrinkage stages identified by Kasahara (Figure 2-3).



Source: Odagiri (2009), modified by Author

Figure 2-3 The degradation process of a community by shrinkage

In the first stage, the community shifts from the κ phase to the Ω phase. The phenomenon is mostly only depopulation without severely affecting community functions. In the second stage, the community reaches the Ω phase. The symptoms of shrinkage spread to a wide range of aspects of living. The decline of community functions becomes visible, and the revolt process for further decline starts. The community at this stage still has the capacity to address shrinkage and moves to the α phase,

but gradually loses such ability as the degradation of the community functions deepens in the revolt process. When the community reaches the critical point where the residents give up hope of maintaining the community, the community enters the final third stage. The revolt process is accelerated, and the community functions are irretrievably lost in the third stage. The community no longer has the potential to proceed to the α phase. The end of the third stage is closure or disappearance of the community. The majority of rural communities in Japan are in the second stage (i.e. the Ω phase), and an increasing number of them are reaching the critical point and facing the third stage.

Having a multi-level nested structure, the phase of the adaptive cycle of the community is decided as the totality of the behaviours of the nested adaptive cycles that refer to local revitalisation activities in the community. Since a community is not a static unified being, but a moving, divided, and heterogeneous entity (Brent 2004) that involves human actors with different interests, the totality of the nested adaptive cycles is not a pure sum of their performances. It emerges from the performances of the revitalisation activities and their intricate relations, which can be symbiotic and synergetic but also divisive and discordant.

According to Holling & Gunderson (2002), whether a system at the Ω phase can proceed to the α phase, being trapped in the Ω phase, or fall into a revolt process for further collapse, depends on the system's ability to rearrange the available "resources and skills" into new configurations to adapt to circumstance change. This ability of self-transformation and adaption is the resilience of the system. To specify what "resources and skills" in the adaptive cycle model indicates when the system is a community, I reviewed eight contributions to the community resilience literature and identified the key components frequently discussed across them. I then reordered the components that were classified rather statically into three main categories highlighting the process aspect, since this thesis aims to identify the dynamics of community resilience building within an evolutionary perspective focusing on process and transformation (Table 2-1). 'Elements' in the table represents the resources being used in community resilience building, 'process' refers to the course of actions needed to mobilise the elements, and 'features' refers to the main attributes of the process and elements.

Table 2-1 Key components of community resilience

Elements	Agents	A variety of active agents with different functions to take action and effect change. Main agents are local individuals and organisations, but may also include external actors.
	Assets	Cultural, financial, human, natural and physical capitals, and social capital (trust and network), which underpins the mobilisation of other capitals.
Process	Acceptance of change	Prepared for and accepting change and uncertainty by shifting perspective from aspiring to control the circumstance.
	Learning and self-organisation	Continual and effective learning by seeking new opportunities and self-organising through rearranging resources.
	Community engagement	Consensus, collective action and participatory decision-making process involving community members.
Features	Neo-endogeneity	Place-based approach focusing on context-specific assets, and proactive search for external resources to support local initiatives.
	Multidimensionality	Multi-faceted integrated approach embracing cultural, economic, environmental and social dimensions.

Summary based on the studies of Bahadur et al. (2010), Berkes & Ross (2013), Berkes (2007), Bristow (2010), Magis (2010), Mayunga (2007), Wilson (2010) and Salvia & Quaranta (2017).

Elements

The elements consist of agents and assets. Agents are the driving force that activate other resources and facilitate the development process of the adaptive cycles. Ramalingam et al. (2008) argue the criticality of the presence of agents who recognise the need for change, shape meanings and provide visions for taking action for change with beliefs and intensions. Moore & Westley (2011) identify the multiple skills of entrepreneurial agents as: the cognitive skills of framing the issue and providing visions; the procedural skills of building and recharging networks between stakeholders; and the brokering skills of mobilising knowledge and resources. They exercise these skills through tactically establishing diverse vertical and horizontal social networks. These networks can be strong “bonds” that enhance trust between community members and weak “bridges” that enable the adaptive cycles to access external resources (Newman & Dale 2005). Calling them “gate keepers”, Boschma (2014)

highlights the instrumental role of agents in preventing the community from being trapped in the Ω phase and facilitating the adaptive cycles by diffusing external resources to the locale. Agents function as strategic intermediators between the locality and extra-locality, and their agency to access external resources is a key factor for attaining neo-endogeneity, a vital feature for community resilience that I discuss later.

Community assets are the primary resources used by adaptive cycles. Community assets are manifold involving cultural, economic, human, natural, physical and social capitals (Mayunga 2007; Magis 2010; Berkes & Ross 2013). Cultural capital refers to the community's way of knowing the world, its values and philosophy (Berkes & Folke 1992) represented in a range of tangible and intangible forms – e.g. customs, traditions, religions, art, language and architecture. Cultural capital is a main asset that determines the identity of the place (Bristow 2010). Economic capital is financial resources that include savings, income, investments and credit. Human capital refers to knowledge and skills accumulated by education, training, and experience. Natural capital refers to resources and ecosystem services from the natural world – e.g. air, water, minerals and oil resources, land and climate (Mayunga 2007). Physical capital refers to the built environment, which includes building facilities (e.g. residential housings, hospitals, schools, halls) and industrial facilities and lifeline infrastructures (e.g. roads, transportation, electricity, water and telephone networks). Social capital refers to social organisations, such as cohesion, network, shared norms and trust (Putnam 1993). Social capital is particularly important, because it prepares a robust foundation for community capacity to act collectively towards a common goal (Moore & Westley 2011; Putnam 1993) by utilising other capitals. In shrinking communities, social cohesion and network are weakened or even dissolved by constant youth outmigration and the decline of community functions. Salvia & Quaranta (2017) claim that building – or rebuilding – the social network and trust is at the heart of the successful development of rural shrinking communities.

These capitals are mutually interrelated (Wilson 2010; Berkes & Ross 2013) and the boundaries between them are not always clear. For instance, natural and physical capital, such as local landscapes

and traditional architecture, are, at the same time, cultural capital that represents local uniqueness. Community assets are generally immobile, and require agents who activate and rearrange them.

Process

Agents and assets are, however, not sufficient for building community resilience. It requires action. Accepting change, learning and self-reorganising are the main actions by which new adaptive cycles are devised and developed. Accepting change and uncertainty (Bahadur et al. 2010; Berkes & Ross 2013; Berkes 2007) is a shift of mentality from seeking equilibrium to adapting to new circumstance. In shrinking communities, acceptance of shrinkage as a given condition creates a foundation for learning and self-organising. Learning (Bahadur et al. 2010; Berkes & Ross 2013; Berkes 2007; Magis 2010) refers to exploring a range of possible strategies with available resources based on the understanding of new conditions. It is a process of formulating the adaptive cycles. Self-organising (Berkes & Ross 2013; Berkes 2007; Bristow 2010) is the implementation of the adaptive cycles planned by learning. Lastly, community engagement diversifies the actors involved in the adaptive cycles. It fosters the sense of ownership and legitimacy from the residents to the adaptive cycles (Tyler 2006) and enhances their continuity.

Features

The features consist of neo-endogeneity and multidimensionality. Neo-endogeneity is the combination of endogenous assets and initiatives and exogenous resources. As discussed earlier, neo-endogeneity is a critical quality for the development of resource-scarce shrinking communities, as it brings in various external assets and diversifies the resources available to local actors to optimise the potentiality of their places (Barca et al. 2012; Leetmaa et al. 2015). Neo-endogeneity supports the emergence of context-sensitive adaptive cycles and provides a cross-boundary resource base to the adaptive cycles through local-external interaction.

Multidimensionality is the basic feature commonly identified across the reviewed literature for community resilience. Community resilience is attained through the synthesis of multiple qualities, functions and skills in the locale. A resilient community is therefore multifunctional, in which various

capitals including cultural, economic, environmental and social capital are mobilised. In other words, the most vulnerable – i.e. the least resilient – communities are the ones that are monofunctional and rely on only one or a few capitals (Wilson 2010). Multidimensionality refers to the diversity of the adaptive cycles in different fields. It reduces the dependency on one or few adaptive cycles, and positive interaction between the adaptive cycles produces the synergy effect that improves the performance of the adaptive cycles.

Potential barriers in community resilience building

Recognisably, the listed components here are rather normative, and the 'perfect community' that is equipped with all of them will hardly exist. Resilience building in the real world is a highly complex, discursive and power-laden process involving various impediments. For instance, regarding elements, active agents may not exist or leave for some reason, the local assets can be scarce or not discovered. As for social capital, in contrast to Putnam's normative notion of social capital, Bourdieu (1985) defines the concept as a resource of social relations used to improve the ability of the actors to advance their interests in the power struggles in society. Similarly, Schwanen et al. (2015) discuss ambiguity of social capital that can contribute not only to social change but also to persistence and reproduction of existing power structures and inequalities. Social capital does not necessarily encourage proactive adaptation; rather, strong local social networks can impose restricted social norms that discourage experimentation and change (Newman & Dale 2005). Such a critical notion of social capital that recognises contested interests, tensions and power relations between stakeholders is needed to consider the process of social capital construction in human systems. Regarding the process, path dependency and the influence of cross-level and within-level power relations will need to be taken into account. Political, institutional, economic and socio-psychological lock-ins both at the macro- and micro-scales makes some certain pathways unthinkable and constrains trajectory of community development to be path dependent. As well as macro structural factors Wilson (2014) indicates in the earlier section (see pp.38-39), resistance to change in the institutional or informal power structure within the community may hamper the process of learning and self-organisation. Engagement of community members can also be hardly attained due to the indifference and lethargy of the residents. Regarding the features of

a resilient community, neo-endogeneity and multidimensionality postulate agents who facilitate local-external interactions and diversify the adaptive cycles with a broad perspective. The existence of such agents is not guaranteed.

In this thesis, I investigate the key agents, assets and development processes of the adaptive cycles of the community revitalisation activities in the case communities in Japan, paying attention to the influence of agency, social capital and power relations on the trajectories, performances and connectivity of the adaptive cycles. By so doing, I identify key drivers and barriers in the navigation of the adaptive cycles. I articulate what the important elements are and what factors are scarce or missing in the effort of community building in the shrinking communities in Japan.

2-5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I examined the literature on peripheralisation, shrinkage, the rural development approach, and Cittaslow that together set the research context in which this study is positioned. I also explored the literature on evolutionary resilience and community resilience in economic geography, regional development, and urban planning to articulate the features and appropriateness of panarchy theory as the theoretical framework to frame rural shrinkage. To conclude, I summarise the gaps identified in this literature in relation to this thesis, and how this study will contribute to address them.

First, rural shrinkage has been rarely studied in shrinkage research. Shrinkage has become a global and persistent phenomenon in today's spatially uneven economic geography, and shrinkage has developed to become a popular research topic in urban studies in the last decade. However, the main study focus has been explicitly shrinkage in urban contexts. Rural shrinkage has been marginalised, in spite of its acuteness, pervasiveness and the impact on the functionality of urban areas and furthermore, entire society.

In planning practice, an adaptive approach that accepts shrinkage as a new given condition has been emerging from places that experience long-lasting shrinkage. This adaptive approach is supported by

scholars in urban studies as more realistic than the pro-growth approach. Yet, its effectiveness to address shrinkage in rural contexts is still uncertain due to the scarcity of studies on rural shrinkage. This thesis intends to enrich the knowledge about understudied rural shrinkage through an empirical investigation of post-war shrinkage in rural Japan, which offers a frontline of social transitions caused by the phenomenon. Drawing upon panarchy theory taken from evolutionary resilience, I examine multi-level responses to rural shrinkage from the policy level to the community level, and analyse to what extent they have contributed to the resilience of the rural regions and local communities. With this thesis, I intend to address the imbalance of knowledge between urban shrinkage and rural shrinkage.

Second, Cittaslow has attracted increasing interest from shrinkage researchers as a potential adaptive approach to rural shrinkage, and from shrinking communities as a strategy for local revitalisation. The holistic slow city vision in Cittaslow shows the potential to offer a wider pathway to adapt to rural shrinkage than other local development models (such as Transition Town and MBVW) do. The evaluations of the effectiveness of Cittaslow for local development vary and are contested in academia, due to the absence of empirical appraisals of the Cittaslow approach in less advantageous places. In this thesis, I examine the performance of Cittaslow for local revitalisation in multiple member towns that are losing their populations. Based on this, I consider the degree to which Cittaslow can support shrinking communities to empower and improve their resilience in the context of rural Japan. This thesis will provide an evidence-based perspective on the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach to revitalise less advantageous towns through articulating its potential and limitations.

Third, the use of panarchy theory to analyse dynamics in social systems is still at an early stage of development. An evolutionary notion of resilience that regards resilience as the ability to transform to adapt to changing circumstance offers a relevant perspective to frame fundamental phenomena, including shrinkage that can change the paradigm of society. The adaptive cycle model in panarchy theory has its strengths in depicting the enduring, multidimensional, multi-level and self-reinforcing features of rural shrinkage with the multi-scalar nested structure and the cross-level ‘revolt’ processes.

On the other hand, panarchy theory is weak in capturing social factors such as agency, social capital and power relations that rarely exist in the ecological world but are common in human society. The application of panarchy theory to regional/urban development studies is at the embryonic stage, and the theory's strengths are often only partially used in the precedent works. This thesis is one of the first studies that investigates rural shrinkage in Japan from the perspective of evolutionary resilience, with exploring the advantages of panarchy theory. I interrogate multi-level social responses to shrinkage, using the four adaptation phases and the nested structure of panarchy theory. In the investigation of the local-level response, I also consider to what extent panarchy theory can illustrate the social factors that have been influential in the local resilience building process through case studies. The findings will help to increase the precision of the validity of panarchy theory in scrutinising social systems.

I aim to make these contributions to the gaps in the existing literature by answering the three research questions. Before describing the research results, I will explain the research method employed in this thesis in the next chapter and the specific activities I conducted to find the answers to the questions.

Chapter 3 Research method

In this chapter, I provide a detailed account of the research methods employed in this study. Firstly, I briefly explain the qualitative case study approach chosen to answer the research questions, and introduce three main data collection sources: documentation surveys; semi-structured interviews; and site observation. I then give an account of the data collection process in accordance with the research questions. I delineate the specific activities in the documentation surveys and the fieldwork in Japan, Italy, Germany and South Korea from where I obtained most of the empirical data. The selection of the case study site, the process and structure of the interviews, the types of participants, my positionality, and the data analysis methods (drawing upon panarchy theory) are outlined. Lastly, I describe data management and ethical considerations. This chapter is not only descriptive of the research methods, but is also critical and reflective about certain aspects of the research methodology.

3-1 Research design

The main objectives of this study are to understand the features of the multi-level dynamic responses to post-war shrinkage in Japanese society, and to consider to what degree Japanese shrinking communities can benefit from the European Cittaslow approach so that they are more resilient to the process. This includes unpacking the socio-political and cultural underpinnings in Japan.

To accomplish the research objectives, I set out the following three guiding questions:

Q1 a) How has rural shrinkage developed in post-war Japan?

b) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the national and prefectural levels, and to what extent have they contributed to the resilience of the rural regions?

Q2 a) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the community level, and to what extent have they contributed to community resilience?

b) What are the key influencers (i.e. drivers and barriers) that shape the performances of community-level responses?

Q3 To what extent can the Cittaslow approach be effective in improving the key influencers identified in Q2-b and help in enhancing the resilience of the Japanese communities?

In order to answer these research questions empirically, this study adopts a qualitative case study format that provides a holistic and in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena and behaviours in real-life environment through detailed contextual analysis with multiple qualitative and quantitative methods (Flyvbjerg 2006; Baxter & Jack 2008; Zainal 2007). Since rural shrinkage is a hybrid phenomenon of macro-scale forces and local contextualities, manifestations and trajectories of rural shrinkage vary in different locations. Also, Cittaslow member towns around the world diverge. In order to detect the main factors that determine the performance of the local responses to shrinkage (for Q2) and identify the features of local Cittaslow practice (for Q3), I have investigated multiple Japanese shrinking communities and Cittaslow member towns. Single-case studies can attain generalisability with careful choice of case site (Flyvbjerg 2006), but multiple-case studies enhance the credibility and robustness of the results (Baxter & Jack 2008). In this thesis I have conducted a detailed investigation of nine case sites (four Japanese communities and five Cittaslow towns) that provided me with rich data sets to identify and analyse the commonalities and differences across the cases.

In case study research, data from multiple sources are triangulated and integrated into a holistic understanding of the examined phenomenon through the analysis process (Baxter & Jack 2008). I draw upon document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and site observation as the main data sources in this study. Analysis of documents, such as scholarly papers and publication records, provides the researcher with broad coverage of data – e.g. background information, existing knowledge, and historical insight – and this helps to contextualise the study within related subjects and fields (Bowen 2009). Interviews allow the researcher to collect rich descriptions of participants' experiences of the phenomenon (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006). I employed semi-structured interviews that allow the dialogue to diverge and can enrich the information gathered from the participants. Site observation provides the researcher with up-to-date information about on-site

situations and activities in the form of direct experience beyond what has already been documented. These three qualitative methods complement each other for a comprehensive understanding of the studied social phenomenon in specific contexts.

3-2 Research process

Table 3-1 shows the process of data collection and analysis corresponding to the research questions. Phase-1 to Phase-3 (involving the collection and analysis of the data from Japan) answer Q1 and Q2, and Phase-4 to Phase-6 (involving the collection and analysis of the data from Cittaslow member towns in several countries) answer Q3. I briefly outline the research process before unpacking each phase in the following sections.

Table 3-1 The data collection and analysis process

Phase	Research activities			Research questions	Chapter
Phase-1	Documentation surveys			Q1-a, b	Chapter 4
Phase-2	Fieldwork in Japan	06.05.2014–21.05.2014	Fieldwork in Tokushima and Minami, Tokushima	Q1-b, Q2-a, b	Chapter 5
		22.05.2014–05.06.2014	Fieldwork in Matsuyama and Uchiko, Ehime	Q2-a, b	
		08.06.2014–11.06.2014	Fieldwork in Tokyo	Q1-b	
		10.01.2015–17.01.2015	Second round of fieldwork in Minami, Tokushima	Q2-a, b	
Phase-3	Data analysis				
Phase-4	Fieldwork in Italy, Germany and South Korea	20.06.2015	Cittaslow GA in Abbiategrasso, Italy	Q3	Chapter 6
		27.09.2015–10.10.2016	Fieldwork in Pollica and Altomonte, Italy	Q3	
		17.10.2015–24.10.2015	Fieldwork in Hersbruck and Wirsberg, Germany	Q3	
		03.01.2016–05.01.2016	Fieldwork in Seoul	Q3	
Phase-5	Workshop	10.03.2016	Workshop at Oxford	Q1-b Q2-a, b Q3	Chapter 5 & 6
Phase-6	Data analysis				

In Phase-1, I first conducted a literature review on research-related topics to contextualise this study. I then analysed scholarly papers, public documents, newspaper articles and governmental statistical data to articulate the trajectory of post-war rural development in Japan. Most of the data for Q1 was collected in this phase. The basic data for the Japanese case study sites was also collected in this phase. In Phase-2, I carried out the fieldwork in Japan by visiting Tokyo and four shrinking communities in Minami, Tokushima Prefecture, and Uchiko, Ehime Prefecture. As the Satellite Office (SO) project in Minami developed rapidly after the fieldwork, I conducted a brief supplementary round of fieldwork in Minami in the next year to update the data. In Phase-3, I analysed the collected data using panarchy theory in evolutionary resilience as a theoretical framework, and identified socio-political and cultural key influencers that shape the performances of the community responses to shrinkage in Japan. In Phase-4, I visited four Cittaslow member towns – Pollica and Altomonte in Italy, and Hersbruck and Wirsberg in Germany – to collect data on real Cittaslow practices. Additionally, I conducted interviews with South Korean Cittaslow practitioners in Seoul. In Phase-5, I organised a workshop at the University of Oxford, and collected data on the potential of the Cittaslow approach for shrinking communities in Japan from several scholars and a Cittaslow leader. Lastly, in Phase-6, I assessed the effectiveness of Cittaslow in addressing the identified key influencers and improving the situation of the Japanese case studies based on the data obtained in Phase-4 and Phase-5.

Phase-1: Document analysis

I collected and analysed mainly three groups of documents. The first group covered scholarly works and academic journal papers on the topics related to this study, including economic geography, peripheralisation, shrinkage, sustainable rural development, the Cittaslow movement, evolutionary resilience, community resilience, policy mobility, and post-war shrinkage in Japan. The second group of documents were publications issued by the public sector and articles in newspapers and magazines available online. The documents related to the Japanese national land-use plans and the counter-shrinkage policy measures issued by the ministries, as well as the regional/area development plans from the prefectural and local governments, were analysed. Newspaper and magazine articles were

used to discern the latest situation regarding shrinkage in Japan and the case sites. The third group of documents was a range of statistical data, which represented the social transitions indicated by the textual documents. I collected the data on demography (e.g. population by age group, birth rate, ageing ratio, migration trend) and the economy (e.g. GDP, employment by industries, unemployment rates) from the National Census and the Basic Resident Register available on the website of the Statistics Bureau of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), as well as from the prefectural governments' statistics divisions and the town offices of the case study sites. I looked into the intensity of the main symptoms of shrinkage – depopulation, outmigration, population ageing, decline of the local industries, and the lack of local employment – within the collected data. The documentation surveys continued during the subsequent phases, in parallel to the fieldwork and data analysis.

Phase-2: Fieldwork in Japan

Case study sites

With regard to the investigation of the local-level responses to rural shrinkage, the primary criterion for the case study sites was that the rural communities were executing revitalisation activities while facing acute shrinkage. The communities were to be at the release phase (Ω) in panarchy theory, and were to be making efforts to move forward to the reorganisation phase (α). In Kasahara's diagram of the community degradation process (see Chapter 2-4-4), they would be at the second stage and would be experiencing multidimensional symptoms of shrinkage, but they have not yet reached the critical point where the residents give up hope and the potential for community revitalisation is lost.

Shrinking rural areas at the second stage of Kasahara's diagram can be found extensively in all non-metropolitan regions in Japan. I therefore first narrowed down the regions to Chūgoku and Shikoku in southwest Japan, which have experienced intensive shrinkage as early as from the 1950s onwards and thus act as good case studies. Today, about three fourths of the local municipalities in Chūgoku and over half in Shikoku are designated as the Depopulated Areas.

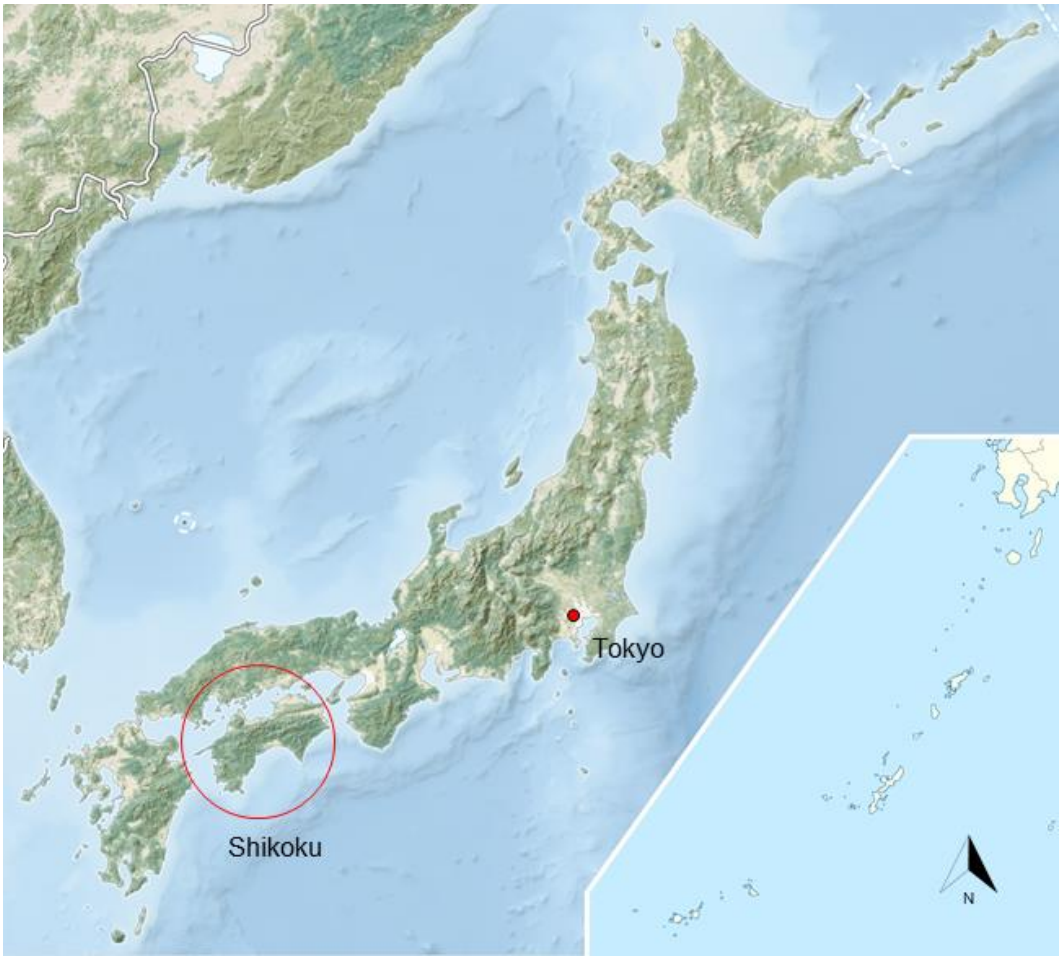
I then visited Ōtoyo[15] in Kōchi, a severely shrinking forest town in Shikoku. Ōtoyo has lost about 70% of its population since 1970, and the ageing ratio[16] exceeded 50% by 2016. The town was already at the third stage of shrinkage, and there were hardly any active responses to shrinkage that I could investigate.

To find towns at the second stage and with active revitalisation activities in Chūgoku and Shikoku, I looked for community initiatives awarded by the ministries and/or covered by the local media. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) annually grants awards for innovative local revitalisation activities, and the most prominent project among the recognised projects in the *mura-zukuri* (village creation) section is awarded the Imperial Cup from the Imperial Household Ministry. The Imperial Cup winner is regarded as the best community revitalisation activity of the year. The MIC has also had a similar commendation system from 1991 that grants an award to good local regeneration activities. I went through the list of recipients of the Imperial Cup and the MIC award from 2000 onwards. Searching awarded communities was useful to effectively identify the places that still had the local capacity to proactively address shrinkage. Besides that, I also searched for articles about local revitalisation activities on the websites of regional newspapers. Based on these multiple sources of information, I shortlisted seven candidate towns (Table 3-2). All the listed towns have remained depopulated since the 1950s. Two towns in which I could conduct in-depth fieldwork over a one-month period were chosen from the list. In order to have a certain variety of revitalisation approaches within the case sites, I focused on towns with multiple activities, and thus selected Minami and Uchiko as the case study towns (Figure 3-1).

[15] The town mayor is on the panel for depopulation issues (organised by the MIC) as a representative of acutely shrinking municipalities.
[16] The ageing ratio in some peripheral districts in the town is even higher. For example, the ageing ratio in Nishimine was 73% in 2015 (Masuda & Hatamoto 2015).

Table 3-2 Case study candidate towns

Region	Prefecture	Town	Revitalisation activities
Chūgoku	Shimane	Ama	• The shima-ryūgaku (study in the island) programme • Innovation of local agriculture
	Shimane	Ōnan	• *A-kyū gurumeno machi* (town for A rank gourmet)
Shikoku	Ehime	Uchiko	• Townscape/village-scape preservation • Farmers' market, Karari
	Kōchi	Umaji-mura	• Town branding with *Yuzu* (Japanese citron)
	Tokushima	Kamikatsu	• The leaf business
	Tokushima	Kamiyama	• The Satellite Office (SO) project
	Tokushima	Minami	• The Satellite Office (SO) project • The Study in the Fishing Village (SFV) programme



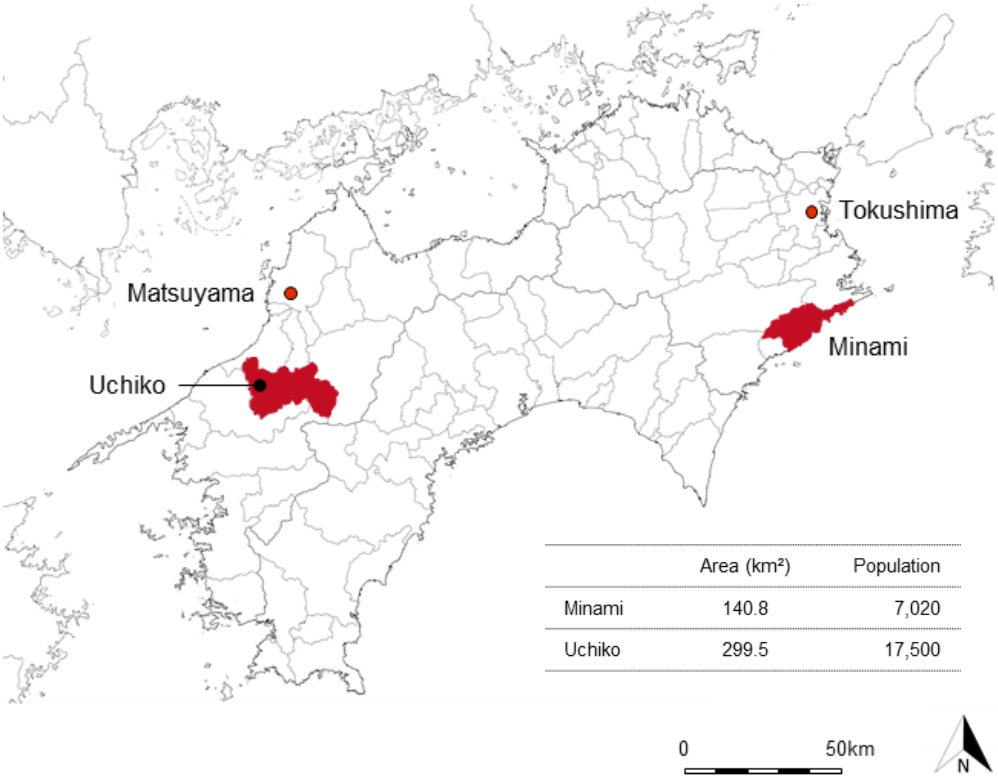


Figure 3-1 The case **study towns in Japan**

The combination of these towns had the widest diversity in the types of activities on the list. In Minami, the SO project – which invites IT and design companies from urban areas – has developed the downtown district, Hiwasa, in recent years. The local residents in a remote district, Izari, started the Study in the Fishing Village (SFV) programme in the 1990s; the SFV programme invites families with young children from outside to study at the local school, and was awarded the Imperial Cup in 2007. In Uchiko, the townscape preservation movement started in the town centre in the late 1970s, and has boosted local tourism. The preservation movement spread to a peripheral district in the town, and the village-scape preservation movement developed in Ishidatami in the 1990s. The town also established a farmers' market, Karari, in the late 1990s to revitalise the local agricultural sector.

The five local revitalisation activities in the communities of Minami and Uchiko do not cover all types of community responses to shrinkage in rural Japan, but they enabled me to compare and identify main socio-cultural factors that shape the performances and impact of these activities on the communities. Minami is a coastal town along the Pacific Ocean and Uchiko is a mountainous town. Thus, choosing them also provided me with geographical variations among the case sites.

As previously mentioned (see Chapter 2), Kesennuma and Maebashi joined Cittaslow in 2013 and 2017 respectively, but I did not choose them as case sites due to the particularity of their membership acquisition. Kesennuma was severely affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, and an exceptional slow city certification was given to encourage the post-disaster reconstruction, even though the population of Kesennuma (65,000) exceeded the eligible population size for membership. Maebashi is the capital city of Gunma Prefecture, whose population is about 340,000 and far larger than what is considered a town, but the sparsely populated northern half of the city was authorised as a slow city. The certifications of these two cities are irregular, and neither of them are small rural communities.

Interviews

To explore how shrinkage is experienced and reacted against across the multiple levels in Japanese society (related to Q1-b, Q2-a & b), I selected interview participants from different groups at the national, prefectural and local levels. For the key informants on the public sector's policy-level responses, civil servants in the central government, officials in the prefectural governments and town offices, and scholars on shrinkage were chosen. In the case sites, I selected participants from two groups: direct participants of the selected community revitalisation activities, and non-direct participants who were not proactively engaged but who experienced these activities as community members (see Appendix 2 for the full list of interviewees). Different perspectives on local community regeneration initiatives were collected, and these initiatives' impact on the communities was identified. Several scholars from regional universities who were experts on shrinkage were also interviewed so that scientific insights could be obtained.

The access to informants was mainly facilitated by sending e-mails or making phone calls. Participants were asked for an interview and background information regarding the interview's purpose was offered, along with a list of questions. When they agreed to the interviews, I sent them the consent form. During the fieldwork, I asked participants to suggest other informants who knew about the topic area. This enabled me to meet key local actors who I could not have identified before undertaking the fieldwork. The snowballing process increased the number of participants to a level greater than initially planned. This method also helped me to create a picture of the informal networks between local actors working on community revitalisation activities. On the other hand, the haphazardness of the snowballing method may have resulted in the selection of participants who shared similar perspectives. In order to minimise bias among the sample informants, I consciously tried to meet people who took different positions in relation to the studied local revitalisation activities (see Appendix 1 for the full list of interviews).

In Shikoku, I first visited the prefectural governments in Tokushima and Ehime before starting the fieldwork in Minami and Uchiko. I discussed with officials the counter-shrinkage measures taken by the prefectural governments. This allowed me to identify the predominance of the central government in shaping policy responses to shrinkage at the prefectural level. I also interviewed several scholars at regional universities who specialised in the shrinkage in Shikoku.

In the four case sites in Minami and Uchiko, I interviewed the stakeholders of the focused revitalisation activities, as well as other community members, to learn about different perceptions and experiences of shrinkage and local revitalisation activities. The participants included: officers at the town offices; the main agents of the revitalisation activities (e.g. an IT businessman who promoted the SO project; leaders of the resident association in Izari; a retired town officer who initiated the townscape/village-scape preservation in Uchiko; and members of the resident association in Ishidatami); people who had in-migrated to the communities (e.g. staff members of the SO offices, families that participated in the SFV programme, community regeneration supporters); staff members of the local industrial institutions (e.g. agriculture cooperatives and fishing unions); local shop owners; teachers at the local

schools; local community revitalisation Non Political Organisations (NPOs) and civic groups; and residents in the communities. In interviews with the stakeholders of the revitalisation activities, I asked about the main agents, used assets, the development processes of the activities and the impacts of the activities on the communities, paying attention to the influence of local-external interaction, social capital, and local power relations. In the interviews with those who were not directly engaged in the activities, I asked about their experience of shrinkage and how they perceived the local revitalisation activities (see Example 1 in Appendix 2 for a sample of interview topic guides in Japan). The total numbers of interview participants were 59[17] in Tokushima and 46 in Ehime (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3 The number of interview participants in Japan

Tokushima	Tokushima		4	59
	Minami	Hiwasa	39	
		Izari	16	
Ehime	Takamatsu		6	46
	Uchiko	Town centre	30	
		Ishidatami	10	
Tokyo				11
Total				116

In Tokyo, I interviewed civil servants in the Depopulation Issue Division of the MIC, staff members of the National Association of Towns & Villages (NAT&A), and several scholars on the advisory panel for the MIC on depopulation issue. From the interviews in Tokyo, I gained varied perspectives on shrinkage from different groups of people: policymakers in the central government; academics who were engaged with the policymaking process; and officials from the prefectural governments who were on temporary assignment at the NAT&A. A total of 11 interviews were conducted in Tokyo.

During the interviews, I allowed the dialogue to diverge from the survey questionnaire when participants spontaneously moved towards different directions in conversation; this was partly not to

[17] Additionally, I conducted two interviews in the Yuki district of Minami, and nine interviews in another shrinking town, Kamiyama, where the SO project first developed in Tokushima.

interrupt the flow of the participants' responses, but also to attain new information beyond my preconceptions. This made some interviews significantly longer than scheduled, but this turned out to be beneficial for finding out what participants were most concerned about with respect to shrinkage, and for understanding the informal human network in the locality. Gill et al. (2008) stress the importance of attentive listening skills and the effectiveness of the proper use of silence to enable participants to elaborate their thoughts without distraction. In order to minimise bias and increase the credibility of the data (Mertens & Hesse-biber 2012), I asked the same questions to multiple participants and combined the data from different informants and sources on the same topics. This triangulation enabled me to validate the information from different sources and to find varying perspectives on the same issue.[18] Attentive listening and the use of silence, and triangulation were applied in all the interviews in this study.

Positionality

A researcher's position is articulated multilaterally and constructs power relations between the researcher and informant (Tarrant 2013), including biological identity (e.g. ethnicity, age, and gender), social identity (e.g. affiliation, language, and registered address) and personality (e.g. social skills and emotional ability). In the Japanese case study sites, my positionality was transitory and more nuanced than the insider-outsider binary. My biological identity is as a female, early career Korean-Japanese researcher with a social identity as a Japanese native who has lived in Japan most of her life. This contributed to understanding the values and socio-political settings underpinning Japanese society, such as the seniority-based hierarchy and the vertical segmentation in central bureaucracy.

My affiliation to a UK university was overall positive in encouraging cooperation from participants, because they were willing to provide information to the researcher who had come all the way from the UK to study their town and its activities. The association with a foreign institution did affect the attitude of some participants, who showed an interest in this study's future publication in order to

[18] For instance, regarding the extensive mergers of rural municipalities in the 2000s, the participants at governmental institutions and ministries perceived this impact positively. However, the participants at the local level generally perceived that the mergers intensified of the decline of towns.

promote the profile of their activities among wider society. Presumably, this has impacted the data provided by them.

Valentine (2003) claims that the positioning of researchers, as well as participants, is never a priori apparent or defined, and is instead mutually fashioned through interactions. The most important factor that determined the way I was treated by the informants was my personality, such as social skills, emotional responses, and an interest in the participants' stories and views. The power relations between the informants and me changed as I interacted with them multiple times during the fieldwork, and my attentive listening and emotional responsiveness to their stories were primary factors in the transition of the relationships. The degree to which the informants shared their experiences increased as I communicated with them. By constructing positive relationships with the participants, I could also access key local individuals through the snowballing method.

Site observations

The site observations verified visible symptoms of shrinkage and local revitalisation activities. I walked around the case sites and made a record of the impact of shrinkage on the physical environment, such as abandoned farmlands, empty houses, and closed schools and shops, by taking photos. I also immersed myself in the local community: I observed the combined classes of the local schools to see the impact of shrinkage on local school education; I stayed in the accommodation facilities run by the resident associations, which were part of their local revitalisation activities; and I stayed in the condominium of the Izari café for a week in Izari, and for three nights at the Ishidatami-no-yado in Ishidatami. Such activities helped me to directly experience what the community accommodation offered to visitors. Interviews with local women who were working at the facilities as service staff were also conducted. I had an opportunity to attend a workshop on community revitalisation organised by the town office in Minami, and a few meetings of the local community development NPOs and resident associations. Occasional informal conversations with the local residents and shop owners during the survey were informative to see how the residents experienced shrinkage and perceived the

local revitalisation activities in the communities. These data were recorded in the fieldwork notes and photographs.

Phase-3: Data organisation and analysis

Data coding is a heuristic procedure (Saldaña 2016), but it can start with themes identified from pre-existing ideas and theories (Gibbs & Taylor 2010). In this thesis, the components of community resilience identified in the literature review in Phase-2 worked as the initial code sets; they correspond to the 'resources and skills' a community has to proceed from the Ω phase to the α phase in panarchy theory. I prepared the list of interview questions based on them. Returning from the fieldwork, I first transcribed the interviews and reorganised the transcripts along with the order of the interview questions (Appendix 2). I added new categories of code for the topics that were brought up by the participants and that did not fit the initial framework. I then re-read the transcripts, fieldwork notes, and the other textual data repeatedly, highlighting the core answers to the pre-set questions, suggestive quotes, and frequently mentioned terms. I also took notes of my ideas about tentative codes, their relationships, and noticeable patterns. These notes provided a number of grounded codes.

The a priori codes and the emergent codes were combined, and the list of codes were revised and reordered through multiple readings of the data as well as further literature review. For instance, informed by the emergent codes of 'local-external exchange' and 'combination of local and external resources' from the interview transcripts, I explored the literature on rural development and added 'neo-endogeneity' as a new code that contained the grounded codes as sub-codes. It was a process of capturing the essence of the collected empirical data through the iteration of theoretical concepts. Charmaz (2006) metaphorically explains the coding process as "generating bones" to be integrated and assembled into a working skeleton. After the cyclical data review and several recoding and reclassification phases, I had a refined list of codes and sub-codes categorised by key topics. This list provided the basis for developing a storyline of data analysis.

The analysis had two parts. In the first part (corresponding to Q1 in Chapter 4), I examined the adaptive cycles created in the counter-shrinkage policies at the national and prefectural levels. I looked at the features of the adaptive cycles and their impact on the resilience of the rural regions. I also illustrated the transition – or lack of transition – of the policy responses by comparing the configurations of the adaptive cycles in the growth period and post-growth period of Japan. In the second part (corresponding to Q2 in Chapter 5), I analysed the adaptive cycles generated at the community level in the case study sites according to the following framework provided in the data coding process (Table 3-4).

Table 3-4 The key components of community resilience

Elements	Agents
	Assets
Process	Acceptance of change
	Learning and self-organisation
	Community engagement
Features	Neo-endogeneity
	Multidimensionality

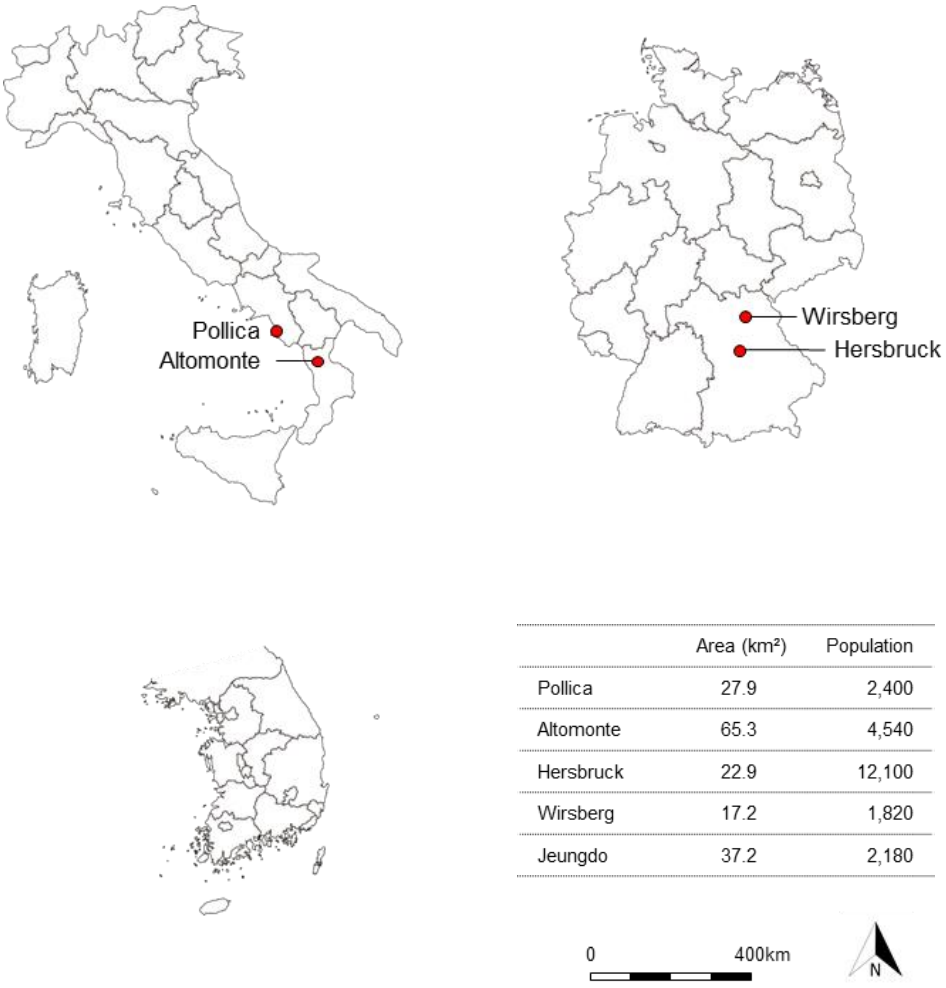
I first detailed the development processes of the adaptive cycles along with the four adaptation phases of panarchy theory. I articulated the main agents, assets, neo-endogeneity, and multidimensionality – the subset items in Table 3-4. I then identified key drivers and barriers that shaped the performances and the connectivity between the adaptive cycles in line with the framework.

Phase-4: Fieldwork in Cittaslow member towns

Case study sites

In order to investigate actual Cittaslow practices in less advantaged towns that face demographic and economic decline, I first focused on towns in Italy and Germany. Cittaslow was a movement born in Italy, and Germany has one of the largest national Cittaslow networks in Europe. Eighteen towns in Germany were certificated by 2017, and some of them joined Cittaslow at the initial stage of the movement.

In choosing the Italian case sites, I focused on the towns in the rural regions in south Italy, where economic decline and rural-urban migration were pervasive. I consulted with the coordinator of the Scientific Committee of Cittaslow, and Pollica and Altomonte were suggested as vigorous Cittaslow member towns suitable as case study sites (Figure 3-2).



	Area (km²)	Population
Pollica	27.9	2,400
Altomonte	65.3	4,540
Hersbruck	22.9	12,100
Wirsberg	17.2	1,820
Jeungdo	37.2	2,180

Figure 3-2 The case study towns in Italy, Germany, and South Korea

Pollica is an agricultural and fishery town in Campania located in a region called Cilento, a destination for summer vacations. The population of Pollica is 2,400 (Tuttitalia 2016b), and the town joined Cittaslow in 2007. The town mayor of Pollica is the current international president of Cittaslow.

Altomonte is a hillside town in Calabria, the agricultural region at “the toe of the boot of Italy”. The population of Altomonte is 4,520 (Tuttitalia 2016a), and the town joined Cittaslow in 2009.

For the German case study sites, I compared 12 member towns (in the year 2015) in terms of location, town type, population size and trend, and the duration of their Cittaslow membership. Four towns were demographically declining rural towns, and I chose Wirsberg, which was depopulating most rapidly and had the longest experience of Cittaslow. Wirsberg is a small town surrounded by forests in Bavaria, on the border of East Germany and West Germany. The population of Wirsberg is 1,800 people (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik 2015a) and the town joined Cittaslow in 2007. Pollica, Altomonte and Wirsberg have commonly experienced constant job-seeking youth outmigration and the decline of the local economy. They had 8 to 10 years of experience with regard to Cittaslow by the time of the fieldwork in 2015. In addition to these three less advantageous towns, I also selected Hersbruck as an example of an affluent, classic type of slow city town in order to see the commonalities and differences of Cittaslow practices between advantageous towns and less advantageous towns. Hersbruck is a historic town with 12,100 residents located near Nürnberg (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik 2015b). Hersbruck joined Cittaslow in 2001, and it is one of the oldest member towns outside of Italy.

After completing the fieldwork in Italy and Germany, I collaborated with a Korean geographer who had studied Cittaslow in South Korea, and explored Jeungdo as a case study of an East Asian Cittaslow town. Jeungdo is a small remote island with just over 2,000 inhabitants, located in Sinan county, the southwest of the Korean peninsula. Jeungdo was certified as the first Korean Cittaslow town in 2007.

Interviews

The informants were selected from two groups: the direct participants of Cittaslow activities at the international and local levels, and the non-direct participants in the case towns in order to obtain diverse perspectives on Cittaslow and its impact on local communities (for Q3). Similar to the fieldwork in Japan, the main method of approaching informants was through e-mail. Some interviews were arranged prior to the fieldwork, and some additional interviews were arranged on-site by asking

the participants to introduce other relevant informants. This snowballing method enabled me to meet unforeseen local actors and obtain different perspectives and thoughts from a range of stakeholders who were directly and indirectly engaged in Cittaslow (see Appendix 1 for the full list of the interviews).

As for the direct participants in Cittaslow at the international level, I met three main leaders in the Cittaslow association: the founder of Cittaslow in Abbiategrasso, the general secretariat in Orvieto and the coordinator of the Scientific Committee of Cittaslow in Rome. I asked for their perspectives on: how joining Cittaslow can facilitate community development; the transnational and transcultural applicability of the Cittaslow approach, especially in terms of shrinking communities; and the main challenges in the application of Cittaslow in places with different socio-political and cultural settings. Through these discussions, I recognised the Cittaslow leaders' strong belief in the universality of the slow city concept and the current operation of Cittaslow. In the four case towns, I interviewed the direct participants of local Cittaslow practices – the (ex-)town mayors; town officials in charge of Cittaslow; town councillors; and the engaged residents – and discussed with them the main agents, the development processes, the variety of Cittaslow activities, and the impact Cittaslow on the town. I also asked the non-direct participants (e.g. owners of local restaurants and shops and the residents in the communities) about their awareness of Cittaslow and their perceptions of change (see Example 2 in Appendix 2 for a sample of interview topic guides in the Cittaslow towns). The interviews in Pollica and Altomonte were conducted with an Italian-English translator. The interviews in Hersbruck and Wirsberg were carried out in English. The number of participants in Italy and Germany was 29 in total (Table 3-5).

Table 3-5 The number of interview participants in the case Cittaslow towns

Italy	Abbiategrasso	1
	Orvieto	1
	Rome	1
	Pollica	10
	Altomonte	6
Germany	Hersbruck	7
	Wirsberg	3
South Korea	Jeungdo	3
	Total	32

With the help of the Korean geographer, I interviewed the director of the National Cittaslow Corea Network (NCCN) and the ex-coordinator of the local Cittaslow council in Jeungdo from 2009 to 2015. I also interviewed the geographer. All three interviews were conducted in Seoul. I asked them about the cross-cultural application of the Cittaslow approach to South Korea, the characteristics of the Korean Cittaslow operation, and the local Cittaslow practice in Jeungdo. This information about the operation of Cittaslow in South Korea, whose socio-political and cultural features are similar to Japan, helped me to anticipate the possible forms of Cittaslow in Japan.

Positionality

As an Asian researcher from a UK university, my biological and social identities were foreign to the participants in the case Cittaslow member towns in Italy and Germany. There were some differences in my positionality in these two countries. In Italy, a retired scholar accompanied me during the fieldwork as a translator. His social status affected the attitudes of some participants, including the mayor of Pollica, who wished to use the interviews as a publicity opportunity for Cittaslow. The scholar's presence presumably impacted on what they talked about.

In the German towns, while the fieldwork was shorter than that in Japan, I experienced a change in the relational positionality between the participants and myself. My attentive listening and emotional responsiveness to the participants' stories changed what they talked to me about. Some participants

told me not only positive aspects of Cittaslow, but also the problems that their Cittaslow practices were facing. Some participants introduced me to other key informants who proved to be helpful to my research.

There are institutional, socio-cultural and historical commonalities in Japanese and South Korean societies, such as the vertical urban governance system, a seniority-based hierarchy based on Confucian ethics, and a similar experience of time-compressed post-war modernisation. In South Korea, my biological and social identities as a Korean-Japanese helped me to understand the participants' stories about the social perception and operation of Cittaslow in South Korea.

Site observations

I observed the physical environment and symptoms of shrinkage by walking around the case towns. I also visited local agricultural producers, cultural assets, and building facilities (such as local museums) that were all regarded as part of the Cittaslow elements in the towns. The occasional informal conversation with local residents during on-site observations allowed me to learn how they perceived the demographic and economic decline of these towns, and to what extent the Cittaslow activities were recognised by the local community members. The collected data were recorded in the form of fieldwork notes and photographs.

Phase-5: Workshop on Cittaslow and rural shrinkage in Japan

I organised a workshop entitled "Slow Cities? The Revitalisation of Shrinking Communities in Japan" at the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, University of Oxford, in March 2016, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Several scholars on shrinkage from Japan, the Netherlands and the UK, as well as the secretariat general of Cittaslow from Italy, attended. The workshop discussed the current status of the rural shrinkage in Japan and the validity of the Cittaslow approach as a regeneration strategy for Japanese shrinking communities. I also presented my fieldwork results in the workshop. The workshop enabled me to obtain information about: the different views on shrinkage between policymakers in the central government and the local actors in shrinking communities; the

positioning of shrinkage in Japan in wider shrinkage debates; and the socio-political and cultural blockages in terms of applying the Cittaslow approach to rural Japan.

Phase-6: Data organisation and analysis

For data organisation, I read the interview transcripts, fieldwork notes, workshop notes and other document data multiple times, and arranged them in line with the same framework as in Phase-3 that were used as the initial codes. I created additional codes found in the data, and the cyclical process of data reading, coding, and code editing and reordering enabled me to articulate the key topics for data analysis and the storyline of discussion.

For the analysis of transnational application of the slow city approach, I drew upon policy mobility literature that has emerged in geography and urban studies over the past decade. Whereas orthodox policy transfer literature in political science emphasises on intergovernmental policy diffusion in which good (or better) policy practices are transferred by rational state actors (Peck 2011), policy mobility literature unpacks the multiplicity and socio-spatial complexities in contemporary policy circulation processes. Policy circulation is dealt with as an emergent, power-laden practice in which socially complex policy actors whose behaviours are shaped by site-specific socio-political conditions influence the process (McCann & Ward 2013a; Peck & Theodore 2010; Temenos & McCann 2013). Policies mutate as they travel to other places, being reinterpreted and reproduced by various actors to fit to their demands, interests and needs in the locations (Peck 2011). The emphasis of policy mobility literature on importers' reinterpretation and modification of the policies, provided me with a useful theoretical framework to explain the reductive reproduction of the Cittaslow approach in the member towns. I first articulated the patterns of the local Cittaslow operation in the case study towns. Based on that, I considered what form Cittaslow might take in the socio-political and cultural contexts in rural Japan, and to what degree the slow city approach could improve the key drivers and barriers identified in the Japanese case studies. I assessed the potential benefits and limitations of Cittaslow for enhancing community resilience in shrinking Japanese towns.

3-3 Research ethics and data management

Ethical considerations and codes of conduct were incorporated throughout this study, from research design to implementation and the publication plans for the research findings. Before conducting the fieldwork, the research plan was reviewed and approved by the CUREC (Central University Research Ethics Committee) at the University of Oxford. The interviews were carried out with the principles of informed consent, voluntary participation, and the protection of participants' anonymity and confidentiality. Prior to the interviews, prospective participants were informed about: the purpose of the interviews; the main interview questions; the use and treatment of the data, including future publication possibilities; the securement of their anonymity and privacy; and the right to withdraw at any time during the interviews. The consent attainment process generally took the form of signing the consent form before the interviews. When I had unforeseen interview opportunities and consent forms were not at hand, I verbally explained the contents of the form and attained consent from the participants before commencing the interviews. The interviews were recorded with an audio recorder and transcribed with anonymity. The original audio files were deleted to maintain the confidentiality of the participants when the transcription was completed.

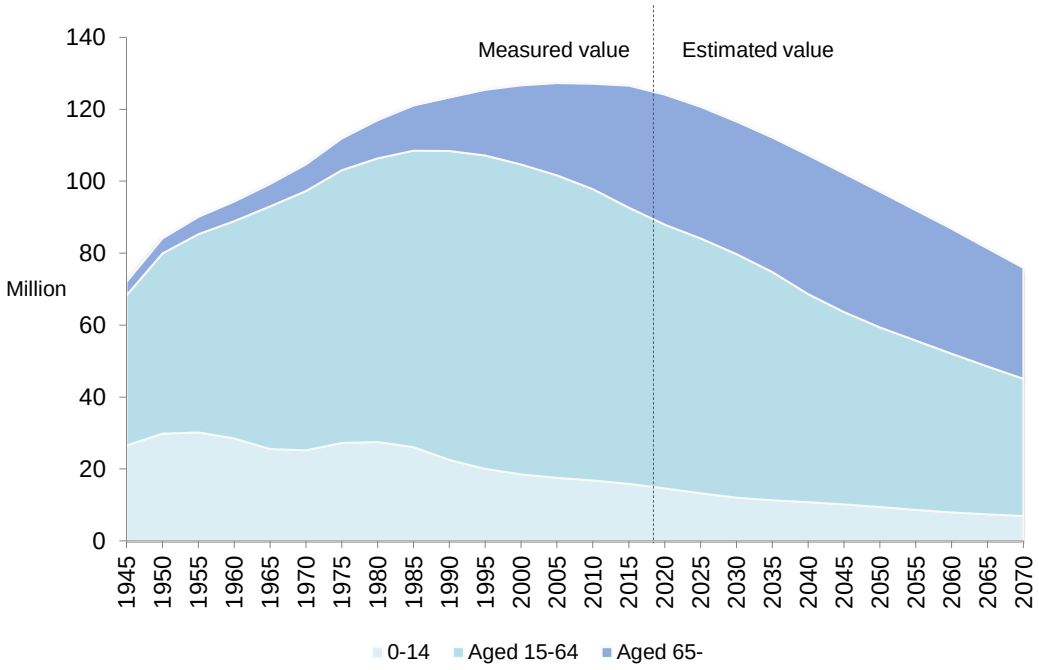
The following three empirical chapters (Chapter 4 to Chapter 6) cover the results of the research activities and the answers to the main research questions drawn from them. In the next chapter, I will detail the development of shrinkage in post-war Japan and the policy responses to it at the national and prefectural levels in order to answer Q1.

Chapter 4 Shrinkage in Post-war Japan

This chapter corresponds to the research question Q1 (a & b). I begin with tracing the demographic transitions and interregional migration trend in Japan from the end of World War II to the present. I illustrate how urban-rural disparities were generated by the concurrence of the concentration in the capital zone and shrinkage in the rural regions during post-war modernisation. I then look at the major policy responses to rural shrinkage taken by the central government and the prefectural governments of Tokushima and Ehime. I investigate the types and effectiveness of the adaptive cycles produced in the policies to alleviate shrinkage for the resilience of the rural regions. I also examine the formations of the adaptive cycles in the counter-shrinkage policies in the growth period and the post-growth period, and identify the basic characteristics of the Japanese Government's approach to rural shrinkage.

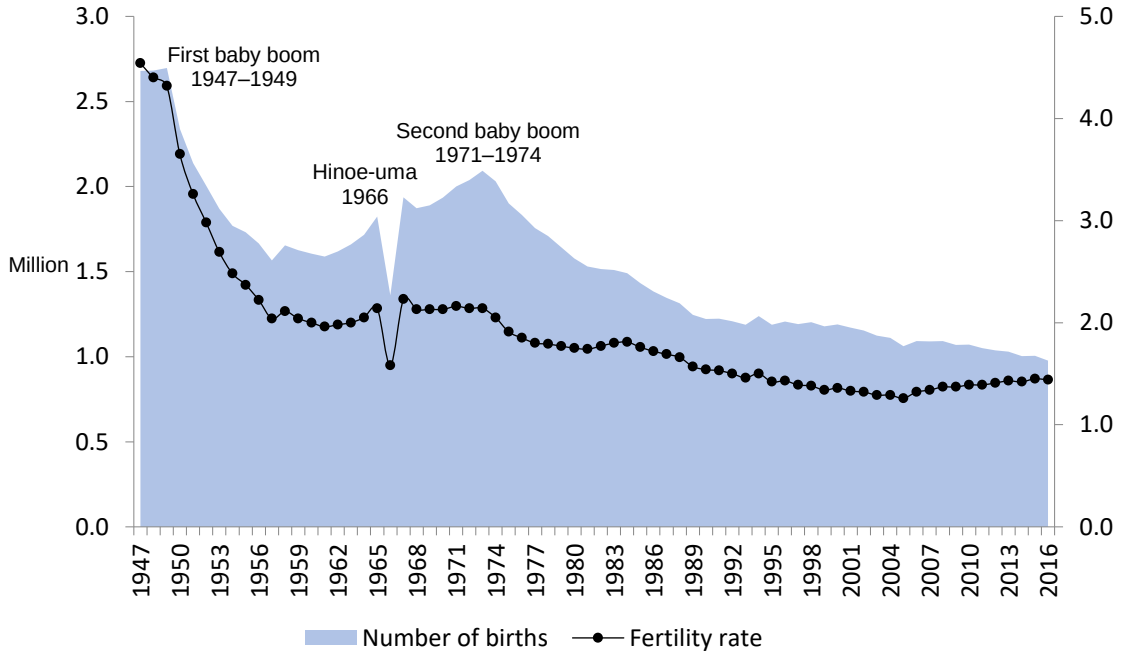
4-1 Post-war demographic trend

I first briefly provide an overview of the entire demographic transition in Japan from the 1950s to the present, and outline its future prospects. Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 show the population development (1945–2070) and the transition of the fertility rate and the number of births (1947–2016).



Source: National Census 2015, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2017

Figure 4-1 Population in Japan 1945–2070



Source: National Institute of Population and Society Security Research, Statistics Japan 2017

Figure 4-2 The number of births and the fertility rate in Japan 1947–2016

Japan's population steadily increased after World War II with two baby booms from 1947 to 1949 and from 1971 to 1974. The average fertility rate[19] during the first baby boom was 4.42 and about 2.70 million babies were born annually in this period. The fertility rate halved within the decade afterwards, and this was attributed to the economic hardships in the early post-war years and the increased use of modern birth control methods. It still remained around 2.10 until the second baby boom, except in the *hinoe-uma*[20] year of 1966, when people avoided having babies. During the second baby boom, an average of 2.00 million babies were born per annum. The fertility rate then declined consistently and fell below 1.58 by 1989, the same level as the hinoe-uma year. This was called the "1.57 shock", and low fertility became a major policy agenda (Cabinet Office 2013). The fertility rate further dropped to 1.26 by 2005. It recovered to above 1.40 in the last few years and reached 1.44 by 2017 (Statistics Bureau 2017b). This is a temporary blip caused by the 'last-minute childbearing' of women born in the second baby boom and is expected to end soon. The current fertility rate in Japan is far below the general replacement rate of 2.10 and is in the lowest group among the OECD countries[21] (OECD 2016). The number of babies born in 2016 was 0.98 million, which is less than half of that in the second baby boom.

Due to a continuous fall in the fertility rate, the growth of the total population was gradually tempered. The population peaked at 128 million in 2008, and has kept decreasing since then at an accelerating rate. The current population of 126 million is expected to fall to 97.1 million by 2050 and to 49.6 million by 2100 (Statistics Bureau 2017c). Population decline and population ageing are taking place concurrently. The elderly population aged 65 and over was 5.1% of the total population in 1950. It exceeded 14%, the benchmark of an 'aged society' in the definition given by the United Nations (Cabinet Office 2017b), by 1995. The ageing ratio of 27.3% in 2017 is predicted to rise to 38.1% by 2060 (Cabinet Office 2017b). Low fertility rate and population ageing are widely observed phenomena in modern societies (for instance, see Van de Kaa (1987) on the "second demographic transition" in

[19] The average number of births per woman.
[20] Hinoe-una (fire horse) year comes around once every 60 years in a lunar calendar. It is an inauspicious year because girls who are born in a hinoe-uma year are conventionally believed to be impetuous.
[21] The average fertility rate of OECD countries is 1.7 (OECD 2016).

Europe after the 1960s), and Japan is ahead of other industrialised countries. The post-growth paradigm of the demography in Japan will last for many decades.

So far, the policy measures taken by the central government to raise the fertility rate and alleviate population decline have not been very successful. In 2014, the central government set an official target of raising the fertility rate to 2.07 by 2030 in order to keep the population at 100 million in the 2060s. However, low fertility rate in one generation leads to a decline in the number of women in subsequent generations, and the cohort of women in childbearing age today is much smaller than in previous generations. In addition, the low fertility trend in Japan is associated with various socio-cultural factors such as the diversified life paths of women, late marriages or no marriage at all, and working long hours. It is hard to be convinced that the current policy menu can address these structural issues and boost the fertility rate to the level of the 1970s. Japan has traditionally imposed strict immigration policies; thus, while the numbers of foreign immigrants has been growing, they are still too small to moderate the entire population decline. If the current demographic trend continues, less than 50 million people will live in Japan by the end of this century, and two in five people will be over 65 (Statistics Bureau 2017c).

4-2 Post-war interregional migrations

The urban governance system in Japan has three basic levels: the central government, prefectural governments, and local governments that are counties, cities, towns and villages. Counties and cities often have wards, towns and villages beneath them. Prefectures are the highest regional administration units. Japan has a total of 47 prefectures and city governments that are grouped into nine regions: Hokkaidō Tōhoku, Kantō, Chūbu, Kansai (Kinki), Chūgoku, Shikoku, Kyūshū, and Okinawa (Figure 4-3).

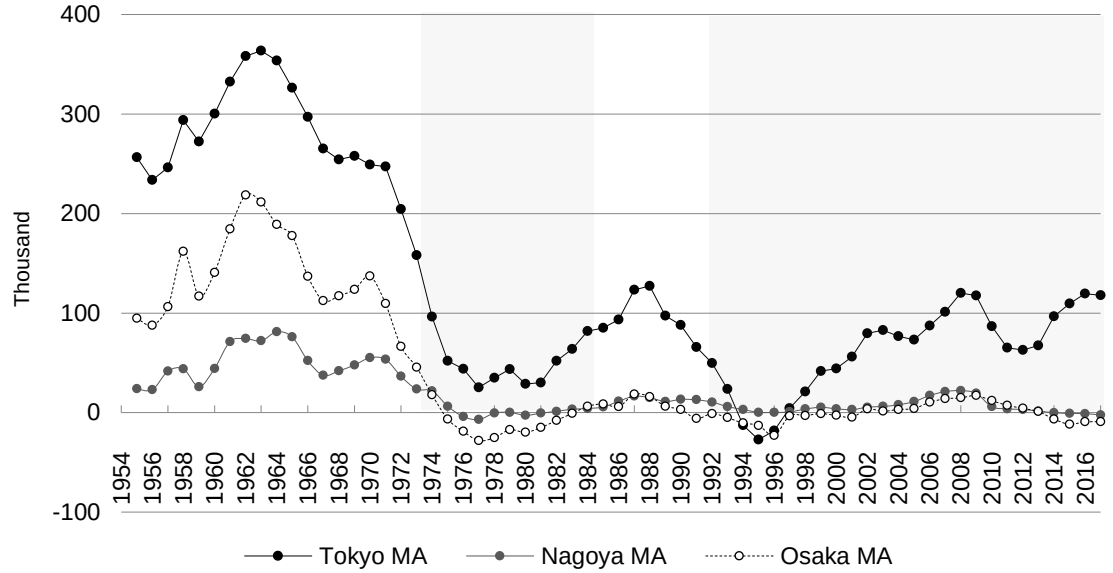


Figure 4-3 Prefectures and regions in Japan

Japan has three[22] major MAs. The largest (the Tokyo MA with 36.3 million inhabitants) includes the Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa prefectures in Kantō; the second largest (the Osaka MA with 18.3 million inhabitants) comprises the Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, and Nara prefectures; and the third largest (the Nagoya MA with 11.3 million inhabitants) includes the Aichi, Gifu, and Mie prefectures

[22] Some studies consider the urban area centring on the Fukuoka Prefecture in Kyūshū as the fourth MA.

in Chūbu (Statistics Japan, 2017). The total population in the three MAs exceeds half of the Japanese population.



Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2017

Figure 4-4 Migration balance in metropolitan areas 1955–2016

The mid-1950s to the early 1970s: The first wave to the major MAs

There have been three peaks in the migration inflow into the metropolitan areas after World War II (Figure 4-4). The first and largest wave of rural-urban migration occurred during the high growth period that started in the mid-1950s and lasted for two decades. The main employment shifted from primary sector industries to secondary sectors. The industrialisation in urban areas triggered a massive youth outmigration from rural regions; the migrants were the main labour force that sustained the rapid growth of manufacturing industries in urban areas. The average annual GDP growth rate in this period was 10%, and the goal that the central government set in 1960 of doubling the average income was achieved within a decade. The migration in this period was largely inner-regional, and the main destinations were the MAs or the prefectural capitals in the regions (Kuwahata 2010). Most of the migrants to the Tokyo MA were from the eastern regions (Kantō, Tōhoku, and Chūbu), and the

migrants to the Osaka MA were mainly from the western regions (Kinki, Chūgoku and Shikoku). The migrants to the Nagoya MA were mostly from Chūbu (Murayama 1990).

Due to an extensive population outflow, shrinkage started to emerge in small municipalities in remote rural regions, and the term "*kaso*" (depopulation) first appeared in governmental documents in 1960 (Odagiri 2009). The core-periphery pattern of economic geography gradually formed, but there were still multiple cores in this period. The migration to the urban areas dropped sharply when the factories of heavy industries in the urban areas were shut down by two oil crises in the 1970s. The large public projects that the central government initiated in the rural regions also contributed to alleviating rural-urban population outflow from the rural regions by creating employment in construction industries (Kawasaki 2006; Nawata 2008).

The 1980s to the mid-1990s: The second wave to the Tokyo MA

Japan entered the stable growth period after the first oil crisis in 1973. The decline of heavy material industries caused by the oil crises led to an industrial shift towards value-added manufacturing industries, such as the automobile industry and the electronics industry, as well as service industries. The second wave of rural-urban migration was triggered by the growth of these new industries and the asset bubble economy[23] from the mid-1980s to the beginning of the 1990s. The second wave was smaller than the first wave in size, and migrant destination was concentrated in the Tokyo MA. The Osaka and Nagoya MAs did not attract migrants in net terms anymore. This reflects the growth of the Tokyo MA to the predominant centre of politics, finance and industries. Krugman (1996) notes the circular causation of the emergence of large agglomerations; as a region becomes bigger, the market in the region grows bigger and attracts more industry and labour forces, which further increases the region. The expansion of the Tokyo MA was an epitome of this accumulative agglomeration process in NEG. The concentration of industries and migrants from rural regions in the Tokyo MA intensified

[23] The Plaza Accord in 1985, which agreed to lower the US dollar to mitigate trade friction, resulted in a high yen and a recession in the Japanese economy. The Bank of Japan lowered the official bank rate to stimulate the economy, and this low-interest-rate policy triggered the overheating of investment in stocks and properties. Share prices set a record high in 1989, and plunged in 1991. The collapse of the asset bubble was widely recognised by 1993.

organically as the Tokyo MA became the prominent centre of the national economy. The unipolar economic geography was established in this period. The population inflow to the Tokyo MA peaked at the end of the 1980s, when the second baby boomers reached employment age and share prices hit a record high, and attenuated when the bubble economy collapsed in the early 1990s. A reversed urban-rural migration by the people who lost jobs occurred for several years after that.

The end of the 1990s to the present: The third wave to the Tokyo MA

The Japanese economy stagnated for two decades after the burst of the bubble economy. There was a rise of IT industries in the 2000s, but the real growth rate during this period averaged at only 0.7% per annum. The Japanese economy has slowed down since then. The economy in the Tokyo MA decelerated, and various diseconomies – such as high property prices, urban sprawl, and long commutes – became apparent (Waley 1997). However, the dip in the regional economy (due to the decline of local agricultural and manufacturing industries) was more severe and was aggravated by fewer public projects in fiscal austerity; thus, the relative superiority of the Tokyo MA was intensified. This led to another wave of rural-urban migration from the late 1990s onwards. The third wave weakened for a time after the financial crisis in 2008, but it has recovered to almost the same level as before the financial crisis. In contrast, the outflow has exceeded the inflow in the Nagoya MA and the Osaka MA since 2013 (Statistics Bureau 2017d).

Unlike the neoclassical convergence hypothesis, the asymmetrical concentration of capital and population in the Tokyo MA has kept intensifying in post-war Japan. After the financial crisis and the Great East Japan Earthquake, there has been a counter-urbanisation trend among young people who are interested in alternative lifestyles different from the fast-paced urban life. Yet, the scale of this movement is still too subtle to mitigate the polarised concentration of the population in the Tokyo MA.

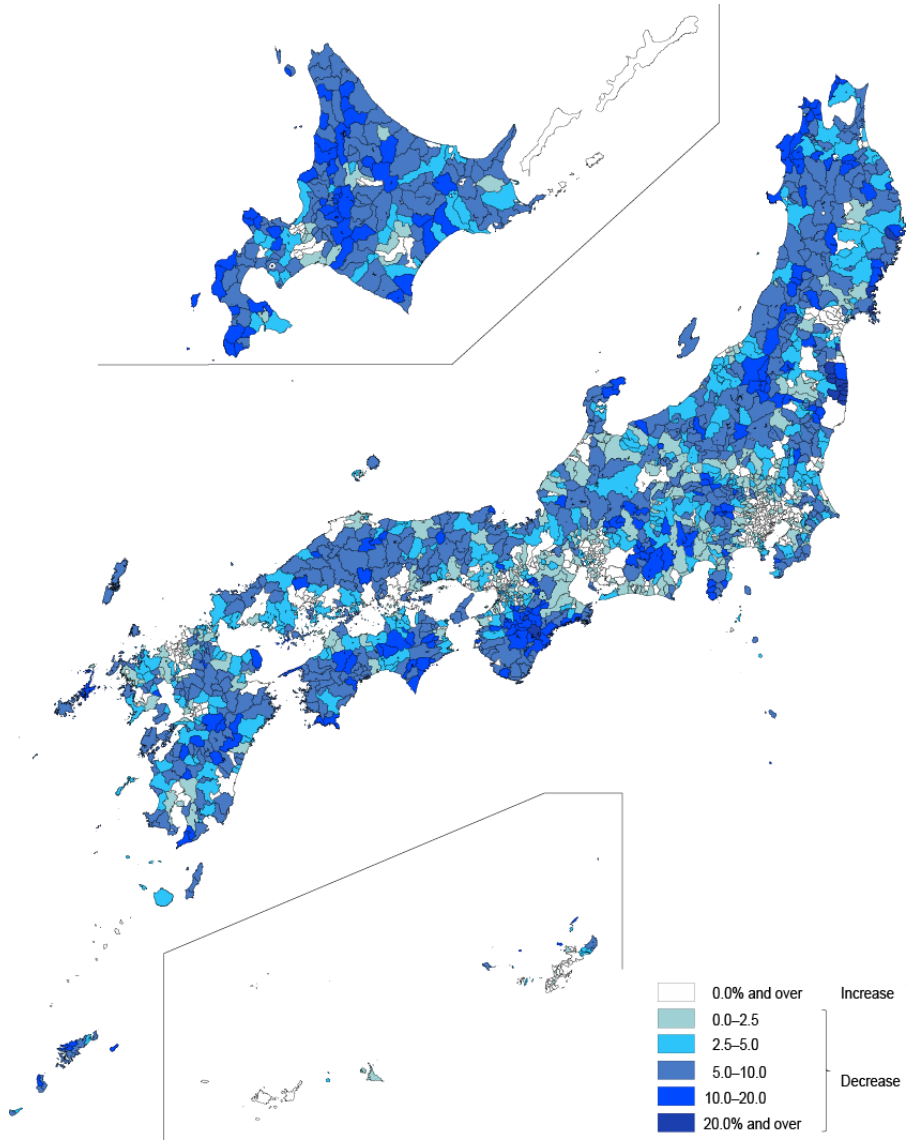
4-3 Development of rural shrinkage

Rural shrinkage first emerged in the small communities in the Shimane Prefecture, Chūgoku, as early as the end of the 1950s, as a consequence of the extensive job-seeking outmigration to urban areas.

The areas affected by shrinkage spread to other municipalities in the southeast regions (Chūgoku, Kyūshū and Shikoku) by the end of the 1960s (Yamashita 2012). The migration from Tōhoku to the Tokyo MA initially took the form of seasonal labour during the agricultural off-season, and shrinkage was mostly an issue in the southeast regions in the 1970s. However, shrinkage in Tōhoku came to the surface in the 1980s, and shrinkage became pervasive in all of the non-metropolitan regions.

By the end of the 1980s, the natural population balance[24] that had offset the outmigration became another depopulation factor because of the constant fall in the fertility rate. Due to the considerable decline of agriculture and forestry and the "double-negative demographic disequilibrium" (Matanle & Sato 2010), shrinkage in the rural regions was intensified along with the concentration of the economy and population in the Tokyo MA. By 2000, shrinkage appeared in small- to medium-size regional cities that were previously functioning as reservoirs that retained the population within the region (Odagiri 2009). Today, only the metropolitan areas and a few regional cities absorb the regional population, and the other medium- and small-sized regional cities and rural areas face depopulation (Figure 4-5) and associated symptoms of shrinkage.

[24] The balance between the number of births and the number of deaths.



Source: MIC 2014

Figure 4-5 The rates of population change by municipalities 2010–2015

Many of the municipalities that lost more than 5% of their populations in the past five years in Figure 4-5 are the designated Depopulated Areas that have been undergoing the significant decline of the local living and are in need of financial support from the central government. In 2016, 797 of the 1,719 local municipalities are designated Depopulated Areas, occupying 58.7% of the national land area and 8.9% of the population (MIC 2017b).

Yamashita (2012) looks at rural shrinkage from the perspective of how families in rural society have responded to the major socio-economic transitions in post-war Japan. The generations born after World War II moved to the urban areas to study or work when they reached employment age, and their parents, so called *shōwa hitoketa sedai* (generations born from 1929 to 1934, the first decade of the Shōwa era), stayed in rural areas and maintained the family agricultural businesses. Thanks to their longevity, the local agricultural and community functions have been sustained longer than researchers predicted.[25] The parents' generation is, however, already in their late 80s to early 90s, and the current mechanism to maintain the local industries and functions has already reached its capacity. A sharp increase in collapsed communities is expected in the coming decade, as the parents' generation disappears.

4-4 The response to shrinkage at the national level

The central government has implemented a range of policy measures to intervene in shrinkage as early as from the 1960s. In this thesis, I examine the adaptive cycles produced by the policies that have been particularly influential to the trajectory of rural shrinkage (Table 4-1 and Appendix Ⅰ).

Table 4-1 The main policy actions in response to shrinkage

Policy actions	Period
The Comprehensive National Development Plans (CNDPs)	1962–2005
The depopulation acts	1970–present
Municipal mergers	The 2000s
Fundamental Plan for National Resilience (FPNR)	2014–present
Regional revitalisation	2014–present

[25] The MIC terms a village in which elderly people account for 50% or more of the population as *syōmetsu-kanō syūraku* (settlement which may disappear) that has a high risk of disappearance in the future. Yamashita (2012) reports that many of the rural communities that were categorised as *syōmetsu-kanō syūraku* in the 1980s still existed today.

The Comprehensive National Development Plans (CNDPs) – later replaced by the National Spatial Plan (NSP) – aimed to narrow the regional disparities through the economic development of rural regions. The depopulation acts – *kaso-hō* – is intended to maintain and improve the degraded living environment of the shrinking places.

The municipal mergers in the 2000s had a measurable impact regarding the capacity of the local municipalities to address shrinkage. The Fundamental Plan for National Resilience (FPNR) and regional revitalisation are the counter-shrinkage policies initiated by the current Abe cabinet. They are operated as part of Abenomics in order to regenerate the regional economy.

4-4-1 The CNDPs

In order to converge the urban-rural gap, the first *Zenkoku sōgōkaihatsu keikaku* (CNDP) – generally called *Zensō* – was formulated in 1962 under the Comprehensive National Land Development Act. The CNDP was the foundation plan that defined the direction of the use, development and conservation of the land in Japan. It indicated basic development principles and measures for their implementation in service of the vision of a "balanced development of the national lands" (MLIT 1998). Five CNDPs were produced between 1962 and 1998 (Table 4-2).

The first CNDP was formulated at the beginning of the high growth period in which industrialisation took place. It aimed to create 22 new industrial centres[26] as the hubs of regional industrial development, and distribute capital, population and technologies to the rural regions. However, the adaptive cycles of developing uniform industrial centres for chemical and material industries, regardless of local context, depended on the supply of raw materials from older industrial sites in urban areas. The sites of the industrial centres also suffered pollution problems, while the profits from the projects were absorbed in the metropolitan areas where the headquarters of the plants were located (Fujikawa 1999). The first CNDP apparently failed to reduce urban-rural disparities.

[26] The government designated 16 new industrial cities and 6 special areas for industrial consolidation.

Table 4-2 CNDPs

CNDP	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Enactment	1962	1969	1977	1987	1998
Target year	1970	1985	1987	2000	2010–2015
Background	• High growth period • Concentration of population and industry in urban areas • Emergence of urban-rural gap	• High growth period • Concentration of population and industry in urban areas	• Stable growth period • Signs of dissemination of the population and industry in regional areas • Industrial restructuring to the third sectors	• Bubble economy • Concentration of population and industry in the Tokyo MA • Globalisation	• Zero growth period • Concentration of population and industry in the Tokyo MA • Population decline • Ageing
General objective	Balanced development among the regions	Creation of quality environment	Improvement of comprehensive living environment	Development of multi-polar structure of the national land	Development of multi-axis structure of the national land
Development models	• Regional industrial hubs	• Transport infrastructure • Industrial areas	• Settlement zones • Technopolises	• Resort areas	Not specified
Amount of investment		130–170 trillion yen	370 trillion yen	1,000 trillion yen	Not specified

The second CNDP, the most development-orientated of all the CNDPs, launched in 1969 during the peak of the high growth period. It planned to equalise regional development by establishing the highway and the Shinkansen (bullet train) networks that connect the regional cities in the country from the north to the south. A number of adaptive cycles of transport infrastructure constructions were made. This ambitious plan was only partially realised, but it set the foundation for the national arterial transport network developed later. The second CNDP also produced the adaptive cycles of large-scale industrial development projects, which were similar to those in the first CNDP, in three areas[27] in remote rural regions. These adaptive cycles were rather short-lived due to pollution problems and the rise of opposition campaigns from local residents. When the heavy industries declined due to the two oil crises in the 1970s, the majority of the industrial areas developed in the first and the second CNDPs were terminated. The abandoned brownfield sites became the negative legacy of the regions.

[27] Tomakomai (Hokkaido), Mutsu and Ogawahara (Tōhoku), and the Setouchi Inland Sea area (the boundary zone between the southeast regions).

The government launched the third CNDP in 1977 in the midst of industrial restructuring and the economic slowdown. Unlike the development-orientated approach in the previous plans, the third CNDP envisioned the improvement of the living environment as its primary goal. The plan intended to promote urban-rural migration by enhancing the quality of living in rural areas through developing settlement zones and technopolises. A settlement zone, with about 250,000 inhabitants, was to consist of urban and surrounding rural areas that would provide an environment where the population could live, play and work. The 44 areas in 300 local municipalities were designated as the model areas for the settlement zones, but the selected municipalities could not afford to invest in the project due to their weak financial base. Most of the adaptive cycles of creating settlement zones remained an idea and were not realised. The adaptive cycles of the technopolises developed the cities with high-technology companies, R&D institutions, and residences in 26 areas in the rural regions. However, the standardised technopolis plans formulated by bureaucrats did not attract leading high-tech companies, and many of the project sites were unsold despite tax incentives. Most of the companies that moved to the technopolises also relocated to offshore countries such as China and Vietnam, where labour and production costs were lower. As globalisation of the economy progressed, Japanese rural peripheries lost to the world's peripheries in the competition for attracting factories (Ōnishi et al. 2011).

The fourth CNDP in 1987 was created at a time when the unipolar dominance of the Tokyo MA was intensifying in the bubble economy. The plan pictured the multi-polar development of national land in which urban functions were divided among the three major MAs. The Tokyo MA was considered to be the centre for financial and information businesses, the Osaka MA to be the commercial, cultural and academic capital, and the Nagoya MA to be the hub of the technological industries. But specific actions to encourage the decentralisation of capital functions were not formulated. For the non-metropolitan regions, the plan shifted the strategy from attracting plants and factories to developing the rural regions with their cultural and natural assets. A number of adaptive cycles of constructing resort areas and golf courses were made to achieve the vision, but they were essentially amenities built for urban dwellers rather than improving the life of the inhabitants in the rural regions. The state-made off-the-shelf resort area developments lacked profitability, and the constructed facilities turned out to

be negative assets when the bubble economy collapsed (Kawasaki 2006). The fourth CNDP also promoted the adaptive cycles of public projects, such as constructing the bullet train network and regional airports. Ironically, the better connectivity provided by the improved transport infrastructure contributed to intensifying the outmigration from rural regions to the Tokyo MA.

The fifth CNDP was published in 1998 during the recession after the bubble economy burst. Named as the "Grand Design for the 21st Century", it was less development-orientated than the previous CNDPs, as it reflected the stagnating economy. To alleviate the polarised concentration in the Tokyo MA, the plan proposed four 'axes' – the north-east axis, the Japan-sea axis, the new Pacific axis and the west Japan axis – together with interregional cooperation. However, the vision was missing a transport network plan, and the implementation of the axes proved to be unfeasible. Reflecting the financial predicament of the national government, the fifth plan did not state the specific approach and scale of the investment. The plan remained conceptual, and did not produce concrete adaptive cycles to implement the vision.

The primary agenda in Japanese land policy has been to reduce rural-urban disparities. The CNDPs contributed to national economic growth and created employment in the rural regions through public construction projects. However, disseminating place-neutral state-made development models to the rural regions under the centralised system did not result in a convergence of urban-rural disparities. Rather, it resulted in a vulnerable regional economy, dependency on the central government, and the undermined resilience of the rural regions (Fujita 2007).

Post CNDP – NSP

In 2005, the Comprehensive National Land Development Act, on which all the CNDPs were based, was altered to the National Spatial Planning Act, and the term 'development' disappeared from the name. This symbolised the end of the development-orientated CNDP era. The NSP Act (2008) highlighted a shift in focus from an explicit economic growth-driven development to a more sustainable development model for an economically mature society (MLIT 2014a). The NSP is revised

every 10 years. The Grand Design 2050, the long-term land-use principles for the next NSP, was announced in 2014 (Table 4-3).

Table 4-3 The visions of the Grand Design 2050

Background	Principles	Land use
• Population decline and ageing • Risk of catastrophic disaster and decline of infrastructure • Globalisation • Global environmental concerns (e.g. climate change and shortage of energy, food, and water)	• Rebuilding **diversity** Promoting regional diversity in the continuum between globalism and localism • Agglomeration through **connectivity** Creating new agglomerations through networking nodes • Building **resilience** against disasters	Metropolitan areas • Creating a super-mega-region connecting the three major MAs Non-metropolitan areas • Forming compact cities and networks of regional cities • Creating small 'hubs' for livelihood support for shrinking rural areas

The Grand Design 2050 states its basic strategy as "concentration and connection", but more precisely, it is selection and concentration. For the metropolitan regions, it plans to create the world's largest agglomeration "super-mega-region" by connecting the three major MAs by Chūō Shinkansen[28] (magnetic levitation bullet-train). While the alleviation of the overconcentration in the Tokyo MA is on its agenda, the Grand Design 2050 seeks to promote further agglomeration to the three MAs for global competitiveness, which is a contradiction to de-concentration. For the non-metropolitan regions, the vision applies the compact city idea and proposes 60 to 70 regional urban cores with about 300,000 inhabitants connected by highway networks. For sparsely populated rural areas, the plan is to concentrate on basic living facilities in about 5,000 selected "small hubs" and to connect them to surrounding communities. The underlying idea of small hubs is the streamlining of public service provision and the reduction of administrative costs. The plan also places emphasis on resilience building against devastating natural disasters, and upgrading the infrastructure for disaster prevention.

[28] The Chūō Shinkansen connects Tokyo and Nagoya in 40 minutes and Osaka in about one hour. A test track at Yamanashi has long been operational, and construction of the inland route has begun to link Tokyo and Nagoya (to be completed in 2027) and will then link Osaka (in 2035).

This vision has been put into practice in the FPNR that promotes infrastructure development as disaster countermeasures, as elaborated in the following section.

The transition from CNDPs to the NSP reflects the limits of the conventional regional development strategies in an economically matured and demographically declining Japanese society. Nevertheless, with its focus on investment to selected locations in the rural regions and the emphasis on public construction projects, the Grand Design 2050 shows a methodological consistency between the CNDPs and the NSP.

4-4-2 The depopulation acts

Another main counter-shrinkage policy was depopulation act, which was enacted in 1970 as the first policy focused on the depopulation issue. The Emergency Act for the Improvement of Depopulated Areas, the first depopulation act, was initially planned as a 10-year temporary statute, but was extended four times although its name and foci changed as shrinkage progressed (Table 4-4).

The basic policy implementation process in the depopulation acts is vertical. The prefectural governments and the local governments in the Depopulated Areas are required to make the shrinkage management plans compliant with the framework articulated by the central government in the depopulation acts. The lower governments are then allowed to issue depopulation bonds to execute the measures in the plans, and 70% of the debts from the bond are redeemed by the central government through local tax allocation.

The adaptive cycles listed in the framework in the depopulation acts are largely categorised as ‘hardware’ projects – mainly the development of physical infrastructure (e.g. lifeline utilities, public facilities, and transport systems) – and ‘software’ projects – programmes that address cultural, educational, medical and social issues in shrinking places. Traditionally, the main emphasis in the depopulation acts has been on hardware projects, and this trait was most explicit in the first two depopulation acts (Table 4-4).

Table 4-4 The depopulation acts

	Depopulation acts			
Name	**The Emergency Act for the Improvement of Depopulated Areas**	**The Depopulated Areas Special Promotion Act**	**The Depopulated Areas Special Revitalisation Act**	**The Special Act Promoting Independence in Depopulated Areas**
Year	1970–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2021
Background	High growth economy	Stable growth economy	Economic stagnation Low birth rate Ageing	Economic stagnation Low birth rate Ageing
Objective	Alleviation of outmigration	Promotion of the local economy	Revitalisation of the local community	Improving the independence of the local community Enhancing the national land's beauty and distinctive character
	Improvement of social welfare / Narrowing regional disparities / Creation of local employment			
Number of Depopulated Areas	776 (1970)	1,119 (1980)	1,143 (1990)	1,171 (2000) 819* (2017)
Measures**	Share of the spending (%)			
Transportation and information infrastructure development	50	50	39	37
Industrial development	22	28	29	28
Living conditions improvement	12	10	18	21
Elderly care and public welfare			3	4
Education and culture	12	10	7	7
Medical services	1	1	2	2

* The number is after the municipal mergers.

** Each measure includes the following projects:

- Transportation and information infrastructure development: road networks, broadband and mobile service networks.
- Industrial development: modernisation of the agricultural industry, attraction of companies, local industry promotion, and local commercial area regeneration.
- Living conditions improvement: water and sewage systems, garbage collection, and fire defence systems.
- Elderly care and public welfare: elderly care facilities, maternal and child welfare.
- Education and culture: education facilities, community centres, and the conservation of cultural heritage.
- Medical services: support for doctor-less areas, doctor patrols.

Source: Made by Chang based on the report of the MIC, 2014

The Emergency Act for the Improvement of Depopulated Areas enacted in 1970 aimed to alleviate the ongoing massive population outflow from the rural regions in the high growth period. When the subsequent Depopulated Areas Special Promotion Act was made in 1980, rural outmigration had slowed down, but many rural regions faced multiple symptoms of shrinkage. The first two depopulation acts aimed to upgrade living conditions by improving the hardware infrastructure, and a number of adaptive cycles of the public projects (such as construction of water and sewage systems, ports, and roads) were implemented. This made the rural regions well equipped with physical infrastructure, but was ineffective to halt the progress of multidimensional shrinkage.

When the Depopulated Areas Special Revitalisation Act was launched in 1990, most rural regions were in deeper shrinkage. Demographically, they were already in the phase of "double-negative population disequilibrium"[29] (Matanle & Sato 2010). Population ageing came to the surface in this period, and elderly care was added to the policy menu[30] (Table 4-4). The methodological limitation to maintain and enhance the living standards in rural regions only with hardware projects was gradually recognised by policymakers.

The Special Act Promoting Independence in Depopulated Areas[31] was enacted in 2000. By that time, shrinkage had aggravated to the extent that some rural municipalities were threaten by the possibility of future disappearance, and the focus of the act shifted from narrowing the urban-rural gap to promoting the independencee of the shrinking rural municipalities. Being aware of the necessity for more holistic support, the usage of the depopulation bonds[32] that the Depopulated Areas can issue was extended from hardware projects to software projects, such as local medical services, community bus services, and the preservation of the local traditions.

[29] Outmigration and the excess of the number of deaths to the number of births.
[30] The benchmarks of the elderly rate and youth rate were added to the conditions that define Depopulated Areas from the Depopulated Areas Special Revitalisation Act.
[31] The act was extended in 2010 to 2016, then in 2012 and 2017.
[32] The municipalities designated as the Depopulated Areas are eligible to issue depopulation bonds, in which 70% of the debts are redeemed as local tax allocation.

Additionally, an unconventional adaptive cycle, which sent personnel instead of subsidy, was launched in 2009. The *chiikiokoshi kyōryokutai* (area regeneration assistants) programme sends interested people to rural municipalities for one to three years as assistants for community revitalisation activities. The programme was well received by the interested urban residents, reflecting the recent counter-urbanisation trend. The number of sent assistants and accepted municipalities grew sharply from 89 assistants and 30 municipalities in 2009 to 3,978 collaborators and 875 municipalities in 2016 (MIC 2017a). About 80% of the assistants are in their 20s and 30s, and roughly 60% have settled in the rural areas after the programme (MIC 2015). The new trend in the measures in the depopulation acts reveals the increasing demands from rural regions for more discretion in the use of funding and for holistic support beyond hardware infrastructure improvement.

Despite the awareness that more emphasis is needed on the software aspect of support and the increase in the new type of programmes, the primary focus on hardware projects in the depopulation acts has not changed (Table 4-4). The state-made hardware-orientated framework has been imposed in a top-down manner, and has constrained the types of adaptive cycles that the lower-level governments can create. This has resulted in the misalignment of adaptive cycles to the site-specific needs, thus leading to the inefficient use of funding. The large investment on hardware facilities may have contributed to mitigating the physical decline of the rural regions than would have been the case without taking those measures. However, they have not been effective enough in alleviating multidimensional consequences of shrinkage.

4-4-3 Municipal mergers in the 2000s

The central government led the nationwide municipal mergers in the 2000s. They were collectively termed as *Heisei no daigappei* (major mergers in the Heisei era), which was the third large-scale consolidation of municipalities in the history of Japan.[33] The mergers were part of the structural reform

[33] The first large-scale mergers were carried out in the process of modernisation in the Meiji era (1868–1912). The number of municipalities reduced from 71,334 to 15,859 from 1888 to 1889. The second extensive mergers were in the Shōwa era (1926–1989), when the country rationalised the administrative system after World War II. The municipalities deceased from 9,868 to 3,472 from 1953 to 1961 (Development Bank of Japan 2013).

initiated by the Koizumi Cabinet to alleviate the accumulated deficit in national finance through streamlining the administrative structure of the municipalities and reducing the tax allocations. The central government prepared tax incentives that the merged municipalities were eligible for a 10-year moratorium[34] of the reduction of local tax allocation and that they were allowed to issue *gappeitokurei-sai*[35] (special merger bonds) for 10 years for establishing new municipalities. These 'carrot and stick' incentives compelled financially weak rural municipalities to merge with their neighbours. The number of local municipalities dropped from 3,232 to 1,727 between 1999 and 2010 (MIC 2017b).

After the mergers, the average jurisdiction area expanded from 114.8 km^2 to 215.4 km^2, and the average population of a municipality swelled from 36,400 to 69,100 (Development Bank of Japan 2013). The spatial enlargement of jurisdiction and the increase of the population 'masked' the shrinkage (Odagiri 2009). Furthermore, Being spatially distant from the residents, the local governments had weaker ties with their residents and were less capable of grasping and addressing the local issues caused by shrinkage. Furthermore, the mergers were not accompanied by the relevant devolution of tax revenue, and did not promote the fiscal autonomy of the municipalities. An increasing number of merged municipalities have reached the end of the moratorium, and they now face serious fiscal difficulties due to lower tax allocations and increased indebtedness. There is a consensus among researchers that the mergers contributed to the intensification of rural shrinkage (Kanno 2004; Feldhoff 2013). For Steiner & Markantoni (2014), devolution is a form of the cross-level trade-off of resilience in which the central government transfers responsibilities to the lower governments without sufficient support. The mergers in Japan were essentially a trade-off between the resilience of national finance, which was in accumulated deficit, and the resilience of the rural municipalities. It aimed to enhance the fiscal well-being at the national level at the expense of the well-being of the financially weakest rural municipalities.

[34] The reduction of local tax allocation started from 1998. After the moratorium, the tax allocation is gradually lowered to the normal rate in five years.
[35] 70% of the debt was redeemed by local tax allocations. The municipalities affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake can issue the bond for 20 years.

4-4-4 The FPNR

In association with the vision of building national resilience in the Grand Design 2050, the FPNR was launched in 2014 to establish a resilient socio-economic structure for disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis (National Resilience Promotion Office 2014). As is frequent in the policymaking field (Manyena 2006), the interpretation of 'resilience' in the FPNR is explicitly equilibrium-seeking 'bouncing-back' resilience that narrowly focuses on hardware dimensions. The FPNR produced a large number of adaptive cycles of infrastructure development for disaster prevention, such as the improvement of old infrastructure, anti-seismic reinforcement of public facilities, and the development of road networks and IT infrastructure in the non-metropolitan regions (Mizuho Research Institute 2013).

The FPNR is positioned as part of the fiscal stimulus strategy in Abenomics, and the central government has been aggressively investing in the projects in the FPNR. The adaptive cycles produced in the FPNR are the same as those in the past CNDPs, and the FPNR has received criticism for its methodical retrospection of applying the obsolete construction-orientated approach (Komine 2014). The multi-polar and multi-axes land use proposed in the FPNR is really just a repetition of the vision in the fourth CNDP and the fifth CNDP. In order to attain state funding, the prefectural and local governments are required to make the project plans in line with the framework set by the central government, and the adaptive cycles are shaped and implemented in a top-down manner. The scheme of FPNR is also a revival of the outdated approach of the CNDP, whose adverse impact on regional development is already apparent. There is serious concern that the adaptive cycles in the FPNR can further undermine the resilience of the rural regions.

4-4-5 *Chihōsōsei* – Regional revitalisation

Responding to the criticism regarding the counterproductive effect of Abenomics on the regional economy, in 2014, the central government formulated a regional economic growth strategy called 'local Abenomics' as part of the third arrow of Abenomics. The Cabinet Office renamed it *chihōsōsei*

(regional revitalisation) shortly after. Regional revitalisation aims to revitalise the regional economy and alleviate the concentration on the Tokyo MA through financial support, human-resource support, and information support (i.e. three arrows of local Abenomics). Financial support is through the regional revitalisation funding programmes; human resource support includes the establishment of regional revitalisation colleges and internship programmes; and information support is the provision of data from the Regional Economy Analysis System (Cabinet Office 2017a).

Regional revitalisation is explicitly grounded in the principle of 'selection and concentration' (Asakawa 2015). Unlike the depopulation acts and other previous policies, regional revitalisation does not prepare a state-made framework but requests local municipalities to create their own master development plans. The central government evaluates these plans based on key performance indicators (KPIs), and allocates the subsidy according to the achievement level of the plans. State funding is concentrated on selected high-performance rural places, rather than taking a bottom-up process that focuses on less advantageous places. Yamashita & Kanai (2015) see the introduction of KPIs as a device to transfer the responsibility of the failure of regional revitalisation in rural areas from the central government to the municipalities in the rural regions. Whether the success of area regeneration can be judged within a few years is also questionable, and might mislead the municipalities to make myopic development plans for short-term achievements.

Additionally, the vision of small hubs in the Grand Design 2050 has been realised as an adaptive cycle in regional revitalisation. The programme streamlines the public service provision to relatively advantageous places in the depopulated regions, and implicitly promotes migration from the surrounding rural areas to the hubs to concentrate the population. Some scholars criticise the efficiency-based approach of the small-hub programme, which disregards the historical background and autonomy of rural communities and the various non-economic roles that rural areas have provided to the region and wider society (e.g. land conservation and the provision of energy, food, and water) (Hobo 2015; Okada 2014; Odagiri 2015).

The adaptive cycles of the performance-based subsidy and the small-hub programme reflect the 'selection and concentration' idea with its discard of 'inefficient' weak rural municipalities. There is a trade-off of resilience between the relatively advantageous rural areas and the least advantageous shrinking places. At the heart, it is a trade-off between national resilience and the resilience of the peripheralised, vulnerable rural municipalities.

Masuda report and the 'vanishing region' discourse

The regional revitalisation policy and the Grand Design 2050 are both grounded on a series of reports published in 2013–2014 by the think tank Nihonsōseikaigi, collectively called the Masuda report (named after the former minister of the MIC who chaired the research team). In an alarmed response to rural depopulation, the Masuda report highlighted the risk of 'vanishing regions' as the worst-case scenario of shrinkage, with a provocative list of 896 *shōmetsukanō-toshi* (municipalities that may vanish)[36] (Masuda 2014). The report was covered extensively in the media and had a dramatic impact on society. The widespread 'vanishing region' discourse abruptly raised the level of concern and the sense of urgency among the general public, politicians, policymakers and especially the local governments in the rural regions. The Masuda report proposes concentrating on facilities and populations in selected regional cities and rural places and reinforcing them in order to counter catastrophic regional disappearance. Its claim was effective in leading the shrinkage discussion to focus on where to draw the line between places that could survive and those that could not. The report has been criticised by some researchers on its framing of shrinkage and the rationale for the list of vanishing municipalities. Kinoshita (2014) argues that the equation of the collapse of local municipalities and the disappearance of places misrepresents the problem, and that the report has misleadingly changed the subject from the accumulated failure of the state's regional development policy and local governance to the issue of population decline and ageing. Odagiri (2014) claims that

[36] The report defined a municipality that would lose more than 50% of its female residents between the ages of 20 to 39 from 2010 to 2040 as a "possibly disappearing city", and those whose total population would become less than 10,000 by 2040 as a "likely disappearing city". They listed 896 possibly disappearing municipalities, and 523 likely disappearing ones in them (Masuda 2014).

the Masuda report also unnecessarily inflamed the ‘vanishing region’ discourse by underestimating the recent counter-urbanisation trend.

Despite these criticisms, the ‘selection and concentration’ policy solutions have been hardly questioned outside academia. Mouffe (2005) calls this contemporary policymaking environment in which consensus is crafted outside of the genuine political arena as post-political. In the post-political condition, consent is built around the perception of inevitability or incontestable norms, and is reduced to technocratic and managerial decisions by eliminating a genuine political space of disagreement and contestation (Swyngedouw 2009). Such post-political consensus building can often be meta-governance operated by the state within the existing power structure in society; Fawcett & Marsh (2014) call this the “shadow of hierarchy”. After the Masuda report, there was a consensus in society that the efficiency-driven counter-shrinkage policies were realistic choices to avoid regional disappearance. The dissemination of the apocalyptic ‘vanishing region’ discourse due to the report, led by a former minister of the MIC, can be seen as a form of statecraft meta-governance in order to legitimise the resilience trade-offs in the counter-shrinkage policies. The term resilience is often used as self-reliance discourse in Western countries to justify resilience trade-offs and drawback of the states in contemporary neoliberal devolution (Joseph 2013; MacKinnon & Derickson 2012). In Japan, instead of resilience, the ‘vanishing region’ discourse is deployed to normalise resilience trade-offs in policy appraoch to rural shrinkage. Instead of being co-opted by neoliberal policies, resilience is framed narrowly as engineering resilience to relabel and legitimise the conventional infrastructure-oriented approach in the FPNR.

4-5 The response to shrinkage at the prefectural level

This section looks at how shrinkage has been responded at the prefectural level. I investigate the Tokushima Prefecture and the Ehime Prefecture in Shikoku, where the case study sites are located. I

briefly overview the regional shrinkage in Shikoku, and then look at the shrinkage and the adaptive cycles formed by the prefectural governments in Tokushima and Ehime.

4-5-1 The Shikoku region

The Shikoku region is the smallest island among the four major islands that constitute Japan. It is located to the south of Honsyū (the main island) and to the east of Kyushū. Shikoku is linked to Honshū by three bridges: the Great Seto Bridge between Takamatsu (the Kagawa Prefecture) and Okayama (the Okayama Prefecture); the Kōbe-Awaji-Naruto Expressway that connects Naruto (the Tokushima Prefecture), Awaji Island, and Kōbe (the Hyōgo Prefecture); and the Nishiseto Expressway, which is often called *Shimanami Kaidō*, linking Imabari (the Ehime Prefecture) and Onomichi (the Hiroshima Prefecture) (Figure 4-6).

The region is geographically mountainous, and only 15% of the total area of 18,800 km^2 is flatland (Shikoku keizai sangyō kyōsōryoku kyōgikai 2014). The regional population is about 4 million, which account for 3.2% of the national population. In the feudal past, there were four provinces: Iyo, Sanuki, Awa and Tosa in Shikoku – *shi* (four) *koku* (provinces) – but these were reorganised into four prefectures, respectively: Ehime, Kagawa, Tokushima and Kōchi in the Meiji period (1868–1912). Shikoku is divided into the northern part and the southern part by the mountains running across the region. The northern part that faces the Seto Inland Sea includes Ehime and Kagawa, and has a larger economy and population than the southern part that includes Tokushima and Kōchi. The two largest cities are Matsuyama city, Ehime, with approximately 516,000 people and Takamatsu city, Kagawa, with approximately 421,000 people in the northern part. Shikoku is traditionally an agricultural region. The manufacturing and material industries (e.g. pulp, oil and coal) and shipbuilding have developed in the northern coastal areas in Ehime, but the main products in the southern part are agricultural. The regional GDP accounts for about 3% of the national GDP (Shikoku keizai sangyō kyōsōryoku kyōgikai 2014).

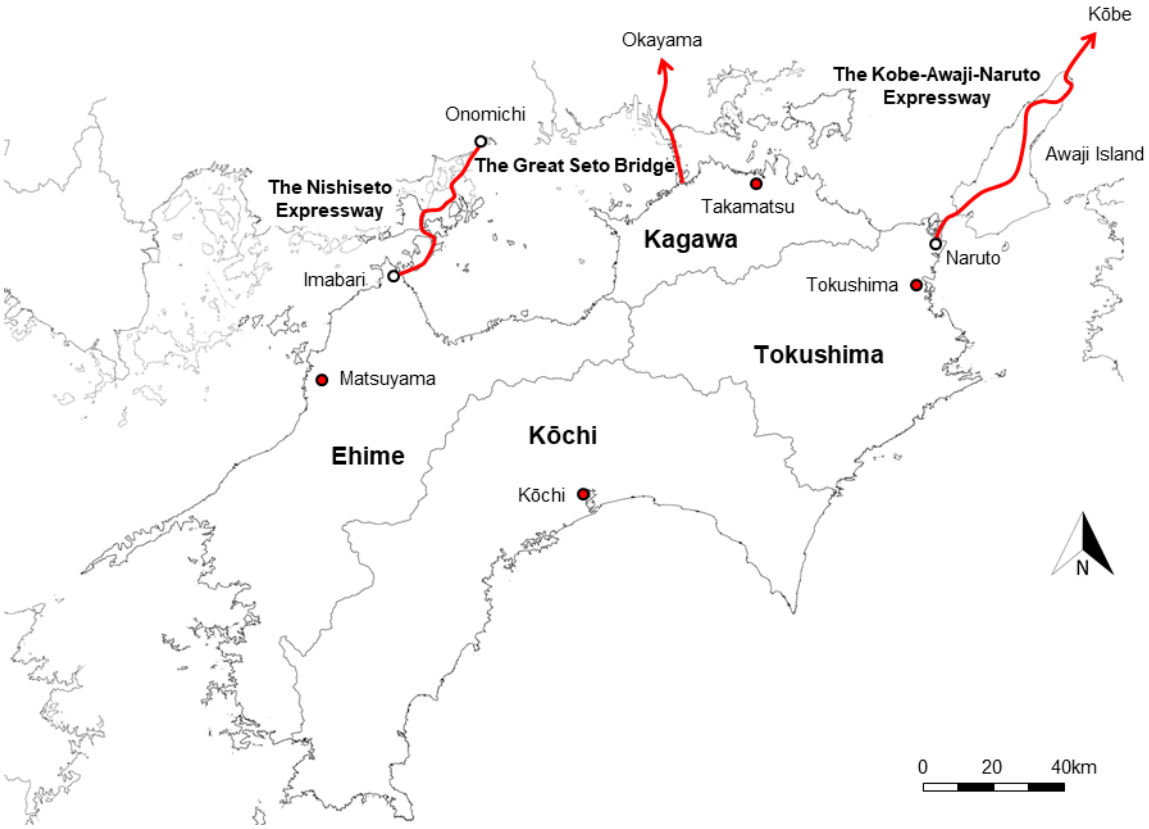


Figure 4-6 Map of Shikoku

The prefectures in Shikoku are geographically divided by the mountains, and the exchange of people and materials between them has been limited. The *hachinoji* (figure-eight-shaped) highway network that links the four prefectures has a missing part in the southern coastal areas in Tokushima (Shikoku keizai rengōkai 2011). Over 90% of the movement of people in Shikoku are within each prefecture (Shikoku keizai rengōkai 2011).

Ohenro and the osettai culture

One of the major cultural heritage sites in Shikoku is *ohenro*, the circular 88 Temple Pilgrimage around the island. A 1,200 km pilgrimage route is associated with a revered Buddhist monk Kukai's[37] ascetic

[37] The founder of the Shingon school of Buddhism, and he is known as *Kōbō-Daishi* (great teacher).

journey around Shikoku about 1,200 years ago (Figure 4-7). Originally, the pilgrimage was a training activity for monks, but the temples on the route of the pilgrimage became popular visiting places in the Edo period (1603–1868) (Tourism Shikoku 2014) at a time when personal travel was highly regulated but pilgrimages were authorised (Traganou 2004).

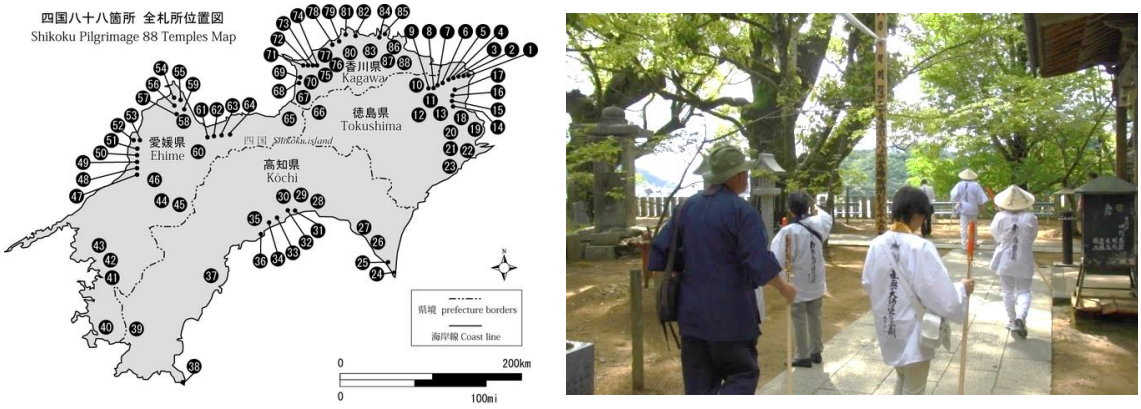


Figure 4-7 Route of the 88 temples pilgrimage in Shikoku

The pilgrimage has fostered the unique *osettai* (gift-giving) culture in Shikoku. Osettai is a daily practice of the local people in the towns on the pilgrimage route; they give food, drinks, guides, money or accommodation to pilgrims as free gifts and encouragement as respect for their spiritual journey. This remains the specific cultural tradition cultivated in the long history of ohenro as a necessary social device to support the pilgrimage (Takahashi 2012). The generosity and openness to outsiders associated with the osettai culture contributed to the local communities' capacity to accept the new adaptive cycles in the case study sites (Hiwasa in Minami) as discussed in Chapter 5.

Shrinkage in Shikoku

Shikoku is one of the most rapidly depopulated regions in Japan. The total population in the region started to decline in the middle of the 1980s, and the current population of 3.81 million is expected to fall by about 1 million by 2040, with the rise of the ageing ratio to 39% (Shikoku keizai sangyō kyōsōryoku kyōgikai 2014). The depopulation in Shikoku has been ahead of the national average for 20 years (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013). From among a total of

95 local municipalities in Shikoku, 66 are designated as Depopulated Areas. The elderly ratio in 24.3% of the 7,216 settlements in Shikoku exceeds 50%, and they fall in the "possibly disappearing hamlet" category set by the MIC (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013). The extensive population decline means that there will be a loss of nearly the entire population in one prefecture by 2040, and this, in turn, will lead to the scaling down of the regional economy in Shikoku. This restructuring of the regional banks is taking place in Shikoku. In 2016, the four banks[38] in Shikoku agreed on a business alliance, and two banks in Shikoku and one bank in Kinki merged, crossing the regional boundary[39] (Tokushima Shinbun 2016). They are part of the nationwide trend of realignment of regional banks[40] in the decline of the entire population (Jiji Press 2017). The following sections illustrate the shrinkage and the prefecture-level responses to shrinkage through the cases of Tokushima and Ehime.

4-5-2 Case-1: Tokushima Prefecture

Tokushima is located in the southeast of Shikoku. The total area of Tokushima is 4,145 km^2, and more than 80% of the land is mountains and forests. The population was 0.74 million in 2017 and one third of the population lives in Tokushima city, the prefectural capital (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2017). The 24 local municipalities – 8 cities and 16 towns – in Tokushima are divided into the east, west, and south areas. The east area with Tokushima city is the centre of the economy, where over 70% of the population lives. The west area is the inland mountainous area, and the south area is the mountainous and coastal area facing the Pacific Ocean. These two areas are primarily agricultural and fishing areas producing rice, sweet potatoes, chickens, and fishery products. Being separated from the neighbourhood prefectures by precipitous mountains, Tokushima has been historically closer to Kinki than to the other Shikoku prefectures; these two places traded and exchanged across the Kii Channel. The flow of people and goods between the two regions was strengthened after the Akashi Kaikyō

[38] The Awa Bank, Hyakujushi Bank, Iyo Bank, and Shikoku Bank.
[39] The Tokushima Bank (Tokushima), Tomoni Holdings (Kagawa), and Taisho bank (Osaka) were integrated.
[40] The Financial Service Agency expects that about 60% of the regional banks in Japan will be in the red by 2025, and promotes restructuring and consolidation of regional banks as a strategy to deal with population decline. There have been 21 cases of mergers and business alliances between regional banks from 2004 to 2018, and three cases are in the Shikoku and Chūgoku region (Yamato 2017).

Bridge was completed in 1999, and more than half of the agricultural products in Tokushima are shipped to Kinki.

Shrinkage in Tokushima

The population in Tokushima peaked at 0.88 million in 1950, then dropped due to an intensive youth outmigration during the high growth period. The outmigration slowed down by the end of the 1970s and the population recovered modestly until the early 1980s. The population has kept declining since 1985 due to the less-intensive but constant outmigration and fall of the fertility rate (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2015). The current population in Tokushima is estimated to decline to 0.57 million by 2040, with the increase of the ageing ratio to 40.2% (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013). In Tokushima, outmigration has constantly exceeded immigration. The main cohort of out-migrants is aged between 20 and 29 (those who seek education and job opportunities), and the majority of immigrants are aged 60 to 65, primarily those who retire to their hometown (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2015).

Among the 24 local municipalities, 13 are designated as Depopulated Areas (located mostly in the west and the south areas) and have 16.3% of the population and 72.5% of the land (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2014). The Depopulated Areas have lost more than half of their inhabitants in the last 50 years (Tokushima Prefecture 2010), and they have suffered a range of symptoms of shrinkage, including: loss of employment opportunities; lack of successors for their local businesses; vacant properties, environmental damage; and abandoned farm lands (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2016b).

The opening of the Akashi Kaikyō Bridge brought new market potentials for agricultural products in Tokushima; however, at the same time, the direct linkage to Kōbe and the major cities in Kinki intensified the shrinkage in the remote areas of the prefecture (Hiraoka et al. 2012). While losing a certain amount of consumption activities, the centrality of Tokushima city in the prefecture was increased by it becoming a transport hub in the prefecture. On the other hand, the shrinkage in rural

areas accelerated. From 2000 to 2010, Tokushima city lost 2% of the population, whereas the Depopulated Areas lost 21% (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2014).

Responses to shrinkage in Tokushima

The prefectural government in Tokushima made the Depopulation Areas Independence Promotion (DAIP) plan complied with the framework set out by the state in the depopulation acts. The plans have determined the variations of the adaptive cycles produced at the prefectural level. Reflecting the emphasis on hardware projects in the depopulation acts, the main adaptive cycles in Tokushima have been infrastructure development. The investment in transport, communication and information infrastructure development from 1960 to 2009 accounted for approximately 60% of the total budget – higher than the national average of 42% (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2010).

As the current depopulation act pays more attention to software projects, the share of the software projects in the Tokushima's DAIP plan has increased, compared to previously. On the other hand, the adaptive cycles of hardware improvement for disaster prevention, such as the earthquake retrofitting of buildings, have gained large shares in the budget and the number of projects after the launch of the FPNR. The plan also emphasised the improvement of transport and communication systems, including the completion of the eight-shaped expressway network in Shikoku (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2016a). The adaptive cycles made in the DAIP plan in Tokushima are still primarily hardware projects that are scoped to be favoured by the central government. The prefectural government does not have an assessment system that evaluates the effectiveness of the adaptive cycles produced in the DAIP plan.

Other than the DAIP plan, the prefectural government has listed the local revitalisation activities in severely shrinking places[41] as the *Tokushima shūraku-saisei* (Tokushima Settlement Regeneration (TSR)) Project in 2012. The TSR project is the repository of the advanced community regeneration practices from which other shrinking communities in and outside the prefecture can learn. Tokushima

[41] There is no clear definition of "severely shrinking places" in the TSR project. But all the listed projects are in the designated Depopulated Areas.

regards itself as "*kadai-senshin ken*" (problem advanced prefecture), and aims to disseminate the Tokushima models of community development for shrinking places through the TSR project. Currently, 36 initiatives led by business groups and civic associations in collaboration with the public sector are listed (Tokushima Prefectural Government 2016b). Among the listed adaptive cycles, the prefectural government puts particular emphasis on the SO project. I will discuss the SO project in greater detail in Chapter 5. The prefectural government in Tokushima is aware that they cannot produce effective adaptive cycles within their organisation. Instead of creating the adaptive cycles on their own, the prefectural government has created a list of adaptive cycles generated outside the public sector and has provided support to them.

4-5-3 Case-2: Ehime

Ehime is located in the northwest of Shikoku. The total area of Ehime is 5,676 km^2, of which 70% is mountainous. The population was 1.37 million in 2016, of which about 40% lives in Matsuyama, the prefectural capital. Ehime is directly linked to Onomishi, Hiroshima, on the mainland by the Shimanami Kaidō (opened in 1999). Ehime consists of 20 local municipalities – 11 cities and 9 towns – that are divided into three areas: *Tōyo* (east area), *Chūyo* (central area), and *Nanyo* (south area). Tōyo is the largest industrial area in Shikoku, and is known as a major producer of ships, paper and pulp products, and towel products. Factories for shipbuilding, paper manufacturing along with chemical materials and steel production are concentrated in this area. About half of the manufacturing products in Shikoku are produced in Tōyo. Chūyo has Matsuyama, the largest city in Shikoku and the centre of the economy and commerce. About 40% of the population lives in Chūyo. Nanyo consists of sparsely populated rural areas with the agriculture, forestry and aquaculture industries. Nanyo is a main producer of mandarin oranges and a variety of other citrus fruits, sea bream, and pearls.

Shrinkage in Ehime

The population of Ehime peaked at 1.54 million in 1955, and was reduced by extensive rural-urban migration during the high growth period. The outmigration ceased at the end of the 1970s and the population grew in the early 1980s. However, the population started to decrease again after reaching

at 1.53 million in 1985, and has kept falling up to the present day (Ehime Prefectural Government 2015; Ehime Prefectural Government 2017). The main generation of out-migrants are young people aged between 20 and 29 leaving for education and job opportunities.

On the other hand, immigrants are mostly U-turners, aged between 60 and 65, who return to their hometown after retirement (Ehime Prefectural Government 2015). The current population of 1.37 million is estimated to decline to 1.08 million by 2040 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013). Between 2010 to 2040, Ehime is expected to lose 26.6% of the population with the increase of the ageing ratio from 26.6% to 38.6% (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013). In Ehime, 17 of the 20 local municipalities are designated as Depopulated Areas, accounting for 25.1% of the total population and 64.7% of the total area (Ehime Prefectural Government 2016).

The shrinkage in Ehime concentrates in the agricultural Nanyo area. The population in Nanyo has kept falling from the 1950s onwards, and has almost halved in the last 50 years (Ehime Prefectural Government 2016). Similar to Tokushima, the Depopulated Areas have experienced multifaceted symptoms of shrinkage, such as the decline of the local economy, the lack of employment opportunities, vacant housing, unused public facilities, abandoned farm lands, and the loss of vibrancy that undermines the entire quality of living. In contrast to the case in Tokushima, the opening of the Shimanami Kaidō in 1999 did not intensified shrinkage in Ehime, because Onomichi was a relatively small city and the outflow of shopping activities and population to the mainland did not occur.

Response to shrinkage in Ehime

Similar to Tokushima, the focus of the adaptive cycles in the DAIP plan in Ehime are hardware projects, including the development of the transport system (mainly roads for the agricultural and forestry industries), the telecommunication system, the water supply and sewage systems, the aseismic reinforcement of public facilities, and the conservation of the forest. For software projects, adaptive cycles of the welfare and care facilities for the elderly and medical service provision are emphasised, reflecting the ageing population in the shrinking communities (Ehime Prefectural Government 2016).

Other than the DAIP plan, in 2009, the prefectural government set up a consultation desk that provided a service connecting shrinking rural communities and volunteers who were interested in community revitalisation activities. But the service has been hardly used because many communities were reluctant to accept external actors to deal with local shrinkage. The official in the regional planning and development department showed his concern:

> "Most communities that think they can manage by themselves will reach a dead end within a decade. It will be too late [to revitalise the communities] when the local residents have a sense of crisis. The sense of resignation and apathy are also prevalent in many shrinking communities. People prefer to quietly accept the future of community disappearance rather than struggle for change."

The prefectural government of Ehime is less proactive in tackling shrinkage than Tokushima and Kochi, the prefectures that face severer shrinkage than that in Ehime. The official raised several reasons for the inactiveness of the prefectural government. Firstly, Ehime is spoiled by its advantages – such as having the largest city and industrial area in Shikoku and being rich in historical and cultural assets for tourism – and lacks the sense of urgency. Second, the main interest of the current prefectural mayor is marketing Ehime to foreign countries, and shrinkage is subsided in the policy agenda. Third, the counter-shrinkage measures have been traditionally regarded as the local governments' scope of work. The official said that it was difficult to have a sufficient budget for the issues of shrinkage at the prefectural level. In effect, the original adaptive cycles formed by the prefectural government is absent in Ehime.

4-6 Comparison of the policy response in the growth period and the post-growth period

It has been nearly seven decades since the central government took the first policy intervention to alleviate rural shrinkage. During this period, the demography and the economy in Japanese society have shifted from the growth to the post-growth paradigm. In this section, I examine whether, and in what way, the policy approach to rural shrinkage has changed by comparing the formations of the

adaptive cycles at the national level and the prefectural level in the growth period – from the launch of the first depopulation act in 1970 until the termination of the fourth CNDP in 1998 – and in the present post-growth period (Figure 4-8 and Figure 4-9).

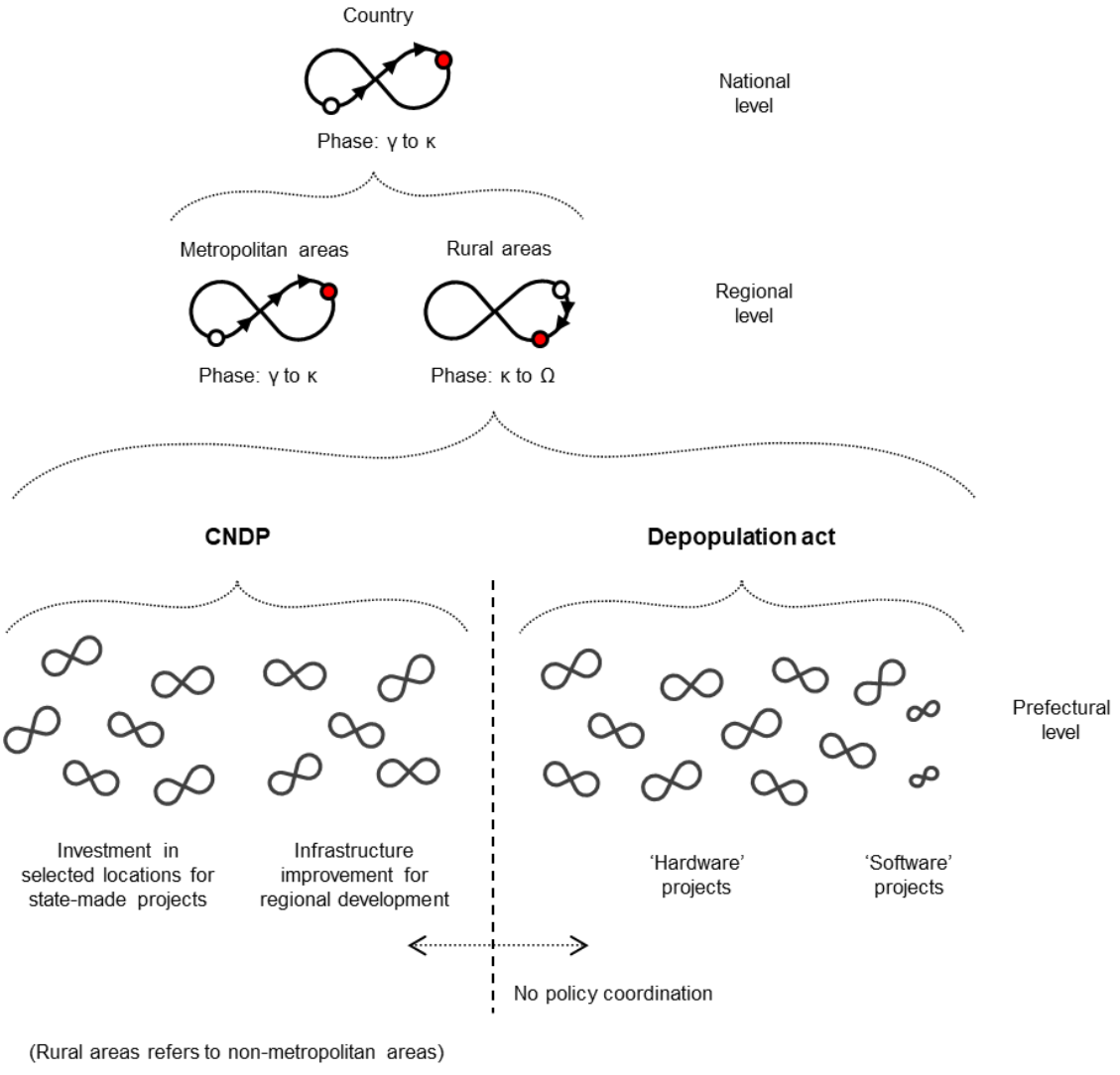


Figure 4-8 The formation of the adaptive cycles in the growth period

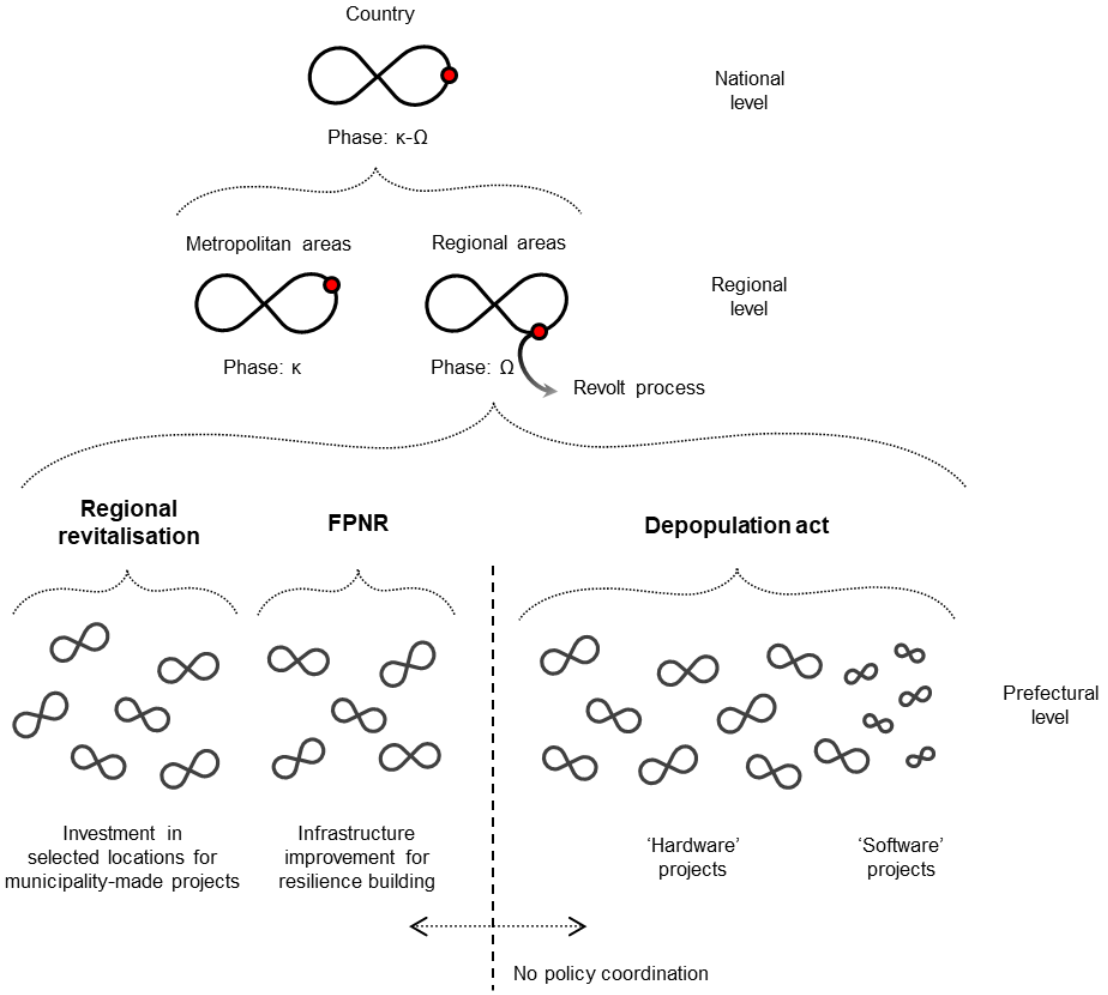


Figure 4-9 The formation of the adaptive cycles in the post-growth period

The two nested structures of the adaptive cycles in Figure 4-8 and Figure 4-9 represent several characteristics of the policy response to rural shrinkage in Japan. Firstly, there is a strong consistency in the policy approach regardless of the change in social paradigm. The main counter-shrinkage policies in the growth period were the CNDP and the depopulation acts. The adaptive cycles in the CNDPs were decontextualised development models (e.g. industrial hubs, resort areas, and technopolises) disseminated to selected locations in the rural regions. The focus of the adaptive cycles in the depopulation acts were hardware projects that included developing infrastructure and physical

facilities. The narrowly focused, place-neutral adaptive cycles in these policies were ineffective to halt the shrinkage process, and often even counterproductive for improving the resilience of the rural regions. The status of the rural regions fell to the declining Ω phase during the growth period. When society shifted to the post-growth period, the same types of adaptive cycles were produced by different policies. Regional revitalisation has invested in public projects in selected locations in the rural regions, and the FPNR has produced the adaptive cycles of infrastructure improvement for national resilience instead of regional development. The share of software projects in the depopulation acts has increased, but the primary policy focus on the adaptive cycles of hardware projects has not changed. Although the combination of the policies has altered, there has been no substantive policy innovation to deal with rural shrinkage.

Secondly, the nearly identical trajectories of the adaptive cycles of the country and the metropolitan areas and the contrasting trajectory of the rural regions indicate the trade-off of resilience between them. In the growth period, the CNDPs traded off long-term socio-economic development in the rural regions for national economic growth and short-term economic growth spurts in the rural regions. As a result, while the country as a whole and the metropolitan areas experienced the growth γ phase and reached the κ phase, the status of the rural regions moved from the κ phase to the declining Ω phase (Figure 4-8). The trade-off became more evident in the post-growth period. The regional revitalisation programme focused on funding relatively advantageous rural locations. The Grand Design 2050, in which regional revitalisation and the FPNR are included, promotes further urban agglomeration for global competitiveness. Both the focus on advantageous rural regions and the promotion of urban agglomeration are explicit trade-offs of the resilience between the country and the metropolitan areas and the most vulnerable rural areas. The rural regions at the Ω phase are experiencing the revolt process towards a greater scale of collapse, whereas the metropolitan areas are still at the κ phase, and the country is gradually shifting from the stable κ phase towards Ω phase (Figure 4-9). The repetitive trade-offs in the counter-shrinkage policies show the central government's consistent stance of placing the growth and stability of the country's central system – mainly that in the metropolitan areas – as the top priority, and the exploitation of resources in the rural regions to achieve this objective.

Thirdly, coordination between adaptive cycles has been missing. The CNDP was made by the MLIT. Regional revitalisation and the FPNR are part of the NSP made by the MLIT. The depopulation acts were organised by the MIC. The CNDP and NSP are land-use plans that include regional economic development strategies, and the depopulation acts are *a posterior* measures that support mitigating the negative consequences of rural shrinkage. They are complementary in nature. Nonetheless, inter-ministerial policy coordination between the MILT and the MIC has been largely missing. The adaptive cycles in each policy have been formulated and implemented separately in a top-down manner. The absence of total coordination of the adaptive cycles is responsible for the lack of comprehensiveness in the counter-shrinkage policies.

Fourthly, the absence of the adaptive cycles produced at the prefectural level reflects the dominance of the central government in formulating the policies and the incapacity of the prefectural governments to create adaptive cycles on their own, outside of the state-made framework.

Structural lock-ins

The above-mentioned features in the policy approach to the rural shrinkage are rooted in some structural factors in Japanese society. Firstly, historically, the urban governance system in Japan has been centralised since the country shifted from the feudal system to become a modern nation, and the bureaucratic system[42] was established in the Meiji Restoration (1868). The centralised system was intact in post-war democratisation, and reinforced by the top-down regional development in the CNDPs. Decentralisation from the mid-1990s without sufficient devolution of administrative powers and tax revenue resources has retained the vertical system. The Japanese urban governance system has been long centralised, and the central government holds the decisive power in formulating and executing policy measures for regional development and rural shrinkage.

Secondly, termed as *tatewari-gyosei* (vertically divided administrative system), the central bureaucracy system in Japan is highly segmented. There are frequent conflicts of interest and rivalry

[42] The prefectural governments were the regional branches of the central government, and mayors were appointed by the state until democratisation after World War II.

between ministries with different policy objectives and priorities, and minimum commitment has been institutionalised as the basic rule in ministerial politics (Moon & Rhyu 2000). As a result, the policymaking process in a ministry is generally 'black boxed' not only to the public, but also to the other ministries (Shiroyama & Hosono 2002; Feldhoff 2013). Due to the central ministries' sectionalism, adaptive cycles have been produced by different ministries without sufficient examination of their appropriateness through cross-ministerial policy coordination.

Thirdly, related to the centralised governance system, the local municipalities are financially dependent on the central government. Their independent revenue averages 30%, known as *sanwari-jichi* (30% autonomy) (Kondo 2007), and the number is even lower in the Depopulated Areas, accounting for only 10% on average (MIC 2017b). The municipalities are used to implementing the state-made counter-shrinkage prescriptions with state funding. This undermines the local governments' incentive to autonomously create context-tailored adaptive cycles from scratch.

There is also an ideological lock-in. Experiencing long-lasting economic stagnation and the accelerating population decline, a nostalgic desire to revive the past period of growth has arisen among policy makers, politicians and business communities (Yamashita & Kanai 2015); The reinforced pro-growth mindset in policy actors has fixated the counter-shrinkage approach to the developmental method in the CNDP period, with a delusive conviction that Japan can return to the growth paradigm through the same pro-growth policies. The sensitivity of the state to social changes is a crucial constituent in building regional resilience (Pike et al. 2010), but the ideological obsession with growth has impeded the responsiveness of the central government to the fundamental social shift to the post-growth paradigm.

The centralised policymaking system, the sectionalism in the central bureaucracy, the financial dependency of local municipalities on the state – all of these are the basic features of the Japanese

governance system[43] (Mizuno 2000) – and the pro-growth mindset are a main structural lock-ins embedded in Japanese society; they have prevented the counter-shrinkage policies from being more integrative, responsive and context sensitive.

4-7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated the development of post-war rural shrinkage in Japan, the policy responses to shrinkage at the national and prefectural levels, and their contributions to the resilience of rural regions in relation to the research question Q1 (a & b).

Shrinkage in Japan first emerged in the geographically remote rural regions as a result of an extensive rural-urban migration triggered by industrialisation and the economic boom after World War II. Since then, rural shrinkage has progressed concurrently with the concentration in the Tokyo MA. The capital zone grew to a world-class metropolis that attracted new populations and industries, and the rural regions faced a constant outmigration and the decline of their agricultural industries. The regional development in the CNDPs, which disseminated the standardised development models, also hampered the development of context-specific long-lasting regional industries. Both the concentration in the Tokyo MA and shrinkage in the rural regions were self-reinforcing, and an extremely asymmetrical economic geography was constructed in post-war development in Japan. The neoclassic economic theory's convergence of urban-rural disparities never occurred, and the areas affected by shrinkage gradually expanded from the remote regions to all non-metropolitan regions. Today, shrinkage has become omnipresent not only in the rural areas, but also in many cities in the rural regions. An increasing number of rural places that have lost their community functions irretrievably by decades-long shrinkage are at risk of future disappearance.

[43] Mizuno (2000) explains three main characteristics of the Japanese administrative system: the dominance of the central governmental agencies; vertical segmentation and weak coordination between the ministries; and the absence of auditing organisations to assess the effectiveness of governmental agencies.

A range of the policy measures taken by the central government never succeeded in ceasing shrinkage. Rather, they often contributed to intensifying the process and undermining the resilience of the rural regions. The adaptive cycles formulated by the central government in the centralised policymaking process were narrowly focused and place-neutral. The emphasis on hardware development in the depopulation acts and the FPNR has addressed only part of the multifaceted symptoms of shrinkage. The off-the-shelf public projects in the CNDPs had an adverse effect on regional development.

Moreover, the CNDPs, regional revitalisation, and the municipal mergers implemented for the development and better administration in the rural regions have, in effect, traded the resilience of the peripheralised rural regions for the resilience of the central system. The trade-off policies were applied repeatedly throughout the growth period and the post-growth period by the central government. These policies prioritised the stability of the national system and the competitiveness of the urban areas over the bottom-up development of vulnerable rural regions. Such efficiency-based approach has become more conspicuous in the predicament of national finance in the post-growth period, and the spread of the 'vanishing region' discourse has been constructing a post-political consensus to normalise the trade-off policies. However, as the nested structure in panarchy theory expresses, there is an interconnectivity between the resilience of the adaptive cycles nested in a system. Trading-off resilience has the risk of damaging not only the rural regions, but also the metropolitan areas that are interlinked to the rural regions in terms of material flow, and can eventually destabilise the entire society. Scholars argue the inevitable trade-off of resilience in human society and suggest a space for negotiation in which all stakeholders, including the most affected group of people, participate (Fabinyi et al. 2014; Bahadur et al. 2010; Lebel et al. 2006). Creating such an agora for open debate and dissent will not be easy, because the tradition of the trade-off policy approach is associated with the basic structure of Japanese society, such as the centralised policymaking process, sectionalism in the central bureaucracy, the financial dependency of the local municipalities, and the pro-growth mindset among the central policy actors. Wilson (2014) calls the macro-scale structural power nexus that encloses the possible pathways and resilience of the lower levels the "transitional corridor". These structural factors and underpinning trade-off policies have created a narrow corridor of the possible future development

pathways for the rural regions, and undermined their resilience. The rural regions are already trapped in the vicious revolt process towards a larger collapse. Re-politicisation of rural shrinkage is urgently needed in order to avoid excessive trade-offs that can further accelerate the revolt process.

In the next chapter, I will take a closer look at the micro-level response to rural shrinkage. I will investigate what adaptive cycles have been produced in the shrinking communities, given the narrow transition corridor, and to what extent they have impacted the development trajectories of these communities.

Chapter 5 Case Studies in Japan

This chapter aims to answers the research question Q2 (a & b) by investigating the community-level responses to shrinkage in Minami and Uchiko, in Shikoku. I first outline post-war shrinkage in the two towns, and then take a closer look at five different adaptive cycles of community revitalisation activities. I delineate the development processes of the adaptive cycles, and examine their contribution to the resilience of the communities. In so doing, I identify the main socio-political and cultural factors that influenced the development paths and performances of the adaptive cycles. I list the main drivers and barriers of the adaptive cycles according to the framework of the key components of community resilience in Table 2-1 in Chapter 2.

5-1 Minami, Tokushima

5-1-1 Minami: Introduction

Minami is a coastal town with a mild climate in the southern *Kaihu* (seaside) block in Tokushima prefecture, stretching east to west along the Pacific Ocean. The town is located 50 km south of Tokushima city, the prefectural capital, and 30 km south of Anan city, the second largest city in the prefecture. Minami is on the ohenro pilgrimage route because of Yakuo-ji (temple 23). The town's area is 140.9 km^2, nearly 90% of which is forest. The sea coast is well known as an egg-laying site for marine turtles.

Minami was created by the municipal merger of Hiwasa and Yuki in 2006. The areas I refer to Hiwasa and Yuki in this study refers to the area that was respectively the former Hiwasa town and the Yuki town. The town office of Minami and the downtown area (developed in front of Yakuo-ji) are located in Hiwasa; the majority of the population lives near the estuary of the Hiwasa River running through the area (Figure 5-1). Yuki is the rural area that comprises of sparsely populated, small fishing villages.



Figure 5-1 View of the Hiwasa district, Minami

Traditional industries in Minami are rice cropping and inshore fishing. The shares of these industries have significantly declined during the post-war period, but the share of the primary sector industries in local employment (16%) is still high compared to the national average of 4% (Minami Town Office 2014). There are no major manufacturing or service industries that can substitute for the decline of agriculture industries, but the tourism in Yakuō-ji has a long history. Yakuō-ji attracts about one million pilgrims and tourists a year from other parts of Japan and abroad.

5-1-2 Shrinkage in Minami

Minami has experienced a continual decline in its population since the 1950s. The population of the town peaked at 17,500 in 1950 and fell to 7,090 by 2015, with the ageing rate growing from 9.3% to 45.8% in the same period (Statistics Bureau 2017a). By 2040, the current population of 7,020 is expected to decline to 3,590 with the rise of an elderly ratio to 54.5% (Minami Town Office 2017b; Minami Town Office 2015). Table 5-1 shows the structural causal factors and the consequent symptoms of shrinkage in Minami.

Table 5-1 Shrinkage in Minami

Structural factors					
Regional level		National level		Global level	
2000s	Municipal mergers	2000s	Structural reform	1980s–	Globalisation and the rise of Southeast Asian countries
1970s–	Decline of fish catch	1980s	Deindustrialisation		
1950s–	Outmigration	1960s	Industrialisation Urbanisation		
		1950s–	Change of eating habits and the decline of rice consumption		

Symptoms of shrinkage at the local level	
Demography:	Outmigration and population ageing
Economy:	Decline and lack of successors for the agriculture and fishing industries; lack of local employment
Finance:	Decrease in local tax revenue and squeeze of public finance
Physical:	Vacant housing; unused facilities (e.g. closed schools); abandoned farmlands
Public services:	Local school closures; lack of sufficient medical facilities
Social:	Decline of local confidence and social cohesion

The main causes of shrinkage in Minami were: constant outmigration; the decline of agriculture and fishing industries; and the fall in the fertility rate. The massive job-seeking outmigration of young people occurred at the end of the 1950s in relation with post-war industrialisation. The outmigration reduced after the high growth period, but the outflow of young people continued, along with the decline of the local primary sector industries. The rice paddy reduction programme from the 1970s and the sharp drop in the price of rice associated with the westernisation of the Japanese people's diet aggravated the rice cropping industry in Minami. The fishing industry also declined significantly. Fish catch has dropped to one third of the original amount in the last two decades in the fishing union[45] in Hiwasa, mainly due to environmental change and overexploitation. The price of fishing products has also increasingly fluctuated with competition from imported seafoods brought in by the globalised economy. The fertility rate in the town, which was over 2.0 in the 1980s, decreased to an average of

[45] Miami has seven fishing unions, six in Yuki and one in Hiwasa.

1.51 by 2008–2012 (Minami Town Office 2015). The fall of the fertility rate has contributed to depopulation in Minami.

The symptoms of shrinkage in Minami are wide-ranging. Local employment opportunities are limited in their variation and number. At the same time, the local agriculture and fishing industries have a serious shortage of successors, as younger people look for more stable jobs in urban areas. They leave the town for jobs or education opportunities when they graduate from high school. Most of the local farmers and fishermen are in their 70s, and the agricultural cooperative anticipates that the 500 farmers in town would be halved in a decade. Only 2 in 70 fishermen were aged below 40 in the fishing union in Hiwasa, and a rapid decline of the number of fishermen is inevitable. The constant declining revenue from resident and property taxes has intensified the vulnerability of local public finance. Tax allocation from the central government exceeds half of the revenue of the town, and its self-finance in the annual budget is only 21% (Minami Town Office 2017a). The physical symptoms, such as an increase in the number of empty houses, shops and public facilities, have degraded the town landscape. The main shopping area, Sakuramachi-dori, along with the main approach passage to Yakuō-ji, has become a 'shutter street', with many closed shops now turned into parking lots. Most visitors to Yakuō-ji move to the next temple without shopping or staying in Minami. The local residents drive to the shopping mall in Anan city for their daily shopping. The medical services in the town are limited. The two town hospitals have only internal medicine, orthopaedic surgery and surgery departments. Obstetrical service and emergency medical facilities are not available in Minami. Pregnant women need to go to hospitals in Anan city or Tokushima city for medical check-ups. In case of an emergency, patients are carried to a general hospital in Komatsushima city by air ambulance.

The merger of Hiwasa and Yuki into Minami in 2006 accelerated the shrinkage in the town. Two high schools – one of them was a fisheries high school – in Minami were closed in 2006 and 2009 for the consolidation of public facilities. This damaged not only local retail businesses but also the vibrancy of the town. Residents missed the training vessel of the closed fisheries high school that had been part of the scenery of the local port. The loss of the old town name and local schools undermined the

residents' confidence about the place. A town official mentioned that the merger under shrinkage also weakened the function of the Municipality and deepened the outmigration trend. A resident who engaged in a local NPO of community revitalisation said:

> "Rural areas have been forgotten for 50 years, and will be abandoned. The central government says that they will increase the population in the rural areas, and it is doing the opposite. They merged schools and contracted the local medical system. Some districts in the mountains will lose more than half of the residents within a few years, and the only people who are returning from the urban areas are retired elderlies. We cannot see the future of the town."

He showed concern about the future continuity of their community, criticising the central government's contradictory actions to revitalise rural places.

5-1-3 Response to shrinkage in Minami

Before the merger, Hiwasa and Yuki had produced different types of adaptive cycles to deal with shrinkage. Hiwasa took the conventional approach of inviting companies and firms from outside the town to create employment. This adaptive cycle was short-lived, due to the transfer of manufacturing factories to other Asian countries with cheaper labour. Yuki created an adaptive cycle of a public-citizen collaboration programme, in which town officials were sent to the local communities to support their revitalisation activities. The programme was well received by the residents but was discontinued after the merger. After the merger, Minami became the main location of a TV drama *Welcame* (a term that is a composite of welcome and *kame*, turtles in Japanese) in 2009 and 2010. The town aimed to develop local tourism using this opportunity, but the visitors to the TV location petered out in a few years.

The main organisations in the local agriculture and fishing industries have had difficulty in creating effective adaptive cycles to cope with industrial decline and the need to secure successors for their local businesses. A staff member in the agricultural cooperative commented that the local organisations were powerless in the face of shrinkage and national policy that did not address the

specific contexts of the town. The patriarchy and seniority-based hierarchy in local organisations also hampered the creation of adaptive cycles. In the fishing union in Hiwasa, a staff member in the union commented on the difficulty of persuading the senior members in power who were in their 60s and 70s. He said:

> "The senior members have pride in their conventional ways and are reluctant to try new things. Ones with ideas and opinions for change are more or less the generation of the senior members' sons. They hesitate to give advice to the members of their father's age, and the senior members won't hear their sons' opinions."

The public sector and the industrial organisations in Minami have not been able to produce effective adaptive cycles that address local shrinkage. Nonetheless, new adaptive cycles have been generated from the business and civic sectors. In Hiwasa, the SO project has started in recent years; this project invites the SOs of IT and design companies to the town, instead of plants and factories. In Izari, a small settlement in Yuki, a group of local residents created a new adaptive cycle to avoid the closure of a local school. The SFV programme accepts families with school children from outside the district. The SO project and the SFV programme are currently the most active adaptive cycles in Minami.

5-2 Case study 1: Hiwasa

5-2-1 The SO project in Tokushima

There were several technological and socio-cultural conditions that created the SO project in Tokushima. When digital broadcasting replaced terrestrial analogue broadcasting in Japan in the early 2000s, Tokushima faced the problem of losing its access to TV broadcasting in the neighbouring region, Kinki. In order to avoid that, with funding from the MIC,[46] the local government established a high-speed fibre-optic broadband network [47] across the entire prefecture, including the most

[46] The cost for establishing the CATV network, 24.39 billion yen, was mostly financed by the MIC.

depopulated rural districts, from 2002 to 2010. At the same time, there has been a growing interest among some companies in the IT industry in a less place-restricted working style and in working in a nature-rich environment. The SO project was initially an organic movement that started when some IT companies in the urban areas created their SOs in Kamiyama, an inland shrinking town.

Observing the trend in Kamiyama, the prefectural government launched the SO project in 2012 to spread the movement within the prefecture as a signature project in the TSR project. The promotional team comprised of officers, SOs, local NPOs, and scholars. The prefectural government identifies itself as a 'concierge',[48] and focuses on supporting the smooth development of the movement instead of directing the project. The SO project has steadily developed, reflecting the high interest in teleworking; the total number of SOs and related companies has grown to 62 in 12 municipalities within five years (Tokushima Satellite Office Promotion Team 2017).

Minami is one of the earliest towns in which the SO project was developed, and it became a hub of the project, together with Kamiyama. An interesting commonality between Kamiyama and Minami is that they are both located in particularly difficult parts of the pilgrimage route.[49] The osettai culture that encourages and heals tired pilgrims has been fostered in these two towns. Several participants who were engaged in the SO project in Kamiyama and Minami mentioned that the long tradition of osettai was an asset underlying the capacity of the local communities to accept outsiders and the changes brought by them. This can be explained as the remember process in panarchy theory, in which the asset cultivated over a long period of time contributes to dealing with system challenges.

[48] For example, they negotiated with the Tokushima airport and prepared a free parking zone for SOs so that the staff members in the SOs could reduce their transport costs.
[49] Kamiyama, with temple 12, is known as part of the "*henro-korogashi*" (places where pilgrims fall down), as the pathway is especially hilly and steep in the mountains. The distance between Yakuō-ji, with temple 23, in Minami and the next, temple 24, is one of the longest sections of the pilgrimage.

5-2-2 The SO project in Minami

The initially planned location for the SO project in Minami was Izari, a very small, remote district. The local leaders in Izari rejected the proposal, which they thought would not fit with the character of the local community, and the project developed in the town centre and its adjacent seaside district, Ebisuhama, in Hiwasa instead (Table 5-2).

Table 5-2 The development process of the adaptive cycle of the SO project

Phase	Period	Activities
Γ	2011	• The prefectural government conducted the pilot SO project
	2012	• The first SO was opened in Ebisuhama, Minami
	2013	• The area regeneration company Awae was established in Ebisuhana • The south-block branch office of the prefectural government launched the ICT Village project • Four companies opened SOs
	2014	• Awae moved to the renovated public bath facility in Hiwasa • Three companies opened SOs
	2015	• Three companies opened SOs
	2016	• One company opened an SO

The γ phase: 2011–present

An IT businessman played a key role in the development of the adaptive cycle of the SO project. He was born in Hiwasa, left town when he graduated high school, and ran an IT company in Tokyo for over a decade. Once he learnt about the SO movement in Kamiyama, he opened his company's SO in 2012 in Ebisuhama, a seashore district a few kilometres from the town centre, as the first SO in Minami. Soon after that, he extended his interest from teleworking to town revitalisation with IT technologies, and invited some companies' SOs to Minami using his personal and professional network. He established an area regeneration company, Awae, in Ebisuhama in 2013 for this activity, and became its director. *Awae* means 'small intermediary space' in the local language.

In the same year, the south-block branch of the prefectural government launched the ICT Village project to promote the SO movement in towns in the Kaihu area, including Minami. The members of the project consisted of the SOs in Minami, Awae, local NPOs, local business institutions (i.e. the Commerce and Industry Association (ACI), the agricultural cooperative, and the fishing unions), officials from the town office and the branch of the prefectural government, and scholars from universities in Tokushima. The members, except the scholars, meet monthly to discuss their activities and the future development of the project.

In contrast to the proactive support of the prefectural government with regard to the SO project, the town office in Minami has been inactive in terms of initiative. Instead of the town office, Awae plays the central role in promoting the SO project: they organise visiting tours for interested companies; prepare the facilities for the trial SO experience; and find properties for new SOs. The town office's role has been limited to providing information about the town to companies introduced by Awae.

In 2014, in order to enhance the visibility and commitment to the community, Awae moved to the centre of Hiwasa after renovating the closed traditional public bath, Hatsune-yu, into their office space. The main bathing area was used for office space and the changing room was opened to the public. Using the iconic local building as the base of their activity improved awareness among local residents about Awae and the SO project (Figure 5-2).



Figure 5-2 Hatsune-yu office of the Awae corporation

At the time this fieldwork was conducted, five companies had opened their SOs. The types of SOs were mainly IT service companies (e.g. cloud computing, cyber security services, computer programming and software development) (Figure 5-3) and creative companies in graphic design and architecture. For instance, an SO was operating a free IT café, where local elderly people could drop by and learn how to use IT devices. Their purpose was collecting data on the visitors' IT literacy to develop IT products that were friendly for the elderly.



Exterior (top) and interior (bottom)

Figure 5-3 An SO of an IT business company in Hiwasa

The director of Awae expressed the lifestyle in the SO in Minami as “half IT, half X”, a life with IT work and with whatever else one would like. For example, a life of a staff member in an SO is “half-IT, half-waves”: he surfs cyberspace during work hours and the waves of the sea after work. Another

staff member is leading a “half IT, half agriculture” life, cropping rice besides his work. The high-speed broadband network in the nature-rich environment was a key element as to why Hiwasa could attract young workers in the IT and design industries. However, among the various assets in Hiwasa – e.g. the IT infrastructure, nature-rich environment, cheap property prices – several staff members in the SOs commonly commented that the existence of Awae and the director as the intermediator between the office and the local community was the primary reason why they opened the SOs in Minami. The first three SOs that had moved to Minami were run by former colleagues and acquaintances of the director of Awae. Awae’s intermediary role and the director’s agency to bring in people with IT and design skills to Hiwasa using his network have been the driving force of the SO project.

The impact of the SO project on local employment has not yet been significant. The average number of SOs is less than five and staff are normally hired from urban areas, so the SO project has not contributed to the local job market. The economic impact of the consumption of the SOs has not been large either, because they drive to Anan city for their daily shopping. For the local leaders advocating the SO project, the focus of the SO project is more about the innovation of local industries with IT skills than any direct employment creation. The town mayor commented:

> “The potential of the SO project is still unknown, but we are expecting unexpected chemistry between them [i.e. the local industries and the SOs] and working to enhance this possibility.”

Tolón-Becerra & Lastra-Bravo (2009) argue that the ICT technology that allows knowledge-based workers to work in rural areas can be a key instrument in bringing about new opportunities and skills for rural development. The SO project is an investment in such opportunities, expecting the emergence of new ‘unexpected’ adaptive cycles of new businesses by creating interfaces between the SOs and the local industries.

However, the local agricultural cooperative and the fishing union have been rather unresponsive to the SO project. A senior staff member in the agricultural cooperative showed hesitation to collaborate with the SOs:

> "There will be many uncertainties in the product development with SOs. Who will provide necessary facilities for the project? Will the farmers be able to produce things required by SOs? How much funding can we expect from the public sector? We cannot take risks."

The reluctance to act for change and a risk-avoiding mentality exists in the organisation. In the fishing union, there is an inertia associated with the patriarchy in the organisation. A member in his 40s said that most senior members in power were reluctant to do something new and would not even understand what IT technology could do for them. The younger fishermen had different opinions, but they had already given up discussing them under the union's seniority-based hierarchy. The motivation to create new adaptive cycles through collaborating with the SOs is missing in the main industrial institutions in Hiwasa.

In the civic sector, there has been a range of adaptive cycles of community development in Hiwasa. Several local resident groups are working for the promotion of local tourism, supporting the elderly, sustaining the local traditional festivals, facilitating property renovation and so on. With the tradition of the osettai culture, the local residents were generally open to accepting people from outside, and some residents showed an expectation that the SOs would reinvigorate the community. However, interaction between the adaptive cycles of the SO project and the other activities has been missing so far. A resident group in their sixties and seventies commented on the invisibility of the SOs and the ambiguity of the potential benefits they could bring:

> "What is the SO project, who are the SOs, what are they doing here? All this is invisible to us… and hard to understand."
> "IT businesses are immaterial. We can hardly see what the local community can get from the SOs."

Trust relationships are a prerequisite for collective work and cooperation (Li 2007; Moore & Westley 2011). The knowledge that the residents have about the IT business and the SO project is still too little, and the trust relationship that enables collaborative action has not yet been established between the SOs and the residents. The director of Awae said:

> "Only few residents see the value of the SO project to the community. The project is still distant to most of the local people, but I think the SOs are gradually recognised by them. I don't want to impose us [to the community]. I want to have a gradual process."

Awae and the SOs have been making various efforts to build positive relationship with local actors through providing their IT skills. For example, Awae and an SO developed a programme for tour guides using PC tablets that can be used by the local volunteer guide group. Similarly, an SO periodically provides IT classes in the local middle school. More informally, some staff members of Awae and the SOs daily join the local fishermen's after-work drinks. An SO allows the local women to run a café in their office meeting space on weekends. Many staff members of the SOs actively participate the local autumn festival and carry *chōsa*, the portable shrines, instead of the local young people who left the community. A stuff member of Awae commented that the SOs were now in the phase of learning local rules and specific protocols in the town to be accepted by the community. Trust between the SOs and the residents has gradually been built through these efforts.

As a positive impact of the SO project on the community, the director of Awae commented that the inflow of young people from the cities contributed to the retrieval of local confidence, and that daily communications with staff members of the SOs, such as chatting and giving them advice about local life, enlivened the senior people. The SO project in Hiwasa has been frequently covered by local and national media from various angles including teleworking, rural revitalisation, social design and new lifestyles. This has also improved the legitimacy of the SO project in the community.

To summarise, the current formation of the main adaptive cycles in Hiwasa is illustrated in Figure 5-4.

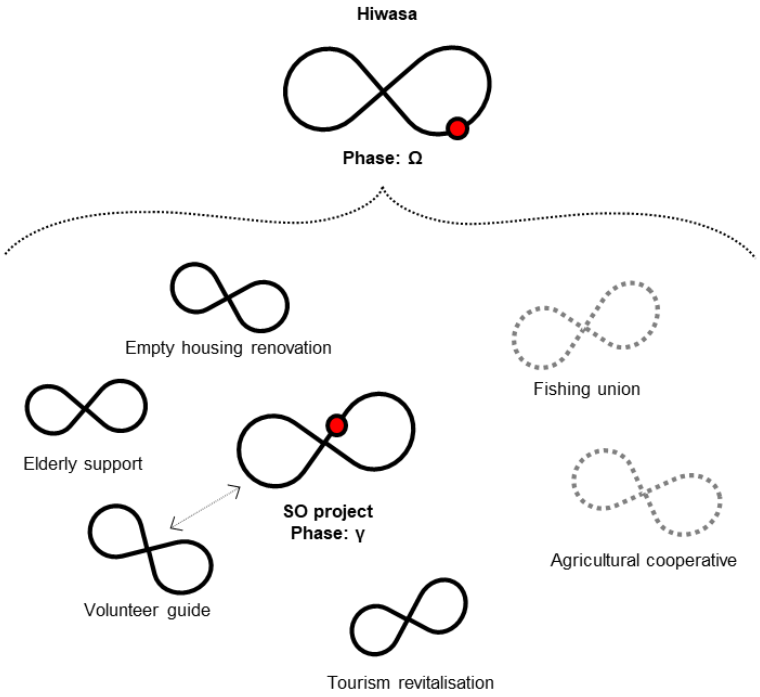


Figure 5-4 The formation of the adaptive cycles in Hiwasa

The number of the SOs and related companies has continuously increased to 16 by 2017, and the adaptive cycle of the SO project has been at the growth γ phase up until the present. However, new adaptive cycles in collaboration with the local industrial institutions have not been generated due to organisational inertia associated with the seniority-based hierarchy in the organisations. Interaction with the existing adaptive cycles led by different groups is also missing in the absence of a robust social network. The impact of the adaptive cycle of the SO project on the resilience of the community has been limited, but the construction of trust relationships between the SOs and the residents is in progress. There is a high possibility of interaction between the adaptive cycles of the SO projects and other adaptive cycles when sufficient social networks are built between them.

5-3 Case study 2: Izari

5-3-1 Izari: Introduction

Izari district is a small fishing district with about 100 residents located on the eastern edge of Minami, surrounded by the mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Until the prefectural road was constructed at the end of the 1950s, access to Izari from other districts was only through unpaved narrow roads, and the district had been called the "inaccessible land". In order to access the district today by public transport, one must take a bus from the Yuki station, which runs three times a day, for about an hour. The name Izari comes from *isari*, the ancient word for fishing, and fishing is the only local employment in the district. The main products are amberjack, cutlass fish, grunt, and porgy, as well as abalone, turban shell and lobster. Izari is traditionally known for its strong community bonds. Several local residents mentioned that geographical isolation and the frequent need for cooperation in their daily activities in the past are the main factors for their strong solidarity[50] (Fig 5-5).



Figure 5-5 Izari, Minami town

[50] For instance, local people carried fishing boats together onto/from the beach every day until the port facility was constructed in the 1980s. Locking the front door of houses is uncommon in Izari.

5-3-2 Shrinkage in Izari

Izari has experienced acute depopulation and its consequences for decades after World War II. The local population, about 400 in the 1950s, constantly fell to about 100 in the 1990s. The only local jobs were fishing and seasonal picking; the majority of local young people have moved out to Kōbe and Osaka for stable jobs, so the fishing union in the district is short of young staff members. The district does not have a supermarket, post office, bank or convenience store. The only general store, run by an old lady in her 90s, was closed in 2013. The co-op shop comes to the district once a week, but people normally drive to Anan city for shopping, the post office and bank services. There is no infirmary in or near the district, and a doctor visits Izari once or twice a month. People usually go to clinics or the general hospitals in Anan city, which are about 20- and 40-minute drives from the district, respectively.

The local school in the district is the joint school of the Izari Primary School and the Izari branch of the Yuki Middle School, so called the Izari School. The adaptive cycles of SFV programme was created by the local residents to maintain the Izari School, which significantly lost students (Figure 5-6).



Exterior



A classroom

Figure 5-6 Izari School

Shrinkage is harmful to social capital, but experiencing the consequences of shrinkage can also trigger protective or entrepreneurial communal responses (Elshof & Bailey 2015). The adaptive cycle of the SFV programme is an example that a symptom of shrinkage can raise a sense of crisis among the local residents and induce a new bottom-up leadership.

Table 5-3 shows the development process of the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme, and the related activities in Izari from the end of the 1990s onwards.

Table 5-3 The development process of the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme

Phase	Period	Activities
Γ	1997–1999	• Discussion on the development of the SFV programme
	1999	• The first promotion event of the SFV programme; *oideyo umino gakko he* was organised
	2000	• The Association for the Future of Izari was launched • The association held the PR campaign for Izari in Osaka • The reunion event was held in Osaka, and the support group for Izari, *Kansai Izari ōendan*, was established
	2002	• The number of transfer children in the SFV programme started to increase

K	2004	• The number of primary school children in the Izari School peaked at 17 (the total number of pupils was 24)
	2005	• The association held the PR campaign of the district in Tokyo
	2007	• The association opened the Izari café • The local revitalisation activities in Izari centring on the SFV programme were awarded the Imperial Cup
	2014	• The number of primary school children in the Izari School had a third peak at 17 (the total number of pupils was 21)
K to Ω	2015–2017	• The number of pupils in the Izari School decreased

The γ phase: 1996–2004

Experiencing significant amounts of outmigration in the high growth period in the 1960s and 1970s, the number of pupils in the Izari School dropped from 87 in 1961 to 5 in 1976–1978. The number did not recover after that. In 1992, the school received a letter from the town office recommending closure. This evoked a sense of crisis among the local residents about the future continuity of the community.

Recognising the idea of the *sanson-ryūgak*u[51] (Study in Mountainous Village, SMV) in other rural areas, the residents made a petition to the town office to save the school with a similar approach. Their petition was, however, ignored for four years. Disappointed by the town office's irresponsiveness, the residents decided to take action on their own. The group of concerned residents met daily and discussed possible future plans over alcohol, which helped them to talk straightforwardly and show their real feelings. Through accumulating a number of discussions – and the occasional physical fight – for over the two years, the ties between residents were strengthened, and they collectively developed the idea of the SFV programme.

In the summer of 1999, the resident group held the first promotion event for the SFV programme, *oideyo umino gakko he* (come over to the school of the sea), in which children could experience a life in the Izari School and various marine activities – e.g. shellfish picking, sea kayaking and boat cruising. The success of the event without support from the public sector gave the residents confidence that they

[51] The programme in which children in the urban areas spend a few months to several years in the schools in the rural villages in the mountainous areas.

could shape the future of their community through their action. This promotional event has become an annual event.

After organising the first event for the SFV programme, the residents recognised the need to create an organisation for continuous local regeneration activity. They launched the *Izari no mirai wo kangaeru suishin kyōgikai* (the Association for the Future of Izari) in 2000, with the catch phrase "*nanimo naikedo, nanika aru*" (nothing here, but something here). All the residents in Izari are regarded as members of the association, even though the organisation is managed by a few residents, such as the secretary of the association and the head of the local fishing union.

Communities with very strong bonds can be exclusive and miss out on valuable weak ties that are the source of external resources (Bosworth & Atterton 2012). The secretary of the association is aware of this risk and has proactively made efforts to create local-external networks. He said:

> "Community cannot be revitalised only with local people's passion. How to get attention from wider society and how to get outside people involved is the key. At the beginning of our activity, I did many things that might seemed useless. I frequently visited Tokyo and met various people including scholars and bureaucrats in the governmental agencies. These things indirectly led to the better recognition of the SFV programme in society and media attention. Otherwise, the programme would have never been known by mass media."

His individual agency in creating connections with actors in external society has been instrumental to add neo-endogeneity and to facilitate the development of the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme.

Shortly after the launch of the association, they held a PR campaign in Osaka (2000) that exhibited the life of Izari with drawings from pupils in the Izari School. In this exhibition, the residents received an offer of support for a reunion event with people who were from Izari and living in Osaka. The reunion event was realised a few months later involving about 300 people. The ties between the current and former residents in Izari were rebuilt, and the *Kansai Izari ōendan* (Izari supporter group in Kansai) was established. The supporter group has assisted the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme

in various ways. Some members have offered their property in Izari for the SFV programme to use; others have purchased Izari's seafood products. The number of members of the supporter group reached 1,000 in 2017. The resident association has periodically organised PR campaigns since then, including a large one held in Tokyo in 2005. As it became better known among wider society (thanks to the agency of the secretary of the association), the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme gained a range of external resources, such as funding, marketing opportunities, and media attention.

The κ phase: 2004–2014

The basic scheme of the SFV programme is accepting transfer children from urban areas to study at the Izari school for a year or more, and their parents are requested to live in Izari with the children. Accepted families are provided with accommodation by the association, which are generally refurbished empty houses in the district. As the visibility of the SFV programme and Izari in the wider society increased, the programme attracted interest from families outside the district. The number of pupils in the Izari School, which was 10 in 1999, recovered to 24 by 2004. The transfer children from outside increased from 6 to 17 in the same period. The total number of pupils at the Izari School averaged 20 in the subsequent decade, which was the stable κ phase of the SFV programme.

The nature-rich environment and the close relationship between the school and the community are the core assets of the SFV programme. There is a variety of nature experience classes outside the classroom, such as seasonal pickling – *hijiki* (seaweed) in spring, abalone in summer, and lobster in autumn – and net fishing, with the help of the residents (Figure 5-7).



Figure 5-7 Hijiki drying in the school's programme

These activities are not only to experience nature, but also to foster children's interests in fishing jobs. For instance, in a hijiki picking class, children pick hijiki from the coast, boil them, dry them in the sun, pack and sell them in the market in Tokushima city every year. Each child gets a small reward[52] and the sales are used for the school trip in the winter. In a fishing class, the pupils above 10 years old accompany fishermen of the local fishing union, and help them clean and cut fish. Local fishermen provide ships and other equipment for these classes, and act as the instructors. Teachers frequently bring children to the fishing union, which is a five-minute walk from the school, as part of teaching. Children are expected to learn what a fishing job is like through these activities (Figure 5-8).

[52] 500 yen (approximately £3).



Figure 5-8 Children visiting the fishing union

Another distinctive aspect of the life at the Izari School is the closeness of the local residents to the pupils. The teachers at school and the local residents who casually speak to the children on the streets call them by their first names without adding *kun* or *chan* at the end of their names. That is generally regarded as blunt and rude in the urban areas, unless they are the children's family or very close to them. The principal of the school said that the bond between the community and the school was uniquely strong, and the pupils of the school were regarded as the children of the community.

The SFV programme has attracted attention not only from families who are interested in raising their children in a place with nature, but also from those whose children had problems at schools and were looking for a place to restart their school life. The principal of the school commented that about half of the transfer children were truants, and that their behaviour improved within a few days to one month at the longest in Izari. Such stories were reported by the media and heightened the profile of the SFV

programme. In 2007, the Izari School was certified as a Community School[53] by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

Izari started to have visitors as the SFV programme began to attract more widespread attention, but there was no café, restaurant or accommodation in the district. In order to create another opportunity for local-external interaction to disseminate information about the SFV programme, the association opened the Izari café[54] in 2007 through the initiative of the secretary of the association. The Izari café was the spin-off adaptive cycle from the SFV programme (Figure 5-9).



Figure 5-9 Izari cafe

The Izari café serves lunch using fish caught in the morning and closes when they are sold out. There are two condominiums upstairs so that visitors can stay in the district. The seven staff members of the café are wives of local fishermen and the mothers of the transferred children in the SFV programme.

[53] A Community School is a school where the community members are engaged in its management and operation. It provides an original curriculum.
[54] The project was funded by the MAFF and the town office.

The people who are interested in the programme can get information through leaflets in the café and by talking with the transfer children's mothers who work there. The floor leader commented that running a café was a totally new experience for the local women and they had no confidence at all. But the café attracted an average of 10,000 visitors a year in the first six years. After the café was covered by several TV programmes in 2013, the annual visitors increased to 15,000 a year. The number of visitors at weekends would often exceed the population of the district. This gave them confidence in the district and themselves.

In the same year as the opening of the Izari café, the SFV programme and its related activities in Izari received the Imperial Cup, a major national award for local revitalisation activities. This deepened the confidence of the local actors and further enhanced the profile of the district and the SFV programme.

The κ–Ω phase: 2015–present

So far, the SFV programme has accepted about 150 children and their families from Tokushima and many other prefectures, ranging from Hokkaido in the north to Fukuoka in the south and including Osaka and Tokyo; the programme has successfully maintained the Izari School. The population in Izari grew from 97 to 103 from 1995 to 2017, and the ageing rate reduced dramatically from 44.0% to 24.3% (Minami Town Office 2017b). According to the resident association, about 60% of the current population in the district are newcomers.

However, the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme has already passed the κ phase and is gradually shifting to the Ω phase due to several concerns. Firstly, the number of children born in Izari has kept declining. Among the 15 pupils in the Izari School in 2017, 13 were transfer children. It is expected that no local children will be in the Izari School in the near future. The number of transfer children has also been on the decline in recent years. The total number of pupils from 2015 to 2017 averaged at 16, lower by 4 than that in the previous κ phase.

Secondly, and more critically, no family in the SFV programme has settled in the district. Most transferred children leave the Izari School when they graduate primary school so as to prepare for the

high school entrance exam in the cities. Those who graduate middle school at the Izari School also leave the district, as there is no high school that they can commute to from the district. Many families thus choose to leave the district, as they do not have a strong reason to stay in Izari after their children's graduation. None of the transfer children have returned to the district, as there is no job opportunity other than fishing. Missing the adaptive cycle of job creation, the district cannot retain the young population that they gain in the SFV programme. The programme has thus been unable to secure generations to look after Izari in the future, and the impact of the programme on community resilience is limited to maintaining the local school. Additionally, the successors of the agents who initiated the activities of the association are absent. The current key agents were the last generation that grew up in Izari, and they have a strong sense of belonging to the district. They are already in their late 60s, and there are no younger generations that have a strong attachment to the place and are eager to take over their activities. The continuity of the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme is highly uncertain.

Figure 5-10 in the next page illustrates the configuration of the adaptive cycles generated in Izari.

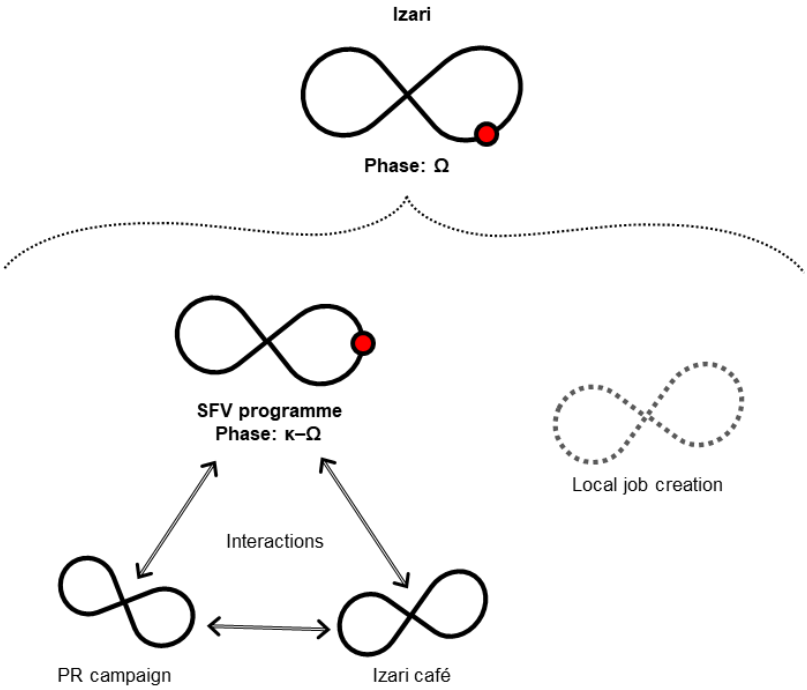


Figure 5-10 The formation of the adaptive cycles in Izari

Starting from the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme, the adaptive cycles of PR campaigns and the Izari café generated in sequence as related activities. These adaptive cycles are interconnected and have synergistically improved each other's performance. However, the district lacks the adaptive cycle of local employment creation, which is vital to attract the youth population in interaction with the adaptive cycle of the SFV programme. With the absence of this critical adaptive cycle, the produced adaptive cycles have not been influential enough to make the community move out of the Ω phase.

5-4 Uchiko, Ehime

5-4-1 Uchiko: Introduction

Uchiko is a small mountainous town in Nanyo, 40 km south of the prefectural capital Matsuyama. It takes about an hour to get to Uchiko from Matsuyama by train. The town has an area of 300 km^2, 77% of which is forest (Figure 5-11).



Figure 5-11 The view of the town centre, Uchiko

The current Uchiko was created in 2005 by the merger of three towns – Uchiko (122 km^2), Ikazaki (38 km^2) and Oda (140 km^2). The old town of Uchiko is the commercial centre with a historical townscape, Ikazaki is the administrative centre (where the town office is located), and Oda is mostly national forest. The focus of this study is old Uchiko, which represents the image of the town.

Uchiko developed wax production in the middle of the Edo era (1603–1868). The town was a major wax supplier, producing 40% of the total Japanese production in the Meiji era (1868–1912). The wax industry rapidly declined by the Taisho era (1912–1926) due to the prevalence of electric lamps and imported paraffin, and the main industry in the town shifted to the silk industry, which also disappeared due to industrialisation after World War II. No major industries in the secondary and tertiary sectors developed in Uchiko after that. Local tourism developed in the historic district in 1980s, and green tourism based on the town's natural environment started in the 2000s. But the main industry of the town is agriculture. The main products are a range of seasonal fruits (e.g. apples, grapes, melons, oranges, peaches, pears and strawberries). The town also produces rice, tobacco, and Chinese mushrooms.

5-4-2 Shrinkage in Uchiko

Uchiko has kept losing its population since the 1950s. The population of the town dropped from 41,800 to 17,500 by 2016 (Uchiko Town Office 2016). The ageing rate grew from 14.9% to 38.1% from 1980 to 2016, which is higher than the national average of 27.3% (Statistics Bureau 2017b). The population of Uchiko is expected to fall to 10,700 with an ageing rate of 44.7%, and 4 in 10 people in town will be over 65 by 2040 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2013).

Similar to Minami, the shrinkage in Uchiko has been caused by outmigration, economic transition, and the low fertility rate. There was an intensive outmigration of job seekers to urban areas during the high economic growth period. Less intensive population outflow has continued afterwards in association with the deterioration of the local primary sector industries and the development of urban knowledge-based industries (Table 5-4).

The agriculture in Uchiko declined sharply due to the rice reduction programme, the fall in rice consumption, the competition from imported food, and the abolition of the tobacco monopoly. Forestry also declined as a result of the sharp drop in demand for domestic timber and the import liberalisation of foreign timber in the 1960s. Most young people leave town when they reach employment age, looking for education and jobs in the urban areas. The fertility rate in Uchiko (1.56) is higher than the national average (1.44), but the number of deaths has exceeded the number of births since 1990 (Uchiko Town Office 2016).

Table 5-4 Shrinkage in Uchiko

Structural factors					
Regional level		National level		Global level	
2000s	Municipal mergers	2000s	Structural reform	1980s–	Market globalisation
1950s–	Outmigration	1980s	End of the tobacco monopoly		
		1970s	Deindustrialisation		
		1960s	Removal of the import ban of foreign woods		
		1950s	Industrialisation		
		1910s	Urbanisation Decline of wax industry		

Symptoms of shrinkage at the local level	
Demography:	Outmigration and population ageing
Economy:	Decline and lack of successors for the agriculture and forestry industries; lack of local employment
Finance:	Decrease in local tax revenue and squeeze of public finance
Physical:	Vacant housing; unused facilities (e.g. closed schools and halls); abandoned farmlands
Public services:	Local school closures; lack of sufficient medical facilities
Society:	Weakening of social cohesion; less local confidence

Shrinkage has impacted a range of aspects of the life in Uchiko. The continuity of the local agriculture is threatened by the lack of successors, and, the town cannot provide different types of employment that would be more favourable for the young generations. The town office suffers a decline in local tax income, and the self-finance in Uchiko is only 14% of the total revenue (Uchiko Town Office 2016). The number of empty houses has grown both in the central and rural parts of town, and the rural districts also face an increase in abandoned farmlands. The town official who brought me to a hamlet that is now uninhabited told that some action should have been taken two decades ago to avoid the community's disappearance, but it was very difficult to incentivise local residents to take precautionary action before it got too late. He assumes that a number of communities in the mountainous areas will disappear in the near future.

When Ikazaki and Oda were merged to Uchiko in 2005, shrinkage in Ikazaki and Oda intensified by the closure of several schools and community halls in these areas. Finding new uses for unused buildings is also a main challenge in Uchiko. The medical services in Uchiko are also limited. There are some small clinics in the town, but people need to go to the general hospital for obstetrics and emergency medical services in the neighbouring city, Ōzu, which is about 30 minutes by car.

5-4-3 Response to shrinkage in Uchiko

The first adaptive cycle of the revitalisation of Uchiko was the townscape preservation movement of the historic district in the 1970s, and a range of adaptive cycles was generated in sequence. Suzuki (2006) explains the development of Uchiko's regeneration activities in four periods: the townscape regeneration from the 1970s to the mid-1980s; the village-scape preservation in the late 1980s to the early 1990s; the revitalisation of the agriculture industry in the late 1990s to the 2000s; and green tourism from the 2000s onwards. Before looking at some of the adaptive cycles in more detail, I briefly overview the evolutionary process of how these multiple adaptive cycles were either directly or indirectly derived from the townscape preservation.

The adaptive cycle of preserving the townscape of the historic district started at the end of the 1970s, when there was no tourism in Uchiko. The effort of townscape preservation resulted in its designation as the 18th Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings in 1983, which enhanced Uchiko's profile. Having an increase of visitors to the district, the adaptive cycle of local tourism grew rapidly in the 1980s onwards.

The rise of the adaptive cycle of tourism piqued the local farmers' interest in new agriculture business opportunities beyond producing primary products (Suzuki 2015). Seeing the success of some farmers' fruit-picking business with tourists, in 1996, the town launched the Fresh Park Karari, a facility with a farmers' market in which the local farmers could sell their products to customers directly. Before Karari, the local agricultural products in Uchiko were purchased in bulk by the agricultural cooperative

and then distributed to the market. Karari represents the adaptive cycles of new agricultural businesses stimulated by local tourism.

The idea of preserving the cultural landscape through townscape preservation spread to Ishidatami, a northern remote district, in the late 1980s, and the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation was developed by the local residents in the 1990s. As part of village-scape preservation, the adaptive cycle of the farmhouse accommodation (*Ishidatami-no-yado*), which set the precedent for the adaptive cycle of green tourism, was created.

Ehime held the *Machinami-haku* (Townscape Expo) in Nanyo in 2004. It was an 'expo without pavilions', in which visitors made tours of traditional townscapes in Nanyo. Uchiko[55] was selected to be a main exhibition site in the expo, and this led to the emergence of the adaptive cycle of green tourism, in which visitors stay in farmhouses and experience the local food and lifestyle. The Uchiko Green Tourism was established in 2004, and the number of guests in green tourism has had a modest but steady increase over the years (Suzuki 2015).

In the trajectory of town regeneration in Uchiko, independent but interrelated adaptive cycles were gradually derived from the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation, and Uchiko attained a certain multidimensionality of adaptive cycles over time. In this thesis, among these adaptive cycles, I look at the adaptive cycles of townscape preservation and the Karari project in the town centre, and the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation in the Ishidatami district, for detailed investigation.

[55] Uchiko, Ozu and Uwa were the three core exhibition towns in the Machinami-haku.

5-5 Case study 3: The town centre in Uchiko

5-5-1 Townscape preservation

The Yameshi-Gokoku district is located in the north of Uchiko's town centre. It has a historical townscape formed by traditional houses with yellow-white plaster walls and white-grid patterns on black slates. They were merchant houses built from the 17th century to the 19th century when the town boomed with the wax industry. The district deteriorated when the wax industry disappeared, but the buildings were left largely intact (they were able to avoid bombing during World War II). When the town centre shifted to the south after the war, the Yameshi-Gokoku district became a forgotten district. Many residents left the district and the empty traditional buildings became dilapidated.

The adaptive cycle of townscape preservation for this district started in the 1970s, and has continued to the present (Table 5-5).

Table 5-5 The trajectory of the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation

Phase	Period	Activities
Γ	1972	• The Yameshi-Gokoku district was short-listed for the first preliminary survey for the selection of the designated preservation districts
	1975	• The Yameshi-Gokoku district was featured in *Asahigraph*
	1977	• The cultural value of the district was confirmed by an academic appraisal
	1978	• The support programme for the renovation in the district started
	1980	• The museum of wax production (which was a converted house of the Kami-haga family) was opened
	1981	• The launch of the local ordinance of townscape preservation in Uchiko
	1982	• The Yameshi-Gokoku district was designated as the Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings
	1983	• Townscape preservation and tourism department was created in the town office
	1983–1986	• The renovation of Uchiko-za in the shopping district
	1985	• The town official was transferred to another department (loss of the key facilitator)

	1986	•	The townscape preservation symposium was held at Uchiko-za
K	1986	•	The plan of extending townscape preservation to the shopping district failed
Ω	1986–2002	•	The preservation activity declined after the key agent left
Ω-α	2002	•	The launch of the Townscape Preservation Centre (TPC) in the district
	2004	•	The Townscape Expo was held in Nanyo
	Present	•	The intensification of depopulation and an increase in housing vacancy in the district

The γ phase: 1972–1986

In the 1970s, the central government introduced the designation system of Important Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings as part of the revision of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. The Yameshi-Gokoku district was listed for the first preliminary survey for the selection of designated districts in 1972. Shortly after that, the district was featured by a well-known picture magazine, *Asahigraph*, in 1975. These events created the background for the generation of the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation. An official in the town office, who was concerned about the depopulation of the town and the loss of Yameshi-Gokoku district as a cultural asset, decided to revitalise the community by upgrading the district. He was the key agent who played a vital role in facilitating the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation through building horizontal networks inside the community and vertical networks with various actors outside the community.

In order to legitimise the preservation activity, he first asked the prefectural government and the Agency for Cultural Affairs to support an in-depth assessment of the cultural value of the district. The prefectural government declined his proposal, but the Agency for Cultural Affairs agreed to support an academic appraisal. The investigation in 1977 concluded that the Yameshi-Gokoku district had one of the best townscapes in west Japan. Encouraged by the result of the assessment, the official travelled to visit advanced town regeneration examples in Japan and European countries, including France, Germany and Italy, at his own expense. During these journeys, he built wide networks with external professionals and practitioners in the field of town development, as well as bureaucrats in central

government agencies. The external knowledge, skills and funding achieved by the official's agency facilitated the development of the adaptive cycle.

The residents in the district were indifferent to cultural property protection, and more concerned about the restrictions it might cause. The official visited the district daily, and talked with the residents about the benefits of upgrading the townscape for the community. He gradually gained the trust of the residents through accumulative communication with them over the years. In 1978, the town office started the programme that supported the renovation costs of the houses in the district. The renovation works were implemented with external experts on architecture and cultural property preservation. The official invited them from Tokyo.

The preservation activity gradually gained consensus from the residents, as more houses were refurbished and the improvement of the townscape became apparent (Figure 5-12).



Figure 5-12 Townscape of the Yameshi-Gokoku district

The official obtained the cooperation of the Haga family, an influential local landlord who was the largest wax producer in the past, and the house of Kami-haga family was converted into the museum of wax production in 1980.

In 1981, with the consensus of the residents, the town office set a local ordinance in which the local municipality could regulate all the actions to change the appearance of buildings and landscapes in the preservation districts. Shortly after that, the Yameshi-Gokoku district was designated as the 18th Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings. The national accreditation was critical in making the district famous and legitimising the townscape preservation activity. With the designation, the adaptive cycle could also attain stable funding, where 80% of refurbishing costs in the designated district was supported by the central, prefectural and town governments. The *Uchiko-chō shinkō keikaku* (regeneration plan of Uchiko) in 1982 positioned townscape preservation as one of the main pillars of the town's development, and a department for townscape preservation and tourism was newly created in the town office.

The adaptive cycle of townscape preservation generated the new adaptive cycle of renovating Uchiko-za, an old performance theatre located off the shopping street adjacent to the historic district. Built for Kabuki performances and theatrical plays a century ago, Uchiko-za lost its relevance by the 1960s due to antiquated equipment. The local ACI, the owner of Uchiko-za, was planning to demolish it to provide car parking. The official proposed to the ACI that they renovate Uchiko-za as a community hall that would represent the history and identity of Uchiko. The association declined his proposal, but donated the Uchiko-za to the town office. The town office restored it to its original design in 1983 to 1986 with support from the prefectural government, which previously declined to support the townscape preservation activity (Figure 5-13).



Figure 5-13 The renovated Uchiko-za

The funding from the prefecture was a result of the agency of the official. He asked a prefectural board member to question in the general assembly what support the prefectural government had provided for townscape preservation. Shortly after that, the town office received a funding offer from the prefectural government. In 1986, Uchiko held a symposium of townscape preservation at the renewed Uchiko-za, inviting external scholars and practitioners. Most of the guest panellists – including the mayor of Rothenburg[56] in Germany – were from the networks that the town official had built during his travels and activities. In 2015, Uchiko-za was registered as an Important Cultural Property by the central government. The renewed Uchiko-za has been used for various purposes, from performances to music concerts, lectures, conferences and local activities.[57] Several residents said that the theatre was their local pride. The renovation of Uchiko-za was a successful spin-off adaptive cycle from the townscape preservation.

[56] A town in the Bavaria, Germany. The town is known for the restoration of the ruined medieval townscape after World War II. Uchiko and Rothenburg became sister-towns in 2011.
[57] The operation rate of the theatre is about 70%, which is exceptionally high for a hall in a depopulating town.

The Ω phase: 1986–2001

The town office disliked the official's activities beyond his usual scope of work as a civil servant. In 1985, the official was transferred to a different department and separated from the townscape preservation activity. After his departure, the adaptive cycle lost momentum, rapidly declined and shifted towards the Ω phase without having the κ phase. Access to the external professional network established by the official was lost, and the monthly meetings of the residents in the historic district for townscape preservation turned into socialising and drinks. The adaptive cycle completely dissolved after the loss of the core agent.

The absence of the key intermediary agent also led to the abortion of an adaptive cycle. The town intended to extend townscape preservation to the shopping district after the official left the preservation activity; however, they developed the plan internally only with the ACI and the shop owners who were positive about the plan. This provoked a strong opposition campaign from the other shop owners. People in the shopping district were split into supporters and opponents, and the project eventually fell through (Figure 5-14).



Figure 5-14 The rundown main shopping street, Uchiko

Several shop owners mentioned that the dialogues between the town office and the stakeholders in the shopping street were critically missing. Ročak et al. (2016) call social networks between different societal groups the "cement of the society". Missing the mediatory agent who would facilitate the creation of this social cement, mutual mistrust between the stakeholders blocked the emergence of the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation in the shopping street. The conflict in the 1980s has cast a shadow on the relationship between the town office and the shopping street today. The head of the Union of the Shopping Street, now in his 40s, commented that there was still mutual distrust between the town office and shop owners, which impeded collaborative action for local revitalisation.

The Ω–α phase: 2002–present

In order to reboot the adaptive cycle, the town office set up the Townscape Preservation Centre (TPC) in the Yameshi-Gokoku district in 2002, and institutionalised the townscape preservation activity. The office of the TPC is located in the historic district, and three officials work full-time there. The head of the TPC commented that the presence of the TPC changed the attitude of the residents, who had not

considered the preservation activity as their business. They came to participate in the activities upon the request of the TPC, although active engagement and initiative were missing.

The *Uchiko-chō kankō kōryū keikakusho* (Plan of Tourism and Communication in Uchiko), made in 2007 after the municipal merger, stated that the new town would take after old Uchiko's development model based on townscape preservation and improvement. Through the continual activity of the TPC before and after the merger, the refurbishment of the exteriors of about 90% of the buildings have been implemented, and their activity has received a number of town regeneration awards.

However, the increase in the visitors to the historic district did not create local employment or incentivise the return of local young people. Most visitors stroll through the Yameshi-Gokoku district, have a look at Uchiko-za and leave Uchiko within a few hours; the average expense of a tourist is between 1,500 and 2,000 yen.[58] The accommodation facilities in the town are old standard lodgings, and local tourism has not developed enough to entice tourists to stay in the town. In spite of the high number of tourists, the impact of tourism on the local economy and employment has been insignificant.

Another challenge in the town preservation activity is the accelerating depopulation of the Yamechi-Gokoku district. The majority of the residents are in their 70s, and traditional houses are not convenient for them to live in. The current preservation programmes only support exterior refurbishment, and the residents have been moving out to live with their children outside the district. The TPC is aware of the limitations of the current preservation programme, but the adaptive cycle lacks the external knowledge resources to innovate the programme, and the remaining residents are indifferent about creating change. The head of the TPC said:

> "The foundation of the activity is not necessarily robust, nor will it be. If we keep doing the same thing, most buildings will become empty, and it will be practically impossible to continue the townscape preservation activity."

[58] Equivalent to approximately £8 to £10.

The adaptive cycle of townscape preservation is now trapped in between the Ω phase and the α phase, and it has not been able to move forward to the α phase of reorganisation.

5-5-2 The Karari project

The growth of the adaptive cycle of tourism induced the adaptive cycles of new agricultural businesses. A representative case is the Fresh Park Karari project developed in the 1990s (Table 5-6).

Table 5-6 The trajectory of the adaptive cycle of Karari

Phase	Period	Activities
Γ	1992	• The Fruit Park plan developed by the town office
	1994–1996	• The pilot project, Uchikono-ichiba, was conducted
	1996	• The opening of the Fresh Park Karari
	2002	• The digitalisation of karari-net • The introduction of the tractability system for the products
	2005	• The creation of “Eco Uchiko”, the certification system of local food
K- Ω	2006	• Privatisation of Karari • The peak sales of Karari and the number of shipping farmers

The γ phase: 1992–2006

The town office developed the vision of the Fruit Park, a complex facility including a farmers’ market, an information centre, restaurants, a park and a product development laboratory, in 1992 in order to promote new agri-business opportunities. The Fruit Park was realised as the Fresh Park Karari (Karari, in short) in 1996.

As the pilot project for Karari, *Uchinoko ichiba* (Uchinoko market) was opened in 1994 where farmers could sell their products to consumers face to face. It was a new experience for the local farmers, whose products had been purchased in bulk by the agricultural cooperative. About 70 farmers participated in the Uchinoko market, and the network generated among them during the project was later institutionalised as the *Chokubaijo syukka unei kyōgikai* (association for shipment and management of the farmers’ market) in Karari. After the two-year experiment with the Uchinoko

ichiba, the Fresh Park Karari was opened as a *michi no eki* (roadside service station) at the junction of Ōzu Highway (Route 56) and Route 376 by the Oda River. Karari consists of a farmers' market, information centre, restaurant, bakery, and riverside park. The farmers' market, the main facility in Karari, sells a range of seasonal fruits and vegetables, as well as processed food such as jams, cheeses, sweets and hams, all produced in Uchiko (Figure 5-15). The management body of Karari was a third-sector company, Uchiko Fresh Park Karari Co. (Karari Co.), sponsored by the town and the residents in Uchiko.[59]



Figure 5-15 The farmers' market in Karari

Several farmers and town officials mentioned the contribution of *chiteki nōson jyuku* (school for intellectual village) in realising Karari. Chiteki nōson jyuku is an activity started by a group of local farmers and agriculture institutions in 1986 to learn about human resource development for the regeneration of the agriculture industry and rural villages. So far, the school has invited about 100 external scholars and practitioners, and over 5,000 local farmers have participated in the lectures and

[59] The town has 700 in 1,400 stocks issued by Uchiko Fresh Park Karari Co., and 616 stocks are held by individual residents in the town (Uchiko Fresh Park Karari Co. 2014).

seminars (Suzuki, 2015). In her argument on neo-endogenous rural development, Katona-Kovacs (Katona-Kovacs 2014) stresses the importance of a learning facility where local actors can learn about their circumstances, explore what is possible, and obtain required knowledge and skills to realise the possibilities. The social learning in the chiteki nōson jyuku has cultivated the local farmers' awareness and enterprise with regard to new agricultural businesses.

The farmers' market introduced the Karari-net, a digitalised information system, in 2002. In the Karari-net, the sales data were sent to shipping farmers in real time for timely shipping and production control. At the same time, the farmers' market adopted the traceability system. The names of producers and barcode numbers are placed on labels on the products' packaging, and consumers can check the information of the producers and their cultivation record on the internet. About 70% of the customers of Karari are repeaters (Suzuki 2015), and they look for the same producers' products when they liked the food. The visualisation of sales records cultivated a 'business mind' in shipping farmers, who now thought about the needs and trends of consumers for better sales. Uchiko also started the original certification system for local food called "Eco Uchiko", which certified the agricultural products that used less chemical fertilisers and synthetic agrochemicals. The traceability and certification system have encouraged local farmers to produce high-value organic food for the differentiation of their products.

Unlike conventional wholesale trading, farmers can sell various products in very small amounts in the farmers' market. This flexibility has contributed to secure the cash income of aged and small farmers who cannot produce in large quantities. Selling their products in Karari is also an opportunity for retired farmers to keep engaged in society. The farmers' market also contributed to empowering local women. The chairman of the Board of Shipping Farmers, a farmer's wife, said:

> "It was predominantly a male society 20 years ago. After the farmers' market started, we got our own bank accounts to which the sales proceeds are transferred. That was unthinkable in the past. Direct communication with consumers also gave us confidence in our products and ourselves."

About 70% of shipping farmers are female, most of whom are local farmers' wives. They have become economically and socially more independent by selling their products in Karari.

The κ–Ω phase: 2006–present

In 2006, Karari was privatised in association with the municipal merger, and Karari Co. became the designated manager of Karari commissioned by the town office. The privatisation changed the nature of Karari, and reduced the operational discretion of the farmers. Local food dining – in which a group of farmers' wives were serving homemade dishes – was altered to a noodle shop with fixed menus run by Karari Co.. Staff members in the farmers' market were replaced by employees of Karari Co., and face-to-face communication between producers and consumers almost disappeared. Today, only a few farmers work in the farmers' market temporarily as part-timers during the busy season.

These changes evoked tension between Karari Co. and the shipping farmers, and resulted in not a few shippers leaving. The adaptive cycle of Karari lost momentum by losing its main actors through privatisation. The friction has been alleviated in recent years, but there is still a large gap in the priorities of Karari Co. and the shipping farmers. The management director of Karari Co. stresses the need to make profit and consider the distributions to shareholders. On the other hand, the shipping farmers emphasise the need to not make the farmers' market an ordinary company business. A shipper said:

> "If it became a company, small farmers would be discarded for better sales performance. It is not what Karari originally aimed for. We can make a vibrant community even when the population is declining, if elderly people have something to live for and women can be independent. Karari is necessary for that."

Karari has faced the challenge of balancing its economic profitability and social functions to assist the people in socially weaker positions since the privatisation.

Another concern is the ageing of the shipping farmers and the growing shortage and instability of product supply. The majority of the shippers are already in their late 60s and 70s, and an increasing number of them give up work or have difficulty in delivering the products to Karari. The agricultural

cooperatives and the local supermarkets created their farmers' markets after Karari, and there has been a competition of securing shipping farmers. In order to cover the supply shortage, Karari Co. is currently considering selling agricultural products produced outside Uchiko. Some shippers see this as a threat to the original purpose of the farmers' market, which was revitalising local agriculture.

A town official in the industrial development department who worked for Karari for several years commented that the success of Karari was already in the past. The chairman of the Board of Shipping Farmers mentioned the limitation of Karari in revitalising local agriculture, as well as its meaning beyond that:

> "The impact of Karari is not large enough to mitigate the decline of the local agriculture and the shortage of successors. But we cannot lose Karari to be able to say to anyone that you can do agriculture and here is a place to sell your products."

The shipping farmers were 147, with the total sales amounting to approximately 70 million yen in 1996. By 2016, the number of shipping farmers increased to 388, with the total sales approximately 720 million yen (Suzuki 2015; Uchiko Fresh Park Karari Co. 2017). The sales from Karari account for about 16% of the total agricultural product in Uchiko (Narimatsu 2017). However, the number of shipping farmers, which once exceeded 400, has declined since 2006 due to privatisation and the ageing of the farmers. The adaptive cycle of Karari is gradually moving from the κ phase to Ω phase. Nonetheless, Karari and its farmers' market have made several non-commercial impacts, including the development of a business mind in local farmers, supporting small-scale producers, and promoting the independence of local farmers' wives. Karari's contribution in the social dimension should not be underestimated.

5-5-3 The adaptive cycles in the town centre, Uchiko

To summarise, Figure 5-16 illustrates the configuring of the adaptive cycles of the main regeneration activities in the town centre of Uchiko. Different types of adaptive cycles were generated in sequence,

beginning with townscape preservation, and the district has attained the multidimensionality of adaptive cycles over the time.

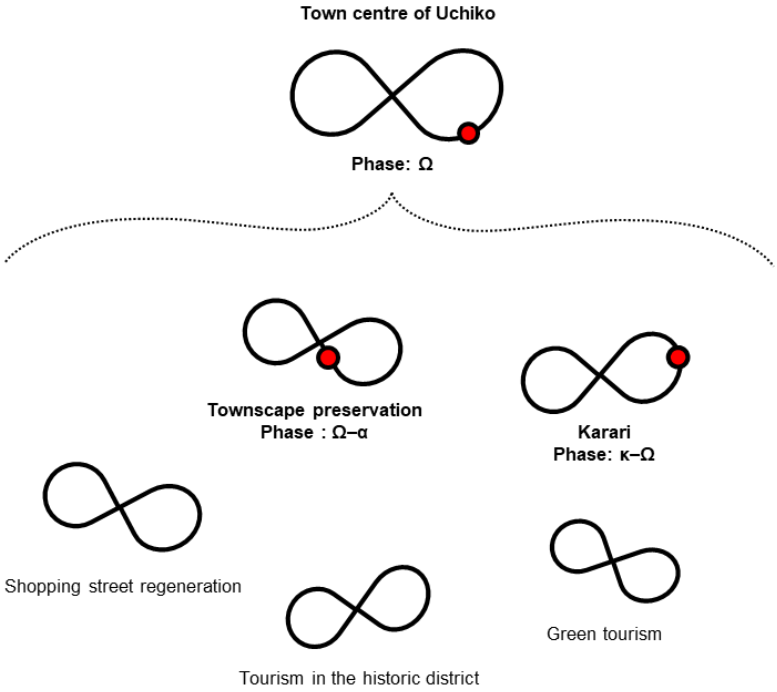


Figure 5-16 The formation of the main adaptive cycles in the town centre of Uchiko

However, the interactions between them are largely absent. The local actors engaged in local revitalisation are aware of this lack of connections. The director of the Union of Shopping Street Regeneration said collective actions hardly existed between townscape preservation, agricultural regeneration and green tourism, and the main reason is the lack of leadership from the town office. Uchiko's town office does not have a town-planning department, and the organisation is vertically segmented by departments. An official said:

> "The biggest challenge is connecting people in different departments. In the past, doing something beyond the departmental divisions was an implicit taboo. It is still regarded as interfering today, and this will disrupt the organisational order and hierarchy."

Organisational segmentation is not unique to Uchiko but a general characteristic of the municipal governments in Japan. Imamura (2006) argues that vertical sectionalism in central bureaucracy has

been reproduced in the administrative structure of the local municipalities through top-down regional development in the post-war period. The segmented organisational structure debilitated the local government's cross-departmental coordination of the adaptive cycles for integrated local development.

Several participants also mentioned the town mayor's lack of interest in promoting cross-field collaboration of local activities. He was the first management director of Karari Co., and his interest is focused on the Karari project. The long-lasting distrust between the town office and the shopping street from the past conflict regarding the extension of townscape preservation to the shopping district has gotten in the way of cross-institutional partnerships in the town.

Furthermore, there is pervasive procrastination among local institutions. The chairperson of Green Tourism commented that there was inertia in the seniority-based hierarchy, as the senior members in power believed that they could maintain the status quo with the local assets created in the past. The director of the Union of Shopping Street Regeneration also mentioned the indifference among the senior shop owners towards engaging in local revitalisation activities.

> "Older shop owners – especially those who don't have their successors – are reluctant to take action for change. They say "That's enough for me. Please don't make work."

The inertia of elderly people observed in the local institutions in Hiwasa stemmed mainly from a sense of resignation. In Uchiko, it derives more from overconfidence in the pre-existing assets in the town. The advantage of having multiple adaptive cycles has ironically nurtured the procrastination of senior members and hampered the local organisations to take proactive action to address shrinkage.

The current master plan in Uchiko has positioned townscape preservation, agricultural regeneration and green tourism as the foci in town development (Uchiko Town Office 2015). In order to create the connections, the town office has launched the visitor centre on the main shopping street in 2014, with the catch phrase "*hirogeru, musubu, tsunagu*" (extend, connect and tie). However, the number of visitors to the facility has been less than one third of the estimated 100,000, and the contribution of the visitor centre to promoting the interactions between the adaptive cycles is yet to be seen. Missing

the synergetic interactions, the multidimensional adaptive cycles have not been able to make a significant impact on the community so as to proceed from the Ω phase to the α phase, and their performances have already started to decline. Both the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation and Karari have passed the γ and κ phase, and are at the Ω–α phase and the κ–Ω phase respectively.

5-6 Case study 4: Ishidatami

5-6-1 Ishidatami: Introduction

Ishidatami is a small district located 12 km north of the town centre. The landscape of Ishidatami is characterised by terraced rice paddies along steep hills, which represents the Japanese traditional rural idyll. Most residents in the district are farmers who produce mainly rice, tobacco, mushrooms, and fruit. Charcoal for Japanese tea ceremonies is also a traditional product in Ishidatami (Figure 5-17).



Figure 5-17 The view of the Ishidatami district

Having experienced a constant outflow of youths for decades, Ishidatami is one of the most severely shrinking districts in Uchiko. Nearly half of the current population of 380 are over 65. Most of the

farmers do not have successors, and there has been an increase of abandoned rice fields. There is no facility for daily services in the district, and people need to go to the town centre for medical services, shopping, and postal and banking services. The number of children in the local primary school was only seven in 2016, and the school had already received a recommendation of closure from the town in 2014.

5-6-2 The adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation

While the town centre in Uchiko had an increasing number of tourists in the 1980s, the remote rural districts were facing acute shrinkage. The adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation was developed in Ishidatami, an extremely shrinking district in the town, by the official who led the townscape preservation activity and by local residents (Table 5-7).

Table 5-7 The trajectory of the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation

Phase	Period	Activities
Γ	1987	• The community revitalisation group, Ishidatami wo omou kai (Omou-kai), was established
	1990	• The rebuilding of the first millwright
	1991	• The suisya matsuri (millwright festival) started
	1992	• The rebuilding of the second millwright • Ishidatami was listed as one of the 100 Beautiful Rural Landscapes in Japan by the MAFF
	1994	• The rebuilding of the third millwright • The Omou-kai made a study visit to Switzerland • The opening of the Ishidatami-no-yado
	2003	• Cherry-tree grafting started by Jichikai
	2004	• The village-scape museum project in the Townscape Expo
	2006	• Ishidatami was listed as one of the 100 Best Townscapes in Japan
	2006–2007	• The traditional roofed bridge was renovated
	2008	• The launch of Ishidatami-mura
K–Ω	2008	• The number of guests at Ishidatami-no-yado peaked
	2015	• Ishidatami was designated as a Future Heritage site by UNESCO Japan

The γ phase: 1987–2008

After being separated from townscape preservation, the official decided to use his experience of townscape preservation to revitalise the rural areas. The official visited Ishidatami daily, and talked to the residents about the vision of village-scape preservation for the community's future. He stressed the importance of continual effort to attain trust from the residents:

> "You cannot change a community overnight. It's about how to find a few motivated individuals and develop them. A mean for that is telling your idea with actions that shows how seriously you think about their community. I visited Ishidatami every day after work and assured them of my earnest. It is important to build a relationship that we talk over tea in the living room not in front of the entrance door. It took me several years to reach that point."

At the beginning, the residents were sceptical about the motivations of the stranger who had suddenly appeared. But mutual trust was built up gradually over time between the official and several interested residents through cumulative informal discussions and communications. In 1987, twelve residents in their 20s to 40s set up a voluntary community revitalisation group, *Ishidatami wo omou kai* (group that thinks about Ishidatami) – Omou-kai in short. It was the birth of the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation.

The official and the members of Omou-kai made study tours of advanced landscape preservation examples in Europe and Japan, and decided to rebuild a millwright, which had been a characteristic element of the local landscape until the 1950s. They cut wood from the mountain and rebuilt a millwright by themselves in 1990. The story of the self-built millwright attracted media attention, including a TV programme, and changed the perception of the residents, who were indifferent to the activity of Omou-kai. Gaining more confidence, the group built the second and third millwrights in 1992 and 1994, and eventually created a recreational park, *Ishidatami Seiryū en*. The construction of the park was funded by the prefectural government and the town office, as, by then, the village-scape preservation activity had been legitimised by the public sector. 'Millwright rice' – the rice polished slowly by the millwrights in the traditional way – became a new product of the district (Figure 5-18).



Figure 5-18 The rebuilt millwright in the Ishidatami Seiryū en

Omou-kai and the residents have held *suisya matsuri* (millwright festival) in the park each autumn, which attracts over 1,000 people from outside the district. About half of the local residents participate in the festival, and their families living outside the district come back to Ishidatami for the festival. The autumn festival has become an opportunity for the residents to exchange with non-local people, and to strengthen the solidarity of the community.

The success of the millwright rebuilding projects generated a new adaptive cycle of farmhouse accommodation. To attract visitors to the district, the official introduced the idea of farm accommodation he saw in agri-tourism in Italy to Ishidatami. An 80-year-old farmhouse was converted into an accommodation facility, *Ishidatami-no-yado* (Figure 5-19). The renovation work was done in collaboration with architects and experts in architecture restoration from Tokyo; the official had worked with them in townscape preservation. The official was the intermediary agent who brought necessary external knowledge and skills to the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation.

The project was funded by the prefectural government,[60] who aimed to have it as a training facility where rural residents could obtain skills for running accommodation businesses.



Exterior (top) and interior (bottom)

Figure 5-19 Ishidatami-no-yado

[60] The cost was 67 million yen (£428,000) in the exchange rate in 1994.

Ishidatami-no-yado opened in 1994. The facility has been operated by *Sakura-kai*[61] (cherry tree society), a group of local women; many of them are wives of the members of Omou-kai. They serve guests seasonal and local dishes cooked by the staff members – e.g. a tempura of wild plants picked in the mountains, river fish roasted in the traditional Japanese sunken fireplace, and millwright rice. The members of Sakura-kai initially had no confidence in running the accommodation. Having over a thousand guests a year constantly after opening the business, they gradually gained confidence in the new community business. Communication with guests also improved their self-esteem. A member of Sakura-kai said:

> "We initially thought how anyone could visit this inconvenient rural place where there was nothing. But guests are impressed by what we take for granted, such as the taste of local dishes, the number of stars in the night – and fireflies in the river in the summer."

Ishidatami-no-yado provided the experience of rural life to the guests, and the opportunity to rediscover their quality of life for the residents. The annual number of guests has reduced after the financial crisis in 2008, but the facility constantly has about 800 guests.

A few guests of Ishidatami-no-yado later settled in the district. For instance, an office worker in his early 30s stayed at Ishidatami-no-yado during his ohenro pilgrimage, and became interested in the district. He moved in with his wife and child from Tokyo shortly after that, and became an apprentice of the last charcoal-making craftsman in the district who was in his 80s. The ex-office worker carried on the local tradition of charcoal-making in Ishidatami, which would have disappeared otherwise.

Over the years, Ishidatami-no-yado became an asset of which the community was proud. The residents greeted and sometimes gave vegetables when they met guests on the road. Some local women often brought flowers from their gardens for the decoration of the accommodation. A resident said that they felt sad when the lights of the accommodation were off in the evening. By this time, village-scape preservation had been intrinsically legitimised by the residents.

[61] The initial name of the operation team was initially *Happa-kai* (leaves society); it changed to Sakura-kai when the accommodation facility was privatised.

The self-esteem and local confidence retrieved through interactions with visitors stirred other adaptive cycles of village-scape preservation by wider community members. The local *jichikai* (neighbourhood community association) started to graft twigs from their 350-year-old cherry tree in other places in Ishidatami. The local *rōjin-kai* (society of the elderly) began to plant flowers for about 1 km along the road to the entrance of the district every April. Some residents voluntarily made handmade signboards.

In the Townscape Expo in 2004, Omou-kai used all of Ishidatami as a "village-scape museum" in which visitors could freely stroll and experience local foods and traditional craftworks in the local farmers' gardens. The idea – originally from the Slow Food festival in Italy – was well received and repeated in the following two years. Membership of Omou-kai increased to 25, and 10 members set up a new group called *Ishidatami-mura* (Ishidatami village) in 2008 for a community business. They cultivate buckwheat and serve homemade soba noodles in a restaurant on weekends. Ishidatami received a number of awards and prizes for community regeneration and cultural landscape preservation, and this encouraged the residents to take further action to upgrade the local village-scape.

The κ–Ω phase: 2009–present

Village-scape preservation has grown to be the community-wide activity in Ishidatami. In 2015, Ishidatami was designated as a Future Heritage site by UNESCO Japan. The accreditations and awards have enhanced the profile of Ishidatami, and the district now attracts about 50,000 visitors a year. The official has continuously engaged with the activity after his retirement from the town office. A member of Omou-kai expressed how much the residents trust him:

> "No one knew him when he came here first. But if he stood for the town council election today, he would take all the votes in Ishidatami."

The strong bond established between the official and the residents through three decades of collective activities has sustained the motivation of the community members.

Nonetheless, despite the success of the adaptive cycles of village-scape preservation, the population in the district has kept declined at an accelerating pace. A main concern is the absence of the adaptive

cycle of inviting new incomers. There are many empty houses, but the houses immediately available for use are very limited. People who have left tend to leave their stuff in the houses, and quite a few houses had family members' graves in the gardens. The houses that have been empty for more than five years are also no longer in a good enough condition for immediate occupation. Above all, the community is not open enough to proactively invite new incomers to the district. The residents welcome external people as visitors, but they prefer returning local residents rather than new incomers as permanent residents. The exclusiveness of the rural community is a main hurdle in terms of generating the adaptive cycles of promotion of immigrants. As a result, Ishidatami has kept losing its population and not has been able to secure younger generations to succeed the community. Additionally, the official and most members of Omou-kai and Sakura-kai are already in their 70s, and the young generation who takes over their activities is not present. The members of the Sakura-kai have reduced from eight to four, due to the elderly members' retirement. Without successors, there is a high level of uncertainty concerning the future continuity of Omou-kai and Ishidatami-no-yado.

As a summary of the village-scape preservation activity, the configuration of the adaptive cycles generated in Ishidatami is illustrated in Figure 5-20.

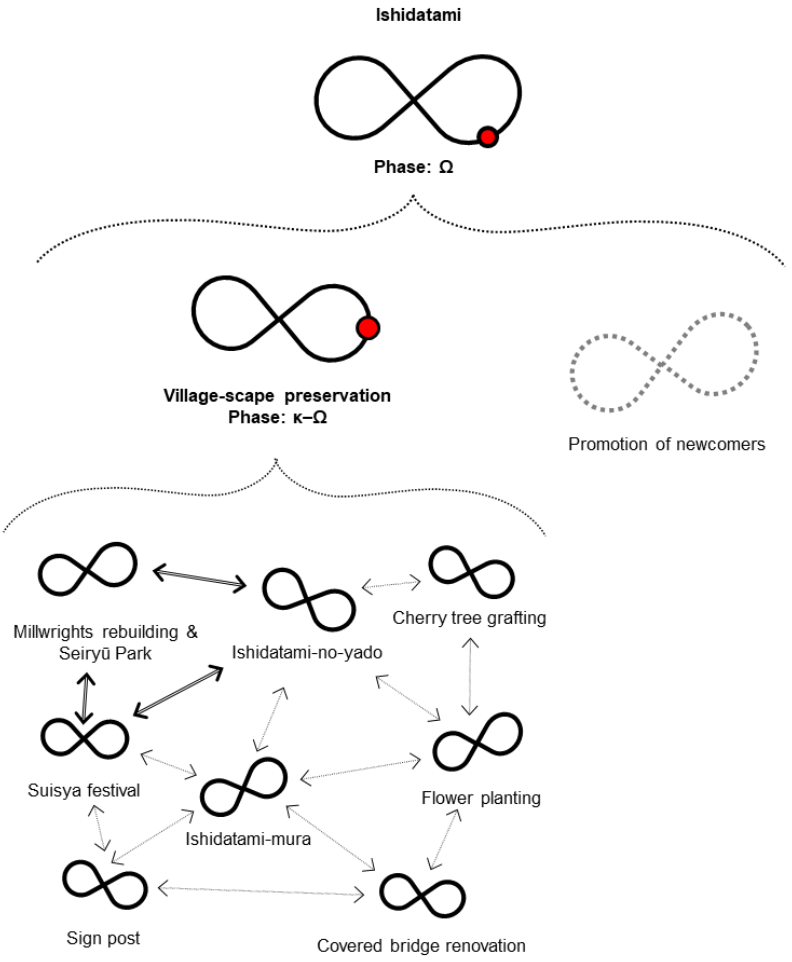


Figure 5-20 The formation of the main adaptive cycles in Ishidatami, Uchiko

The adaptive cycles of village-scape preservation diversified over the time. The well-interacted adaptive cycles have collectively upgraded the local townscape. They have enhanced the profile of the district in wider society, and contributed to the retrieval of local confidence. However, the absence of the adaptive cycle of immigrant promotion has restrained the impact of the adaptive cycles of village-scape preservation on the resilience of the district. The status of Ishidatami is still at the Ω phase, and the adaptive cycle of village-scape preservation is already at the κ–Ω phase with the ageing of the main actors.

5-7 Responses to shrinkage at the community level

The five investigated adaptive cycles were diversified in their approach, foci, timescales, agents, and development processes. Regardless of these differences, methodical neo-endogeneity was found as a main common feature across all of them. The adaptive cycles combined the local assets and external resources to develop in different ways. In the SO project, the scheme itself – which invited external people with IT and design skills for the innovation of the local industry – was explicitly neo-endogenous. The SFV programme, townscape preservation and village-scape preservation used local cultural and natural capital as the main assets, and incorporated external resources – including funding, knowledge, skills and accreditations – to facilitate the activation of the local assets. The farmers' market in Karari seems a rather endogenous approach, but the entrepreneurship of the participating local farmers was nurtured by attaining external knowledge on new agriculture business in chiteki nōson jyuku. The intermediary agents played a key role in bringing in external resources for the local actors. Their agency of facilitating local-external interaction added the neo-endogeneity to the adaptive cycles.

I summarise to what extent these neo-endogenous adaptive cycles revitalised the case sites in terms of demography, profile building, local confidence and employment (Table 5-8).

Table 5-8 The impact of the adaptive cycles on the communities

	Minami		Uchiko		
	The SO project	The SFV programme	Townscape preservation	Karari	Village-scape preservation
Youth immigration	○	○	×	×	×
Profile building	○	○	○	○	○
Local confidence	○	○	○	△	○
Visitors	△	△	○	○	○
Local employment	△	×	×	△	×

○: significant effect △: some effect ×: no effect

With respect to demography, the three approaches in Uchiko have not had any effect on the youth population inflow. The SO project and the SFV programme in Minami attracted youth immigrants, but the staff members in the SOs and the families in the SFV programme were temporary dwellers, staying only for several years. They helped to increase the liveliness in the communities, but were not permanent residents. In effect, none of the five adaptive cycles was successful in securing the future generations of the communities.

The studied adaptive cycles effectively enhanced the profiles of the local communities in terms of the outside world. The media coverage and high evaluation from wider society and an increase in the number of visitors improved the self-esteem and local confidence of the residents, and facilitated further revitalisation activities. As Kasahara's diagram indicates (see 2-4-4 in Chapter 2), the sense of resignation from the loss of local confidence is a critical factor that undermines a community's capacity to deal with shrinkage (Odagiri 2009). Recovery of local confidence was an important contribution of the adaptive cycles to community resilience.

On the other hand, the adaptive cycles were not able to make an impact on the local employment market. The SFV programme, townscape preservation, and village-scape preservation were not direct employment-creation approaches. The increase of visitors as an outcome of these activities also did not link to sufficient job creation in local tourism. The SO project and the Karari project created some local jobs, but most staff in the SOs were people from the urban areas, and job creation through industrial innovation remained an idea. Karari's main contribution was providing a new marketing space for local farmers, rather than producing new employment. The five adaptive cycles were not able to address the issue of the lack of job opportunities, which is the primary cause of youth outmigration.

Additionally, the lack of connectivity with other adaptive cycles (i.e. in the SO project, townscape preservation and Karari) or the absence of necessary adaptive cycles to interact with (i.e. in the SFV programme and village-scape preservation) limited their impact on community resilience. All the five

adaptive cycles were not effective enough to make the communities move out from the Ω phase towards the γ phase.

5-8 Key influencers of the adaptive cycles

The factors that shaped the performance and connectivity of the studied adaptive cycles varied. Nonetheless, there were some influencers that were frequently observed across the case studies. I listed the identified main drivers and barriers of the adaptive cycles in line with the key community resilience components in Table 2-1 in Chapter 2 (Table 5-9).

Table 5-9 The key influencers of the adaptive cycles in the case studies

Components of community resilience		Key influencers identified in Japanese cases	
Elements	Agents	Drivers	• Intermediate organiser(s) • Resident groups initiated by intermediate organiser(s)
		Barriers	• Lack of initiative in the local government • Lack of successors for key agents
	Assets	Drivers	• Site-specific cultural and natural capitals • External resources (e.g. funding, knowledge, and skills) • Social capital (trust and networks)
		Barrier	• Population decline and ageing
Process	Acceptance of change	Driver	• Vision of the intermediate organiser(s) • Shared sense of crisis
		Barrier	• Inertia and resistance to change
	Learning and self-organisation	Drivers	• Institutionalisation of initiatives • External resources brought by the intermediate organisers • Experience of successful collective activities • Media coverage and accreditations
		Barriers	• Lack of power, risk-aversion and sectionalism in the local government • Inertia in local institutions in the seniority-based hierarchy
	Community engagement	Drivers	• Retrieval of local confidence • Social networks (pre-existing and/or newly built)

		Barriers	• Indifference from the lack of a sense of ownership • The sense of resignation and powerlessness • Population decline and ageing
Features	Neo-endogeneity	Driver	• Local-external cross-level interactions initiated by intermediate organiser(s)
		Barriers	• Absence of networks with extra-local society • Exclusiveness of the community
	Multidimensionality	Drivers	• Holistic perspective and coordination of intermediate organiser(s) • Social networks (pre-existing and/or built)
		Barriers	• Absence of social networks (pre-existing and/or built)

Elements

Agents

The prominent drivers in agents were the individuals who facilitated the adaptive cycles through intermediating between local and external resources and actors. The director of Awae in the SO project, the secretary of the resident association in the SFV programme, the town official in the town preservation and village-scape preservation projects – all of them acted as intermediate organisers. They built – or have been building – trust and social networks with and between the local actors in the community through horizontal intermediation. These local horizontal networks set the foundation for the collective work that these intermediate organisers initiated. The intermediate organisers also created connections with various external actors outside the communities through cross-level agency. The vertical connections brought a range of external resources that broadened the resource bases of the adaptive cycles. Only tight local networks can impose strict social norms and increase homophily that reduce resilience (Newman & Dale 2005). Constructing both 'bonds' between the community members and 'ties' with the non-local actors, the intermediate organisers prevented such lock-ins. They promoted local-external interplay through vertical intermediation and disseminate external resources to the local actors.

Trust and social networks are the construction of accumulative informal communications (Moore & Westley 2011), which is, by nature, a non-compressible process. The efficacy of the intermediate

organisers' horizontal social network building differed depending on their positions in the communities. The secretary of the association in Izari, a pure local resident, had trust relationships with residents from the start. The town official – born in the neighbouring town of Uchiko – was considered an outsider in the historic district and Ishidatami, and it took him several years to build trust relationships with the residents. The director of Awae, a returner, was perceived as a 'non-outsider but non-local' by the local people. He has been in the process of building networks for years. When the intermediate organisers are perceived as outsiders by the community, social network building can be a time-consuming process. Other than intermediate organiser(s), the grassroots resident groups were also the main agents. As seen in the cases of the SFV programme and the village-scape preservation project, they were the driving force that implemented the new vision of community revitalisation.

A main barrier was the ageing of the main agents and their lack of successors; the scarcity of inheritors threatens the future continuity of the adaptive cycles. Another impediment was the absence of leadership in the town offices and the weak support offered to the adaptive cycles generated outside the public sector. The inactivity of the local governments slowed down the development of the adaptive cycles. But, for some situations, it could also stimulate the emergence of grassroots initiatives by residents, as observed in the case of the SFV programme.

Assets

The use of site-specific assets – e.g. the nature-rich environment in Hiwasa and Izari and the traditional cultural townscape/village-scape in Uchiko – made the adaptive cycles unique based on the local contextualities. External resources (e.g. funding, knowledge and skills) that were scarce or unattainable within the shrinking communities were instrumental to smoothening the progress of the adaptive cycles. The trust and social networks among the local actors were also vital prerequisites for the community capacity to collectively mobilise available local and external resources.

Conversely, the decline of local human assets due to outmigration and population ageing was a frequent barrier. For instance, in the Karari project, the shortage of the commodity due to the ageing and retiring of the shipping farmers led to a decrease in the farmers' market's sales.

Process

Acceptance of change

The major trigger for change was the future community visions proposed by the intermediate organisers, in combination with a shared sense of urgency among the residents. The inertia in the residents and the local institutions with regard to taking action for change was pervasive. But new visions and the local actors' awareness of the necessity for change created the momentum to generate new adaptive cycles.

Learning and self-organisation

Learning and self-organising are the stages at which the adaptive cycles explore possible actions to take and implement them. The key drivers for this were: institutionalisation of the initiatives; external resources; shared experience of successful collective activities; and media coverage and accreditations. Giving grassroots initiatives a form of organisation, such as the resident association in Izari and Omou-kai in Ishidatami, provided the base for activities and enhanced their stable operation. The external resources brought by intermediate organisers contributed to facilitating the development process of the adaptive cycles. For instance, in the learning stage, the knowledge of advanced cases empowered the residents to specify what actions to take in townscape/village-scape preservation. The teaching in the chiteki nōson jyuku fostered the entrepreneurship of the local farmers. External funding and professionals' expertise supported the realisation of local projects such as the Izari café and Ishidatami-no-yado and the renovation of traditional houses. The shared experience of productive collaborative activities improved the confidence and solidarity of the actors, and the visible change of the community as an outcome of these activities gradually improved the perception of other community members regarding the adaptive cycles. Media coverage, awards and accreditations from higher institutions gave credits to the adaptive cycles, as well as to the communities. This strengthened

the self-esteem and confidence of the local actors and contributed to legitimising the adaptive cycles in the communities.

These drivers were not separate, but created a positive feedback loop. The outcome of the collective works attracted media attention that improved the recognisability of the adaptive cycles in wider society. This often led to the accreditations and awards from higher authorities. High attention and evaluation from external society motivated the local actors to take further collective activities. The intrinsic legitimacy from the community members regarding the activities was gradually built in this process. The intermediate organisers worked as catalysts in this virtuous circle; they initiated the institutionalisation process, facilitated the collective activities through bringing in external resources, and promoted local-external interaction for better visibility of the adaptive cycles in wider society.

There were also barriers. A risk-aversion attitude was ingrained in the local governments, which were habituated to implementing state-made strategies in the segmented organisational structure. Another deep-rooted barrier was the inertia to change in the local industrial institutions associated with the seniority-based hierarchy system. In her observations about Japanese value priorities, Hendry (2012) argues that there is a strong preference among Japanese society for keeping a long-term *wa* (harmony) in the internal face-to-face network; in relation to this, the seniority system is the main device for creating order in the internal group. In the local institutions in Minami and Uchiko, the senior members in power were reluctant to act for change, and the younger members chose to be silent to keep 'wa' in the organisations. The seniority-based cultural power relation originated in the concept of *ko* (filial piety) in the Confucian teaching, which is a deep-seated virtue in Japanese society (Winfield et al. 2000; Zhang et al. 2005). It is a cultural lock-in that constrained the potential of institutional innovation in rural Japanese society.

Community engagement

Community engagement can take passive form (e.g. acceptance and legitimation) and active form (e.g. direct participation), and active engagement normally comes after passive engagement. The key drivers for active community engagement in the case studies were a combination of robust social

networks and retrieved local confidence. Although, attaining both can be a time-consuming process. For instance, it took almost a decade for the majority of the residents to spontaneously actively engage in village-scape preservation. The adaptive cycles first attained acceptance and legitimisation (i.e. passive engagement) from the residents with regard to the outcomes of Omou-kai's activity. Then the residents' motivation for more active engagement grew gradually as they retrieved local pride over time, through high evaluations from external bodies and accumulative communication with visitors.

As the main barrier, indifference to community revitalisation activities due to a sense of resignation and powerlessness among residents and local institutions was pervasive. The communities also had a high proportion of elderly people who were generally less active and unable to commit to community development activities. Unless there were particularly strong social networks and motivations that exceeded the entrenched apathy, active engagement of the wider community members was absent.

Features

Neo-endogeneity

The primary factor that added neo-endogeneity to the adaptive cycles was the agency of the intermediate organisers, who facilitated local-external interaction and expanded the resource base for the adaptive cycles. They built networks with various actors (e.g. experts, policymakers and scholars) outside the community, and provided the adaptive cycles with tangible (e.g. funding) and intangible (e.g. knowledge and skills) external assets through the networks. A common weakness across the adaptive cycles other than the Karari project was their high dependency on the intermediate organisers' agency to attain neo-endogeneity. The lack of external knowledge to innovate the adaptive cycle of townscape preservation shows the risk of relying excessively on a few individuals for external resource acquisition. Another barrier for neo-endogeneity was the closed nature of the communities with regard to accepting external elements, which was observed in the lack of motivation for inviting new residents to Ishidatami.

Multidimensionality

Multidimensionality is about the variety and the positive connectivity of the adaptive cycles. Two patterns in relation to the formation of adaptive cycles were found from the case studies. In Izari and Ishidatami, the multiple adaptive cycles were gradually generated over time due to the holistic visions of the intermediator organisers, and the adaptive cycles operated by the actors with strong social ties interacted well with each other. However, they did not have adaptive cycles in crucial dimensions – i.e. local job creation in Izari and immigrant promotion in Ishidatami – that were required to acquire future generations for the communities. The other pattern was seen in Hiwasa and the town centre of Uchiko, which had multiple adaptive cycles initiated by different groups of people but were missing synergetic interactions between them. The main reasons for the disconnectedness were the lack of trust and social networks that could overcome weak leadership in the town offices and the inertia for change in the local institutions.

Primary influencers

The drivers and barriers are not separate, but intricately interrelated to each other. The trajectories and performances of the adaptive cycles were shaped through the dynamic and complex interplay of various influencers in the local power structure. The most instrumental drivers in the case studies were the existence of intermediate organisers and the social networks of the residents. The intermediate organisers were the mobilisers of all other assets. They activated local actors, site-specific assets and a range of external resources, thus acting as catalysts through horizontal and vertical intermediation. Without their agency, the adaptive cycles would not have been produced, nor would they have gained neo-endogeneity. The social networks of the residents were also a vital prerequisite to incentivise the collective actions of the local actors. They created the foundation in terms of the community capacity to develop and operate the adaptive cycles. The intermediate organisers were the core facilitators for (re)constructing local social networks.

Moore & Westley (2011) identify the multiple skills required to entrepreneurs for social innovation as: pattern generators (of new developments), relationship builders and brokers, and resource brokers.

The intermediate organisers demonstrated all these skills. The main role of the intermediate organisers includes: proposing and refining the community development vision; building networks with local and external actors; facilitating collective activities; and providing external resources. Additionally, the intermediate organisers are commonly self-motivated and have a lasting passion that stems from their strong attachment and sense of belonging to the communities. All the intermediate organisers in these case studies spent their childhood and teenage years in the communities or nearby. Securing such versatile and motivated local agents is becoming increasingly difficult for shrinking communities that have undergone constant youth outmigration and ageing populations. One possibility is attaining potential intermediators from outside the community; these can be either external agents who have moved in from other places (I-turners) or the people who once left and now returned to their hometowns (U-turners). External agents can bring in new resources (e.g. skills, knowledge and network) and fresh perspectives, and are free from the restraints of the local human network. But their attachment to the place and sense of ownership are generally much weaker than those of local actors. For instance, six in seven people who came to Minami as area regeneration assistants for the chiikiokoshi kyōryokutai programme (see Chapter 4) left before completing their three-year contract period. All of the three people working in Uchiko as the area regeneration assistants position themselves as helpers of the local people's initiatives, rather than as agents who take initiative. To what degree such external actors can perform as intermediate organisers is uncertain.

Returners are hybrid actors who have both externality and locality in their identities. Returners can bring external resources and have a sense of belonging to the place to some extent. Their hybridity makes them better potential candidates for intermediate organisers than external agents. The significant role that returners play in the revitalisation of shrinking rural communities with their 'half-local' perspective has been recognised in recent regional development studies in Japan (Yoshikawa et al. 2014). However, in both Minami and Uchiko, the main generation of returners are aged in their mid 60s, people who intend to spend their post-retirement life in their home town; they are generally less active in terms of engaging in community development activities. The returners from the younger generations are very small in number, and the probability of attaining returners who possess all or

some of the skills of intermediate organisers is not high. There is no established or promised way in which shrinking communities can secure intermediate organisers, either locally or externally. Effective methods to identify or develop such agents have yet to be found.

As for the primary barriers, the most influential factor was the pervasive apathy in the communities. Together with the ageing population, they emerged as organisational inertia in seniority system in local institutions and a lack of resident engagement. The seniority-based hierarchy in organisations stems from filial piety, a Confucian philosophy influential in Japanese society, and has been functioning as an influencial social capital to retain internal order and uniformity in institutions. Social capital does not necessarily encourage proactive change but can contribute to keep status-quo (Bourdieu 1985; Schwanen 2015), by imposing some norms that impede experimentation and restrain possible options (Newman & Dale 2005). Stolidity is a deeply ingrained protective attitude of the people in vulnerable communities to endure shrinkage beyond their control. The lassitude from a sense of powerlessness was wide-spread among the inhabitants in the case studies. The ageing of the key agents and their lack of successors are less influential barriers than prevalent lethargy, but they also cast a long shadow on the continuity of the adaptive cycles. They will become critical issues in the coming years.

In the case studies, community-wide apathy was often greater than the momentum for local revitalisation created by the intermediate organisers and motivated residents. As a result, the performances of the new adaptive cycles were constrained. Lacking wider resident engagement, all the adaptive cycles excluding the SO project already face the uncertainty of future continuity due to the ageing of their current participants.

5-9 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have investigated five different types of adaptive cycles developed in the shrinking communities in Minami and Uchiko in order to answer the research question Q2 (a & b). Detailing the development process of the adaptive cycles in line with the adaptation phases in panarchy theory, I

analysed the characteristics and effectiveness of the adaptive cycles as well as the key influencers of their trajectories and performances.

The primary common feature of the adaptive cycles across case studies was the methodical neo-endogeneity that developed site-specific assets in combination with external resources that were locally scarce or unattainable. The neo-endogenous adaptive cycles enhanced the profile of the places through local-external exchange, and attracted visitors and temporary dwellers from wider society. The new dynamics brought by the adaptive cycles reinvigorated the community in the social and psychological domains through improving the residents' self-esteem and local confidence. However, the approaches of the adaptive cycles were either too weak or indirect to alleviate structural issues, such as lack of local employment and youth outmigration. They were not effective in retaining or regaining younger generations that were necessary to maintain the communities in the future. Connectivity with other adaptive cycles was also frequently missing; social networks between the local actors were absent or under construction. Thus, the impact of the adaptive cycles on the resilience of the case sites was not significant enough to enable the communities to move out the Ω phase towards and proceed to the α phase.

The performances and connectivity of the adaptive cycles were shaped in the nexus of dynamic power relations, in which various socio-political and cultural drivers and barriers interplay. The prominently influential drivers in the case studies were the existence of intermediate organisers who activated all the other assets as the catalysts and the social networks of the residents (re)built with the initiative of the intermediate organisers. Attaining multi-skilled and motivated actors who can perform as intermediate organisers, either locally or externally, is becoming increasingly difficult and random for most of the resource-scarce shrinking communities. The major barrier was the prevalent lethargy among community members that appeared as organisational inertia in seniority-based local institutions and the lack of resident engagement with adaptive cycles. The power dynamics between the primary drivers and barriers varied among the case studies, but the socio-culturally rooted lethargy in the communities generally surpassed the drivers, and confined the performances of the adaptive cycles.

In the next chapter, using Cittaslow as an example, I will consider whether, and in what way, another local development approach can improve the key influencers of the adaptive cycles and support the shrinking rural communities to enhance their resilience.

Chapter 6 The Evaluation of Cittaslow

This chapter corresponds to the research question Q3. I assess the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach in helping the Japanese rural communities to be more adaptive and resilient to shrinkage. I first hypothesise about the potential impact of the Cittaslow scheme on the key influencers of the adaptive cycles in the Japanese case studies based on the Cittaslow charter and the visions of Cittaslow's international leaders. I then illustrate the local Cittaslow practices in five member towns in Italy, Germany and South Korea. I investigate the functionality of Cittaslow as 'title' and 'roadmap', and evaluate the actual impact of Cittaslow on the key influencers. Based on that, I speculate the form of Cittaslow in the context of rural Japan and discuss its impact and limitations in improving the resilience of Japanese rural communities to deal with shrinkage.

6-1 The hypothetical potential of Cittaslow

6-1-1 The key influencers of the Japanese case studies and the Cittaslow charter

The Cittaslow charter is an important element in Cittaslow. The charter sets out the main principles, the 72 criteria of a slow city, and the operational schemes. By looking at the articles in the charter, I considered to what degree the Cittaslow approach could improve the identified drivers and barriers of the adaptive cycles in the Japanese case studies (Table 6-1).

Table 6-1 The key influencers of adaptive cycles and the Cittaslow charter

Components of community resilience		Key influencers identified in the Japanese case studies		Statements in the Cittaslow charter
Elements	Agents	Drivers	• Intermediate organiser(s) • Resident groups initiated by the intermediate organiser(s)	Required membership application from the mayor of the town (or the president of the town of the district council, or of the local community council) (Art. 2 and Art. 5, Attachment B) Periodical reassessment of the membership status every five years (Art. 8)
		Barriers	• Lack of initiative by the local government • Lack of successors for key agents	
	Assets	Drivers	• Site-specific cultural and natural capitals • External resources (e.g. funding, knowledge, and skills) • Social capital (trust and networks)	Local development based on the slow city concept that focuses on site-specific traits and identity, visible from the outside and deeply lived within (Charter Document, Attachment A)
		Barrier	• Population decline and ageing	
Process	Acceptance of change	Driver	• Shared vision proposed by intermediate organiser(s) • Experience of materialised symptoms of shrinkage	The awareness of the need for alternative community development in response to the standardisation effect of globalisation (Charter Document, Attachment A)
		Barrier	• Inertia and resistance to change	
	Learning and self-organisation	Drivers	• External knowledge brought by the intermediate organisers • Institutionalisation of initiatives • Experience of successful collective activities • Media coverage and accreditations	Proposition of local development based on the slow city concept that focuses on site-specific traits and identity,

		Barriers	• Lack of power, risk-aversion and sectionalism in the local government • Inertia in local institutions in the seniority-based hierarchy	visible from the outside and deeply lived within (Charter document, Attachment A) Promotion of citizenship actions in local communities (Art.3) Certification as Cittaslow town: entitled to place the Cittaslow logo on their images (Art. 14)
	Community engagement	Drivers	• Retrieval of local confidence • Social networks (pre-existing and/or built)	Obligatory requirements of: - Systemic and permanent information for citizens regarding the meaning of Cittaslow - Support for Cittaslow campaigns (Requirement for Excellence, Attachment C)
		Barriers	• Indifference stemming from the lack of a sense of ownership • The sense of resignation and powerlessness • Population decline and ageing	
Features	Neo-endogeneity	Driver	• Local-external cross-level interactions initiated by intermediate organiser(s)	Member town shall undertake the commitment to promote cooperation and exchanges between Cittaslow towns (Art. 13) Networking opportunities within the member towns - The Annual General Assembly (Art. 16) - The periodical national network meeting (Art. 26)
		Barriers	• Absence of networks with extra-local society • Geographical remoteness • Exclusiveness of the community	
	Multidimensionality	Drivers	• Holistic perspective and coordination of intermediate organiser(s)	72 requirements in seven policy dimensions of Cittaslow:

	Barriers • Absence of social networks (pre-existing or built) • Absence of key adaptive cycles - e.g. local employment creation	- Energy and environment (5/12)* - Infrastructure (5/9) - Quality of urban life (9/17) - Agriculture, tourism and artisanship (7/10) - Hospitality, awareness and training (5/10) - Social cohesion (0/11) - Partnerships (0/3) * (Obligatory requirements/all requirements) (Requirement for Excellence, Attachment C) Principle of the creation of microeconomics (Art. 3)

In terms of the agents in the elements, the existence of intermediate organisers that activated other assets was a primary driver, and the weak leadership of the local government was the main barrier. Cittaslow addresses these two by institutionally designating the town mayor as the representative of local Cittaslow. Membership applications to Cittaslow need to be from the mayor (or president) of the town (Article 2 and Article 5 in Attachment B), and the local government is required to officially commit to Cittaslow (Article 13).

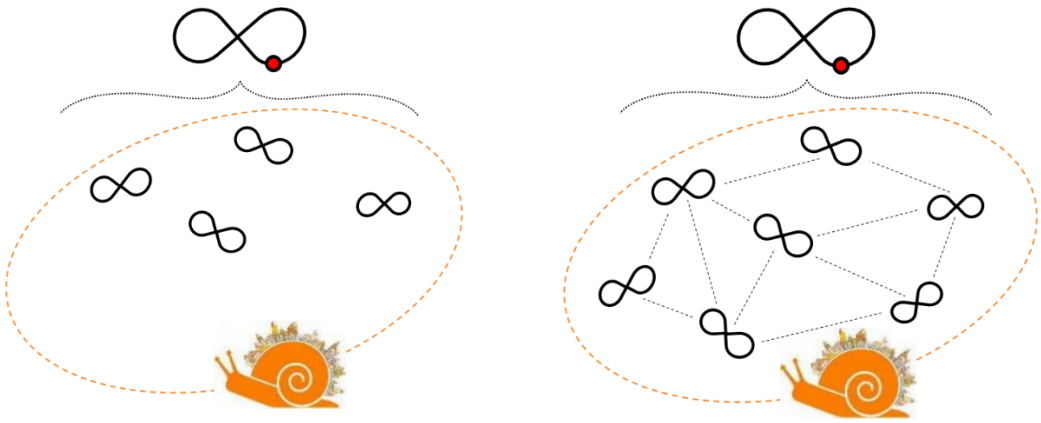
The process to join Cittaslow has three steps: 1) the mayor of the candidate town sends an application letter to the international president, with reasoning for the grounds for becoming a member; 2) the Certification Office in Cittaslow sends a delegate to the town and gives the certification form and assistance necessary for the certification process; 3) the candidate town completes the form and sends it back to the head office of Cittaslow. If the certification score exceeds 50% of the 72 requirements, the town will be declared as a new member town in the next official Cittaslow meeting. If there is a national Cittaslow branch in the country, the first two steps are delegated to them. After the accreditation, the slow city status of the town is reassessed every five years through the same procedure (Article 8). Placing the town mayor and the local government as the central agents, Cittaslow aims to assure the local government's continual initiative in slow city making, through avoiding the institutional inertia of the local government. As for assets, the focus of Cittaslow on place identity and the intrinsic characteristics of the locale (Charter Documents, Attachment A) resonates, and can reinforce the driver of using site-specific cultural and natural assets.

In terms of process, the primary barrier was the absence of community engagement due to low awareness, indifference, sense of powerlessness among residents and institutional inertia. Cittaslow sets up citizen actions as one of its core principles (Article 3), and requests a systemic, continual dissemination of the Cittaslow philosophy to the residents as an obligatory criterion for certification (Requirement for Excellence, Attachment C). Cittaslow also offers several key drivers. It proposes slow city as an alternative vision for community development (Charter Document, Attachment A), and joining Cittaslow offers an institutionalisation of initiatives, as well as an international

accreditation. The member towns are entitled to use the Cittaslow logo for their publications (Article 14) and mention that they are officially authorised as slow cities.

In terms of features, Cittaslow provides the member towns with periodical networking meetings at the international and the national levels (Article 16 and Article 26), in which they can attain neo-endogeneity through exchanges with other member towns (Article 13). As for multidimensionality, slow city is a holistic sustainable development vision, and Cittaslow is, by nature, a multidimensional approach. The charter sets the criteria of a slow city in seven different fields (Requirement for Excellence, Attachment C). The core principles in each fields are: consideration for the natural environment and ecosystem; improving the quality of public spaces and making walk-able towns; equipping ICT technologies and facilities for urban quality; preservation and promotion of local traditional products; fostering local hospitality for visitors; enhancing multicultural and intergenerational social cohesion; and disseminating the philosophy of a slow city. Though the weight allocated to each field varies, Cittaslow is an integrated approach including cultural, economic, environmental and social dimensions.

In Chapter 2, I introduced Cittaslow's two complementary functions as 'title' and 'roadmap'(see 2-3-3). Cittaslow is an international 'title' as a slow city, and also a 'roadmap' that gives its member towns an action guideline for their further implementation of the slow city vision. The drivers that are anticipated to be given by the 'title' function of Cittaslow are: intermediate organisers, institutionalisation, accreditation, media coverage, and local-external interaction. The driving elements mainly delivered by the 'roadmap' function are: use of site-specific assets, vision sharing, community engagement, and multidimensional development. Figure 6-1 shows the impact that the 'title' and 'roadmap' functions of Cittaslow can have on the formation of adaptive cycles in a community.



The ‘title’ function

The ‘roadmap’ function

Figure 6-1 The impact of Cittaslow on the formation of adaptive cycles

The ‘title’ function relabels the pre-existing adaptive cycles of local development activities as Cittaslow activities. It is a conceptual reframing of the already existing adaptive cycles, and does not directly influence their formation. The ‘roadmap’ function then promotes synergetic interactions between the adaptive cycles and stimulates the generation of new adaptive cycles within the holistic slow city vision. As a consequence, the adaptive cycles in the town are diversified in multiple fields and better connected to each other.

Hypothetically, the Cittaslow approach shows high potential for providing positive impact on the key influencers of the adaptive cycles in the Japanese case studies, and could improve their performances and formations. However, to optimise the potential benefits of the approach, Cittaslow needs to function both as ‘title’ and ‘roadmap’ in the town. In order to examine whether and to what degree the two main functions of Cittaslow work in real Cittaslow practice, I investigated the local Cittaslow activities in five member towns in Italy, Germany and South Korea.

6-1-2 The perspectives of the international leaders of Cittaslow

Prior to the fieldwork in the Cittaslow member towns, I interviewed two international leaders of Cittaslow, the general secretariat of the Cittaslow association and the coordinator of the Scientific Committee of Cittaslow, regarding the nature of the Cittaslow scheme and its applicability for different socio-demographic and cultural contexts. The general secretariat and the coordinator commented that Cittaslow was largely an institutional movement centring on the network of town mayors. Cittaslow aims to incorporate the slow city idea into local town planning policies and efficiently realise the slow city concept by placing the mayor as the local representative. They claimed that taking an institutional approach was advantageous to realising integrative development with the slow city vision. The town office is expected to function as a 'hub' that invites various people engaged in different local adaptive cycles and coordinates cross-boundary collaborations between them, for their better interaction and integration in making a slow city.

Based on these two interviews with the Cittaslow international leaders and the provisions in the Cittaslow charter, I interpreted the Cittaslow approach as a scheme with a biaxial structure. The structure comprises of two axes of cross-boundary intermediations: the vertical axis of cross-level intermediation at the local to international levels, and the horizontal axis of cross-field intermediation between different adaptive cycles at the local level (Figure 6-2).

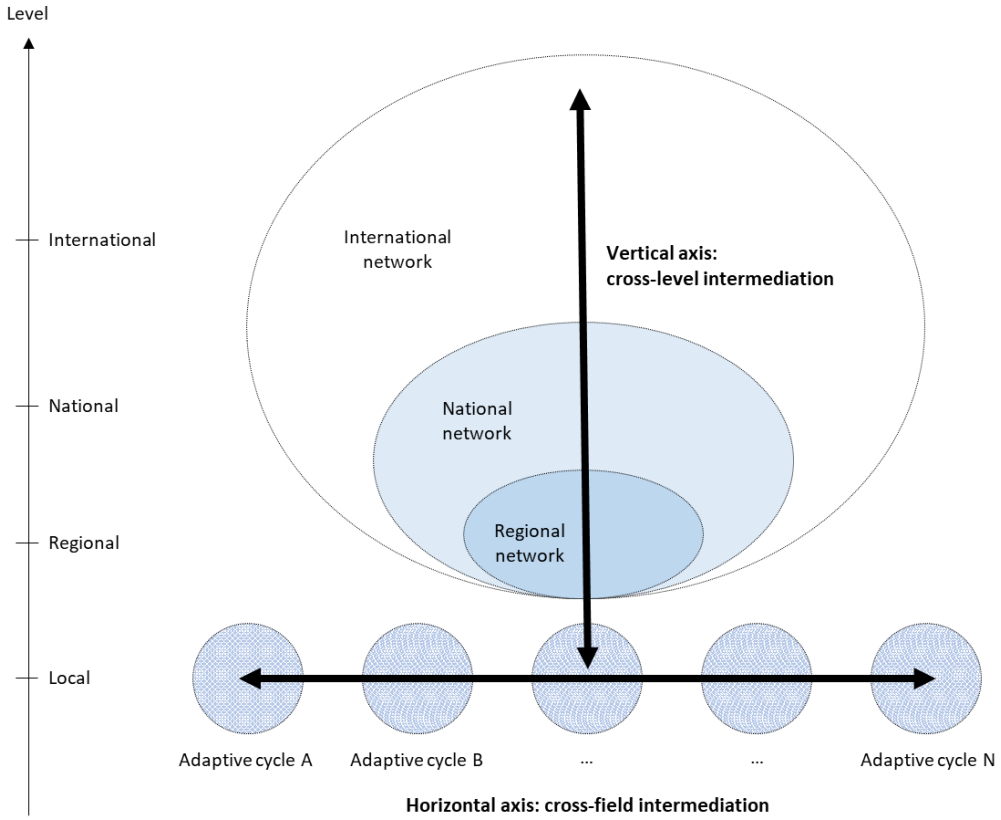


Figure 6-2 The biaxial structure of the Cittaslow scheme

The biaxial framework of the Cittaslow scheme is given when the town has attained the 'title' of Cittaslow membership. The vertical axis of intermediation connects the town to the regional, national and global Cittaslow networks, and promotes knowledge exchange regarding slow city making between them. The intake of external knowledge through this cross-level interaction enables the town to develop neo-endogenously. The horizontal axis of intermediation coordinates collaboration among different local adaptive cycles in the town and integrates them under the vision of a slow city. The existence of the horizontal axis means that Cittaslow is used as a 'roadmap' for town development. The main agent for vertical intermediation is the town mayor, and the agents for horizontal intermediation are primarily the mayor and the town office. To what extent the biaxial structure is properly realised, therefore, depends on the functionality of the mayor and the town office as intermediators. If they are inactive, the two axes lose substance.

In the interviews with the Cittaslow leaders, the general secretary was confident about the universality and cross-cultural applicability of the Cittaslow philosophy:

> "The spirit is worldwide. The culture is not the problem. In our General Assemblies, the participants are talking in more or less the same language."

On the other hand, he seemed concerned about the pervasive tendency of using Cittaslow only as a 'title' for town branding, saying that the main barrier was not cultural difference but different interpretations of Cittaslow by the importers. The circulation process of urban development and planning policy models in contemporary society is arbitrary and complex, as the original models are reinterpreted and modified by the importers to meet local conditions and expectations (Temenos & McCann 2012). The Cittaslow approach is frequently reproduced reductively by a number of member towns as a mere 'title', thereby eliminating its 'roadmap' function.

For the applicability of Cittaslow in rural communities in Japan, the general secretary again affirmed the validity of the Cittaslow idea in shrinking communities with some customisation of the 72 criteria to fit Japanese socio-demographic contexts. The coordinator of the Scientific Committee also believed that the Cittaslow spirit could be applied well to shrinking towns in principle. He assumed that the 'title' function of Cittaslow could stimulate local tourism, which would create new job opportunities and attract young people who were interested in the convivial rural lifestyle.

The general secretary stressed that Cittaslow was not the selection of elite towns, but of towns that have decided to take action for a better future. Reflecting this selection policy, the types of Cittaslow member towns has been diversified as the network grows. The present Cittaslow network involves traditional idyllic towns that were dominant at the initial stage of the movement, suburban towns without particular cultural and historic assets, and less advantageous towns that face economic and population decline. The gradual increase of less advantageous towns in the network could be a reason for the prevalence of the reductive and narrow interpretation of Cittaslow, as policy agents in these towns are under pressure to find quick solutions that can give their towns an attractive image.

The positive remarks by the Cittaslow leaders on the trans-contextual applicability of the Cittaslow approach were anticipated, considering their positionality in the organisation. Their answers were however based on the premise that the Cittaslow scheme would work perfectly, and they tended to disregard socio-political and cultural factors in shrinking places that could significantly impede this ideal scenario.

6-2 Case Study 1: Pollica

Being located 140 km to the southeast of Naples, Pollica is a town in the province of Salerno, Campania, in south-western Italy. The central and southern part of Salerno, including Pollica, is a region called Cilento, a major tourist destination in south Italy. As part of the Cilento National Park, Pollica has two coastal villages – Acciaroli and Pioppi – on the Tyrrhenian Sea, and three hillside districts, Celso, Galdo Cilento, and Cannicchio. The traditional industries in Pollica are agriculture and fishing, where the products are olives, cheeses, fruits and sardines. Acciaroli[62] and Pioppi[63] are popular summer resorts, and tourism is also a main industry of the town.

Pollica has kept losing its population for decades, similar to many other towns in south Italy. The population of 3,230 in 1970 fell to 2,400 by 2015 (Tuttitalia 2016b), mainly due to outmigration, but also natural decline. Most young people leave for Naples and Salerno for education and job opportunities when they graduate liceo[64] (i.e. high school) or istituto di formazione professionale (i.e. training school) due to the scarcity of decent local employment. Due to a constant outflow of young people, the ageing rate of Pollica was 28.1% in 2015 – higher than the national average (Tuttitalia 2016b).

[62] Acciaroli is known as the place where Ernest Hemingway stayed. It was said that he was inspired to write *The Old Man and the Sea* in Acciaroli.
[63] Pioppi is famous for the longevity of the local people, which is generally believed as a result of the Mediterranean climate and the healthy local food culture.
[64] The basic education in Italy is five-year scuola primaria (primary school) from the age of 6 to 11, and three-year scuola secondaris (secondary school) from the age of 11 to 14. After that, there are three options to choose: five-year liceo (high school) for general education or five-year instituto tecnico (technical school) or three-year instituto di formazione professionale (training school) for vocational education.



Figure 6-3 The town view of Pollica

Agents and process of Cittaslow Pollica

The town's main strategies to mitigate youth outmigration are creating jobs in local tourism and agriculture by branding the town as a centre of the Mediterranean diet. Cittaslow was introduced by the former town mayor in 2007 to support this town vision. Working together with Carlo Petrini, the founder of Slow Food, the former mayor succeeded in adding the Mediterranean diet to the UNESCO's list of Intangible Heritage in 2010. He, who energetically engaged in Cittaslow as vice president of the association, died in an accident in a conflict with local mafia. The current mayor has succeeded in implementing the former mayor's vision, and is actively engaged in Cittaslow, taking the role as the international president since 2013. He aims to make Pollica a representative Mediterranean model of the slow city. The mayor has been passionate about exchanging with other Cittaslow towns as the vertical intermediator, and disseminating information about Cittaslow activities in Pollica to the outside world. Recently, a group of children in the local school visited a school in Gao-cyun,[65] the first slow city in China, and represented Mediterranean food and lifestyle.

[65] Gao-cyun became a member of Cittaslow in 2009.

In Pollica, however, there is no town official or group of residents working with the mayor, and he is the only agent in the local Cittaslow. Although the mayor is enthusiastic about Cittaslow, the local government does not function as the horizontal intermediator that coordinates the local adaptive cycles. The local producers and the people in the organisations introduced by the mayor as participants of local Cittaslow did not consider themselves part of Cittaslow. An owner of a local café said that Cittaslow was just the mayor's individual activity. The general attitude of the local residents to Cittaslow is indifference or passive endorsement, rather than positive engagement.

Cittaslow activities in Pollica

The main focus of Cittaslow in Pollica is promoting local tourism based on the traditional Mediterranean diet in the town. Renovating the 17th-century Palazzo on the seafront of Pioppi, they opened the Dieta Mediterranea museum[66] that introduces the local and healthy dietary culture and lifestyle of the region. About 5,000 to 6,000 people including children in the local schools visit the museum a year. A medieval castle was renovated to become the central studio of Dieta Mediterranea in 2011 and has been used for its events and meetings. The town encouraged the production of healthy and safe foods, such as organic non-GM crops. Developing tourism based on the Mediterranean diet and using historic buildings are the main adaptive cycles in Pollica to cope with shrinkage. Other than local tourism development, the town recently introduced electric and hybrid buses and boats for sustainable transport. It has also started a telemedicine service with the University of San Diego and the University of La Sapienza so that residents could have medical checks without going to the hospital. They are new adaptive cycles initiated by the town mayor in pursuit of the holistic slow city vision.

In Pollica, the local assets and existing activities (i.e. adaptive cycles) were relabelled as Cittaslow elements by the mayor to promote the Mediterranean diet and the development of local tourism. The mayor added some new adaptive cycles of hybrid energy transport and the telemedicine programme, but the main focus has been on marketing the town to outside society. The local Cittaslow is mostly

[66] The museum is also a homage to the American physiologist who made the Mediterranean diet an internationally famous nutritional style, Ancel Keys. He moved to Pioppi and researched the reason for the local people's longevity. He himself lived to 101.

the mayor's individual town branding activity; it is missing resident engagement, and horizontal intermediation between the reframed adaptive cycles is absent.

Impacts of Cittaslow on Pollica

A staff member who was engaged in the local Dieta Mediterranea activity said that three to four local young people had returned to the town in the last few years expecting job opportunities in local tourism stimulated by Cittaslow. On the other hand, some local residents commented that they had observed no change after joining Cittaslow, saying that Cittaslow had not solved the problems they faced, such as a lack of decent jobs other than seasonal and low-skilled jobs in tourism. A woman in her 30s, who had an accounting degree, commented that she was working at a restaurant during the summer, and would lose even that job in the rest of the year. The 'title' of Cittaslow with the mayor's marketing effort has heightened the profile of the town in the outside world and led to the return of a few young people. However, Cittaslow has not had substantial impact on the local job market, and the outflow of the youth population has not been alleviated. The mayor himself admitted that he had not seen the recognisable change that Cittaslow should bring to the town, saying that Cittaslow was not for today but an investment for the future.

6-3 Case study 2: Altomonte

Altomonte is a small historic town in Calabria, located 280 km to the southeast of Naples (Figure 6-4). Calabria is an agricultural region, and the town produces various fruits and vegetables, including olives, onions, peaches and red peppers, and wine. Altomonte has a well-preserved medieval townscape, and local tourism to visit the historical and natural assets in the town has grown recently. Local tourism is highly seasonal and most tourists arrive in June and September.



Figure 6-4 The town view of Altomonte

Compared to many other towns in Calabria, the population of Altomonte was relatively stable owing to immigration, mainly from Romania and Bulgaria. Yet the population has decreased in the last few years because of youth outmigration. The current population is 4,540, with the ageing rate at 20.0% (Tuttitalia 2016a). Young people leave Altomonte for better job opportunities. Their main destinations are Berlin and London, or large cities in Italy such as Rome, Milan, Bologna and Naples.

Agents and process of Cittaslow Altomonte

Altomonte joined Cittaslow in 2009, initiated by a local hotel owner who was a town councillor at that time. Altomonte has been the first and only Cittaslow member town in Calabria since then. The hotel owner who was doing agricultural retail business organised a range of food and cultural events. With his initiative, Altomonte hosted the annual General Assembly of Cittaslow in 2010. However, the explicit focus of Cittaslow activities on the promotion of local food and tourism was perceived by the residents as a marketing ploy by the hotel owner's business. The mayor elected in 2014 is critical of the effectiveness of Cittaslow for town development. He said:

> "I don't know Cittaslow. I haven't seen the benefit of it. … His [i.e. the hotel owner's] interest is his hotel, and there has been very little contribution to the wider community. We haven't seen the results of Cittaslow, and I don't like vague smoke."

The mayor showed his preference for the Most Beautiful Village in Italy (MBVI), another certification network that Altomonte joined in 2008. The MBVI is the Italian association of the Most Beautiful Villages of the World (MBVW). The MBVW has some similarities to Cittaslow in terms of the philosophy and the certification process,[67] but it is basically for small-sized rural villages with traditional pastoral characteristics. In Calabria, about 20 towns joined the MBVI, and their proximity enabled the member towns to create a regional network. Bus tourism has developed for tourists wishing to visit the MBVI towns in Calabria.

In Cittaslow, Altomonte is the only member town in the region, and geographically isolated from the national Cittaslow network (which is centred in north to central Italy). The mayor also pointed out that Cittaslow was less sensitive towards dealing with the local political power shift than the MBVI. The new local government received tutorial materials about the principles of the MBVI after the election, whereas there was no action from Cittaslow. The mayor explicitly showed his suspicion about Cittaslow, and did not deny the possibility that Altomonte would leave the network in the future.

With a mayor who is sceptical of Cittaslow, Altomonte's commitment to Cittaslow is a 'twist' on the original model: the town formally participated in the movement but the mayor, who is supposed to be the core intermediator, does not engage in the activity. To compensate for this 'twist', the vertical intermediation is performed by the hotel owner. He has attended the meetings and events in the Cittaslow network instead of the mayor, and the external knowledge and connections gained from that are used for his private business.

[67] In order to be authorised by the MBVW, candidate towns need to meet the criteria the associations in their countries set based on the criteria in France, and the certification is revised every five years (Plus Beaux Villages de France n.d.).

Local Cittaslow activities in Altomonte

The only Cittaslow activity of Altomonte is participating in the periodic food fairs held in the cities. For instance, Altomonte took part in the Cittaslow's stall for the Milan Expo in 2015. However, a local shop owner who participated the food fairs questioned the effectiveness of such occasional "fireworks" for the sustainability of their business. Cittaslow has almost completely faded from Altomonte. The hotel owner stressed the benefit of Cittaslow for town regeneration, but he himself admitted the loss of momentum in local Cittaslow:

> "Introducing local products, food and assets to the world is very important to small towns today. Cittaslow opens up the door to wider society to do that. Altomonte was once one of the most active Cittaslow towns in Southern Italy, because I organised many activities and events. Now Cittaslow has all stopped in Calabria."

The perception that Cittaslow is a marketing tool for the hotel owner is pervasive among the residents. It is unlikely that Cittaslow will regain impetus in Altomonte in the future unless some agents who act as horizontal intermediators appear and connect the activity to other community members.

In the selection process of case study sites in Italy, the coordinator of the Scientific Committee of Cittaslow recommended Altomonte as the most active Cittaslow town in south Italy; however, in reality, Cittaslow has no traction there. There is a large gap between the perception of the central members of the Cittaslow association and the actual situation of the town. The memory of the General Assembly hosted by Altomonte in 2010 and the hotel owner's active participation in Cittaslow meetings might have shaped the impression of the central members in the association. This gap suggests an organisational weakness in Cittaslow with regard to updating the status of member towns even within Italy.

Impact of Cittaslow on Altomonte

Cittaslow has lost substance and has no impact on the recent growth of local tourism in Altomonte. A town councillor working for local regeneration projects explained that what brought about the growth of local tourism was mainly the effort of the town office for organising various cultural and music

events using the amphitheatre and the rise of tourists from the USA. Nonetheless, the rise of local tourism has not mitigated the outmigration of younger generations. The town councillor in his 20s commented on the shortage of human assets for local revitalisation:

> "I decided to stay in Altomonte, but I feel alone. There are almost no young people except me who want to work for the good of the community."

The stable and skilled local employment is still very limited in the town, and most young and educated people move to the cities seeking better jobs.

6-4 Case study 3: Hersbruck

Hersbruck is the first German slow city that joined Cittaslow in 2001. Located 30 km to the east of Nuremberg in Bavaria, Hersbruck is a historic town with a mediaeval townscape surrounded by walls (Figure 6-5).



Figure 6-5 The town view of Hersbruck

Most residents in Hersbruck commute to Nuremberg, which is 15 minutes away by direct train, and there is no particular local industry other than small-scale local tourism that involves visiting the historic and natural assets of the town.

Hersbruck is an example of an affluent Cittaslow town, and unlike the other case studies, the town does not have youth outmigration. Rather, the town is a popular suburban town for young families to bring up their children. However, the population has seen a gentle decline since the mid-2000s due to an excess of deaths compared to births (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik und Datenverarbeitung 2011). The current population of 12,100 is expected to decrease moderately in the future, along with the rise of the ageing rate, which is now 23.3% (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik 2015b).

Agents and process of Cittaslow Hersbruck

Hersbruck had adopted the Local Agenda 21 as the town vision before it joined Cittaslow. A group of residents suggested Cittaslow to the town mayor; the mayor, who saw an affinity between the Local Agenda 21 and Cittaslow, decided to introduce Cittaslow to Hersbruck. The town councillors were initially unenthusiastic about Cittaslow, as the term 'slow' had negative connotations, such as 'incapable' and 'lazy', in German culture. After a long process of consensus building in the council, Hersbruck became the first German Cittaslow town. The mayor wished to avoid repeating the time-consuming process of consensus building with the residents, and local Cittaslow proceeded as the mayor's one-man activity with no resident engagement. A town councillor who was the vice mayor at that time indicated the lack of resident participation in Cittaslow during the mayor's tenure. She said:

> "Cittaslow was sleeping for 10 years."

The mayor was active as a vertical intermediator, but not interested in performing as a horizontal intermediator. When a new mayor who was indifferent to Cittaslow was elected in 2010, Cittaslow in Hersbruck faced the risk of termination. The former vice mayor and a group of residents who initially proposed Cittaslow to the town had a long discussion with the new mayor, and they decided to make a new start of Cittaslow instead of leaving it.

Today, there are three main actors in the operation of Cittaslow in Hersbruck: the retired former mayor; a voluntary working group organised by the former vice mayor; and an official in the town office. The former mayor is commissioned to attend the Cittaslow meetings on behalf of the current mayor, and acts as the vertical intermediator. A voluntary working group set up in 2012 is the main horizontal intermediator; the group consists of 15 to 20 members, including the councillors and local residents. With the coordination of the former vice mayor, they meet several times a year to discuss how to promote local Cittaslow and involve more local people in their activities. A town official in public relations is in charge of the administrative issues of Cittaslow membership.

Compared with the former mayor's tenure, the current form of Cittaslow has a greater degree of resident engagement. However, by having a proxy for the mayor in vertical intermediation, Hersbruck has the same 'twist' in committing to Cittaslow that Altomonte did. This twist has separated the external knowledge gained from the exchanges in the Cittaslow network from local town planning. A member of the voluntary working group commented:

> "It would be nice if you have the former mayor dealing with international affairs in Cittaslow and the new mayor working for internal affairs work together. But it's only ideal. They don't work together."

The 'twist' and the lack of collaborative relationship between the former and present mayors have resulted in the disjunction of the vertical axis and the horizontal axis in the operational scheme of Cittaslow. Furthermore, in Germany, the biannual meetings of Cittaslow towns are not fully functioning as knowledge-sharing occasions. The former vice mayor indicated the necessity to better balance the agenda in the regular Cittaslow meetings:

> "We only talk about administrative matters and never have time for exchanging ideas of local projects. There is a high potential [in the Cittaslow meetings for knowledge sharing]. But we are not benefitting from it. You don't know what other towns are doing. It really is a pity."

Secondly, the horizontal intermediation by the voluntary working group is limited in scale and breadth. In 2014, the working group organised the first Cittaslow Tag[68] (Slow City Day) to disseminate the Cittaslow idea in the community. The event was well received by the residents, but they could not make it an annual event due to the shortage of human and monetary resources. The second Cittaslow Tag has not yet been realised.

Local Cittaslow activities in Hersbruck

Hersbruck has a variety of adaptive cycles of local development activities. *Hutangerprojekt* started in 1985 to maintain the landscape and the cultural heritage of *hutanger*, the traditional pasture lands that were used in the past as the community's common property (Naturschutzzentrum Wengleinpark 2012). The town has also encouraged the use of local wooden chips as a sustainable fuel. *Heimat aufm Teller*[69] (encouraging home plate) promotes local food production and consumption through connecting restaurants and farmers in Hersbruck, as well as the neighbouring towns. *Minikoche* (mini chef) teaches children how to cook seasonal local dishes in the local restaurants. In *Tolle Knolle* (fantastic potato), school children cultivate potatoes and cook traditional potato dishes with the potatoes they grew. The town also organises occasional cultural events, such as small music festivals and art exhibitions. All these local activities were the adaptive cycles that existed in the town before the Cittaslow accreditation; they were relabelled as Cittaslow activities when the town joined the network. After becoming a Cittaslow town, a thermal swimming pool using wooden chip fuel was constructed by the former town mayor. Other than the addition of the adaptive cycle of this thermal pool, there have been no significant changes in the formation of the adaptive cycles. Missing an active horizontal intermediator, Cittaslow has not created new interactions between the pre-existing adaptive cycles either.

[68] Cittaslow Tag involved over 70 small attractions, including walking tours, farmhouse visits, and local food cooking programmes.
[69] Currently, 13 restaurants and 25 farmers (most are small-scale producers) are in the network.

Impact of Cittaslow on Hersbruck

Relabelling the existing adaptive cycles under the umbrella of Cittaslow gave Hersbruck a new positive image as a convivial, sustainable town. Hersbruck attracted high media attention as the first German Cittaslow, and the 'title' enhanced the town's profile in wider society. A member of the working group said:

> "Cittaslow brings the small pieces of the town together. Always, we prefix 'Cittaslow' to the names of our old events and activities. Now we drink the local beer under the name of Cittaslow, then we have interviews with interested people."

As one of the oldest Cittaslow town, Hersbruck often has group visits from Cittaslow towns in other countries, such as South Korea and Taiwan, to learn about advanced Cittaslow practices. A few families interested in living in a slow city moved into the town from other parts of Germany. However, the impact of the Cittaslow on the local community has been limited in Hersbruck.

Lacking any perceivable changes, the residents' awareness of Cittaslow has remained very low. The former mayor said that 7 in 10 people on the street would know nothing about Cittaslow. A member in the working group has also admitted the lack of changes by Cittaslow and the uncertainty of the continuity of local Cittaslow when the former vice mayor who is initiating the working group departs for some reason:

> "Nothing has changed by Cittaslow. Cittaslow here hasn't been and will not be safe."

The original biaxial structure of the Cittaslow scheme has never existed in its complete form in Hersbruck despite the long history of membership. The vertical intermediation is surrogated, and the volunteer group lacks the capacity to act as an active horizontal intermediator.

6-5 Case study 4: Wirsberg

Wirsberg is a small German town on the border of former East Germany, located about 100 km to the northeast of Nuremberg, Bavaria (Figure 6-6). Being part of the Frankenwald nature park, the over-

100-km footpath in the forest is the main natural asset of the town. Wirsberg does not have any industry other than tourism. There are two four-star resort hotels in Wirsberg; one is a traditional hotel run by a well-known Michelin-star chef, and the other is a large hotel with wedding facilities. People visit Wirsberg either for nature tourism, leisure or a wedding. The nature tourism in Wirsberg is seasonal, and the local restaurants open only half days a week from October to April.

The population of Wirsberg, which was 2,120 in 1950, declined during the post-war period. The depopulation intensified after the reunification of Germany in 1990 and the financial crisis in 2008. The current population of 1,820 is expected to further decline in the future. The town's ageing rate of 24.2% is higher than the national average of 21%, and is predicted to grow (Bayerisches Landesamt für Statistik 2015a; The World Bank 2016).



Figure 6-6 The town view of Wirsberg

Due to a constant decline of visitors in terms of nature tourism, the number of beds in the local accommodation facilities dropped from over 900 in 1975 to 380 in 2015. Today, almost 90% of the visitors stay in the two four-star hotels that have a high-occupancy ratio over the year, and the other

local accommodations are struggling to survive. Two small hotels and three restaurants closed down due to financial difficulty and the ageing of their owners within the last few years. The local employment is very limited in terms of size and type, and most young people leave for Munich or Nuremberg to pursue educational opportunities and jobs when they graduate middle school. The town does not have a hospital. The nearest general hospital with ER and obstetrics is in Kulmbach,[70] which is 15 km away from Wirsberg and not easy to assess by public transport. The only local supermarket closed in 2013. The town is trying to invite another retail company while providing a shared-taxi service twice a week to residents who have difficulty in visiting the supermarket in the neighbouring town, but no company has shown interest as of mid-2017. In recent years, there has been a rise of elderly people's outmigration due to the inconveniences of living in the town.

Agents and process of Cittaslow Wirsberg

The town mayor of Wirsberg became interested in Cittaslow when he met the mayor of Hersbruck in 2006. As in Hersbruck, the town councillors in Wirsberg showed scepticism regarding Cittaslow, questioning why the town that was already "slow" would need to be even slower. Persuading the councillors that Cittaslow was more a vision for sustainable development, Wirsberg became a member of Cittaslow in 2007. Wirsberg is the smallest German Cittaslow town.

The actors in Cittaslow in Wirsberg are only the mayor and an official in the town office. The mayor has supported Cittaslow and been active as vertical intermediator, but he is not acting as horizontal intermediator. The official in the public relations department dealt with the administrative issues of local Cittaslow as an extra task added to his main work. The official said that the town office lacked human and budgetary resources for taking a strong initiative in the local Cittaslow. In practice, a horizontal intermediator is absent in Wirsberg. Residents' awareness about Cittaslow is very low, and there is no local business or civic actors actively engaging in Cittaslow in the town. The official said that most people in town would not know anything about Cittaslow.

[70] The capital city of the Kulmbach region in Bavaria.

Local Cittaslow activities in Wirsberg

The Cittaslow activities in Wirsberg are mainly the promotion of renewable energy and nature tourism, as well as occasional food and cultural events. The mayor has supported wind-power generation from the 2000s onwards. In tourism, the town has been improving the facilities for the footpath, such as information boards, resting spots and signage. There are also seasonal music concerts and art events. Similar to Hersbruck, these activities are the adaptive cycles that existed before the Cittaslow certification. After becoming a member, they built new windmills and introduced solar power generation for the town office. These are extensions of the existing adaptive cycles, and new types of adaptive cycles have not been produced by Cittaslow. The impact of Cittaslow has been limited to relabelling the old adaptive cycles as local Cittaslow activities. They call the local open market 'slow market' and name old events with the prefix 'slow' to attract media attention.

Impact of Cittaslow on Wirsberg

After accreditation, some groups of other Cittaslow member towns have visited Wirsberg, and two to three families interested in living in a slow city moved from other parts of Germany. However, missing the human and budgetary resources for horizontal intermediation, Cittaslow has not had significant impact on the formation of adaptive cycles. The adaptive cycle of local employment creation has not been generated, and youth outmigration has continued. The official said that Cittaslow was a good emblem to create a positive image of Wirsberg as a sustainable and lively place, but not an effective prescription to address the issues that the town faced:

> "I think Cittaslow can help a little, but not much. Cittaslow is more a reward than a solution."

This suggests that the town's expectation of Cittaslow is mostly related its 'title' function and not its 'roadmap' function. The official also doubted that a new mayor would use the town budget for a membership that is not acknowledged by residents. There was uncertainty about the continuity of Cittaslow after the current mayor's retirement in 2020.

6-6 Cittaslow in South Korea

6-6-1 Cittaslow Corea[71]

The Cittaslow network in South Korea has developed steadily since Jeungdo, a remote island in the South Jeolla Province, was certified as the first Korean Cittaslow town in 2007. By 2018, 12 towns[72] across the peninsula have joined Cittaslow. Today, South Korea has the largest Cittaslow network in East Asia followed by China. The types of Korean Cittaslow towns are diverse, ranging from remote islands and small rural villages to historic and/or cultural districts in urban areas (Mayer & Knox 2010). Busan, a major metropolitan area in South Korea, has also joined the network as a Cittaslow Supporter.

The National Cittaslow Corea Network (NCCN), the Korean branch office of the Cittaslow association, is the central agent that manages the Cittaslow movement in South Korea. The director of NCCN is a vice president of the Cittaslow International Coordinating Committee. The NCCN has three main roles: developing the South Korean Cittaslow network; re-evaluating the Korean member towns' status on behalf of the Cittaslow association in Italy; and promoting knowledge exchange between the member towns in and out of South Korea. The NCCN holds biannual network meetings among the Korean Cittaslow towns. There are two types of committees in Cittaslow in South Korea: one is the committee of the mayors of county or city governments; and the other is the committee of local Cittaslow councils that consists of residents in the towns. The local Cittaslow councils were launched in 2013 in order to increase the presence of local residents in the Cittaslow movement.

Similar to Japan, South Korea experienced a compressed modernisation after the Korean War (1950–1953). Rapid post-war economic growth and urbanisation from the 1960s onwards created large urban-rural disparities in the country. Substantial amounts of the rural population have migrated to urban areas for jobs and education, and many rural areas have undergone shrinkage for decades. From the

[71] Corea is Korea in Italian.
[72] Jeungdo Island, Cheongsando Island, Changpyeong-myeon, Akyang-meyon, Daeheung-myeon and Eungbong-myeon, Jeonju Hanok Village, Joan-myeon, Pacheon-myeon, Hamchang-eup, Goggeom-myeon and Ian-myeon, Kimsatgat-myeon, Susan-myeon and Bakdaljae, Sowon-myeon, and Seokbo-myeon.

2010s onwards, there has been an emerging trend of counter-urbanisation among the younger generation. Most of the migrants are those who cannot find jobs in the cities, or people who were tired of the fast life in urban areas and looking for alternative lifestyles in rural areas. The director of the NCCN commented that the steady growth of the Cittaslow network in South Korea was supported by the urban dweller's interest in a slow life, and that Cittaslow could assist the growing counter-urbanisation movement. The NCCN started new programmes of human resource development (e.g. Slow Community Leader Programme, Slow Tourism Professional Programme, and Slow Life Design Programme) from 2015 to support urban-rural immigrants' employment in Cittaslow towns. For the director of the NCCN, the Cittaslow 'title' is an effective driver for local tourism development. He was assured that the increase in visitors would revitalise rural towns:

> "Depopulation is everywhere in the rural region in South Korea. But, if we can increase the number of visitors, they can serve as 'pseudo population' and contribute to the local economy."

However, the cases of Uchiko and Izari in Japan show that an increase in tourists and temporary residents does not guarantee town regeneration or the future continuity of the place.

In South Korea, Cittaslow is promoted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and the movement has been initiated in a top-down manner by agents in the public sector – mayors and officials in the tourism department of local municipalities. The director of the NCCN said that reversing the Cittaslow practice from top-down to bottom-up was the most significant challenge for Cittaslow in South Korea.

Choi (2016) argues that the different temporality has been imposed on rural communities by civil servants through the Cittaslow projects, ignoring the relevant pace at which the local communities could accept these changes. As a result, residents are left behind from the 'accelerated' slow city making in Korean Cittaslow member towns. Japan and South Korea share a centralised urban governance structure and the vertical power relations between bureaucratic authorities and citizens. The current Cittaslow operation in South Korea suggests the risks of Cittaslow becoming a bureaucrat-

led practice, and the potential absence of resident engagement in a society with a hierarchical governance structure.

6-6-2 Case study 5: Jeungdo

Jeungdo is an island located off the south-western coast of the peninsula in Sinan county, South Jeolla Province. About 900 people live on the island. Most of them are farmers cultivating rice. The traditional industry in Jeungdo is agriculture and fishing. The island surrounded by tidal flats is a major sea salt producer; the Taepyeong Salt Farm in Jeungdo is the largest salt field in South Korea.

Agents and process of Cittaslow Jeungdo

The owner of the Taepyeong salt farm, who visited the Italian Cittaslow towns, proposed to the county mayor that they apply for Cittaslow to encourage local development. The mayor liked the idea, and Jeungdo became the first Korean Cittaslow in 2007. An environmentalist joined Cittaslow Jeungdo in 2008 as the secretary of the local Cittaslow council. He initiated the coordination of local Cittaslow until he left in 2015. Similar to the intermediate organisers in the Japanese case studies, the secretary performed as the horizontal intermediator and also brought in external knowledge resources for the development of local Cittaslow. Right after the appointment, the secretary settled in Jeungdo with experts in marine ecology, eco-tourism and community development, and cooperatives from his network. They spent several months conducting a survey of site-specific assets, and organised multiple meetings with the residents in the 19 villages in Jeungdo to facilitate an island-wide discussion of future prospects. The residents were initially suspicious of the secretary's motives, but a trust relationship had been built gradually through accumulative communication and collaborative activities.

There are five main agents working for the Cittaslow activity in Jeungdo. The 19 representatives of the local Cittaslow council, elected from each village, could be considered the first agent. The second agent is the office of the local Cittaslow council, including the secretary. The third agent is the Tidal Flat Exhibition Centre, one of the ecological institutes that conducted surveys and formulated the nature conservation strategies for Jeungdo. The fourth is the Sinan county government. The county

mayor at that time was an ecologist and supportive of Cittaslow. The county government paid consistent attention to the Cittaslow project while giving the local Cittaslow council high autonomy and a budget. The fifth agent is external professionals with expertise in the subjects related to the local needs.

Cittaslow activities in Jeungdo

Multiple new adaptive cycles of eco-village and eco-tourism were created by collaboration between these five groups of agents with the secretary's coordination of their interests and opinions. He made the development plan with four stages: 1) creating the eco-village; 2) developing eco-tourism; 3) enhancing the quality of life and the income of local residents; and 4) establishing a governance system of Cittaslow activities. The adaptive cycles for eco-village creation included a smoking-free island programme, the use of ecologically friendly detergent, and the introduction of systemic conservation approaches to the tidal flats. These efforts resulted in a number of accreditations for the natural environment of Jeungdo, such as the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the National Protected Area, the National Protected Mudflats, and the Tidal Flat Provincial Park. In the second stage of eco-tourism development, the local Cittaslow council encouraged the local residents to run guesthouses, to develop specialised local food, and to undertake eco-experience businesses. The provincial government provided financial support to convert local houses into guesthouses, and accommodation in Jeungdo swelled from 7 to 130 (Lee 2011).

They developed local dried fish as a slow food named "sky fish" (as fishes are hung to dry in the sun), and created various eco-experience tours, such as salt making, traditional fishing and barefoot walking across the mudflats. New active adaptive cycles were produced gradually using both the 'title' and 'roadmap' functions of Cittaslow for community development. In Jeungdo, the county mayor performed vertical intermediation, and the horizontal intermediation was performed by the secretary. This role sharing built on the mutual trust between them worked very well. However, when the new county mayor who was less interested in Cittaslow was elected in 2015, he made the secretary leave

the office. Losing its key intermediator, Cittaslow in Jeungdo has rapidly lost its momentum before reaching the fourth stage of the development plan.

Impact of Cittaslow on Jeungdo

After becoming a Cittaslow town, the local economy has expanded, generating new businesses such as guesthouses, restaurants, eco-experience tours and the dried fish business. The diversification of economic activities gave the residents extra income resources. On the other hand, the growing tourism did not have a significant impact on the local economy. The economic benefits to the residents were minor compared with the surge in the number of tourists, mainly because many people came by cars, enjoyed the natural beauty and left within a day without staying overnight (Choi 2016). A similar situation was observed in the townscape preservation project in Uchiko, where the majority of visitors stayed in the district only a few hours without spending money. Cittaslow created new local employment, but it was not influential enough to mitigate the constant outmigration of young people from the island.

Reflecting on his experience in Jeungdo, the ex-secretary raised several problems with the current operation of Cittaslow. Firstly, he commented that the 72 slow city criteria were too rigid to allow creativity among local organisers and residents in tailoring a site-specific approach:

> "The aim of Cittaslow is improving local areas and residents' quality of life based on their distinctiveness. But if we follow the criteria, we will end up with the same type of Cittaslow towns."

He stressed that Cittaslow should support member towns to find their specificities. This suggests that the slow city framework can limit the possible direction of local development and may not always be the best option to optimise site-specific potential and assets in the locale. Secondly, the ex-secretary said that Cittaslow could provide suggestions regarding how to motivate and empower the residents to be able to act for making their slow city. This indicates the necessity of the preparation process in which the Cittaslow practitioners build trust relationships with the residents and attain their legitimacy through accumulative communication in order to acquire active resident engagement in local Cittaslow.

Thirdly, he stated that Cittaslow was being used only as a 'title' for town branding in the member towns in South Korea:

> "It is very difficult to get the Cittaslow philosophy and vision correctly and in depth. At the moment, the member towns use Cittaslow as a marketing tool for tourism and 'slow' businesses. This is not the way it should be."

Fourthly, the ex-secretary questioned the explicit focus on only town mayors at the international and national Cittaslow meetings, in which local practitioners and residents could not participate and have their voice. The separation of the Cittaslow actors at the higher levels and the local level was also reflected in the misconception of the international leaders of the Cittaslow association regarding the situation in Altomonte. This is an organisational risk, as the slow city certification could lose substance.

6-7 Analysis of Cittaslow practice

The patterns of the Cittaslow scheme in the case study towns

The operation of Cittaslow in the case study towns have demonstrated that the biaxial structure of the Cittaslow scheme does not necessarily function as intended. No case study towns had the complete biaxial structure, and three incomplete patterns of the Cittaslow operation were found, namely the 'no horizontal axis' pattern, the 'weak axes' pattern and the 'no axes' pattern (Table 6-2).

Table 6-2 The patterns of the Cittaslow operation in the case study towns

Pattern	No horizontal axis			Weak axes	No axis
Town	Pollica	Wirsberg	Jeungdo	Hersbruck	Altomonte
Twist	-	-	-	Twist	Twist
Vertical intermediator	Mayor	Mayor	Mayor	Ex-mayor	Hotel owner
Horizontal intermediator	-	-	-	Voluntary group	-

The 'no horizontal axis' pattern, which was the case of Pollica, Wirsberg and Jeungdo, only had the vertical axis. The mayors were active as vertical intermediators by proactively participating in the

network meetings of Cittaslow. Nonetheless, the mayors and the local governments were dysfunctional as horizontal intermediators. The focus of the mayors was marketing their towns with the 'title' function of Cittaslow, and the engagement of the residents in the local Cittaslow practice was almost absent. This resulted in an absent horizontal axis. Jeungdo initially had an active horizontal intermediator and resident involvement, but lost them after the local power shift. Missing the horizontal axis, the external knowledge gained from the local-external interactions in the Cittaslow meetings was confined to the mayors without being shared with the local actors.

The 'weak axes' pattern had feeble vertical and horizontal axes. Hersbruck, the example of an advantageous town, falls into this pattern. The town had a 'twist' in its participation in Cittaslow, as it had a mayor who was disinterested in or critical of Cittaslow. A proxy (retired ex-mayor) acted as the vertical intermediator instead of the mayor, and the separation of the external knowledge attained from the Cittaslow meetings from local planning undermined the vertical axis. The horizontal axis – created by the voluntary resident group (instead of the mayor and the town office) – was also weak due to resource scarcity. The founder of Cittaslow mentioned that Cittaslow's vulnerability regarding a local power shift that would often result in a 'twist' or leaving the network was a primary challenge of the movement.

In the 'no axis' pattern, which was the case of Altomonte, neither the vertical axis nor the horizontal axis existed. Altomonte also had a 'twist' in terms of participation in Cittaslow, and the vertical intermediator was performed by a proxy (the local hotel owner) who was dysfunctional as a horizontal intermediator. The knowledge and information gained through vertical interaction was privatised for the promotion of the proxy's business. The vertical axis lost substance, and the horizontal axis was literally absent.

Except for the 'weak axes' pattern in Hersbruck, all the towns in the case studies (i.e. with the 'no horizontal axes' pattern and the 'no axis' pattern) lacked horizontal intermediators who would coordinate the interaction between local actors, activities and assets for implementing the slow city

vision. This indicates that Cittaslow was not functioning as a ‘roadmap’ for local development in less advantageous case study towns.

Fastness in Cittaslow

One practical reason for the constant absence of the ‘roadmap’ function was the shortage of human and monetary resources in the case study towns. All the same, there are two underlying factors in the current operation of Cittaslow that makes the ‘roadmap’ function dormant. They are both related to ‘fastness’ in Cittaslow.

There is a ‘fastness’ to the Cittaslow’s dissemination process to different locations. The circulation of planning policies and knowledge in contemporary society is not a transparent, rational replication or emulation, but rather an arbitrary reproduction process involving various socially complex importers (Peck & Theodore 2010). Importers of urban policies are quite often “solution-starved” actors; they seek quick development remedies under the pressure of the efficient adaptation of seemingly successful policy models that worked elsewhere (McCann & Ward 2012; Temenos & McCann 2012). They reinterpret and modify policy models to shapes that are supposed to fit to the specific purposes, needs, and interests in their locales (McCann & Ward 2012). Policies rarely circulate in their complete form, but mutate in their journeys to other locations (Peck 2011). As Cittaslow grew globally, an increasing number of member towns have become less advantageous towns that struggle with local economic decline and outmigration. Those towns were inclined to interpret Cittaslow narrowly as a convenient ‘title’ for immediate branding, neglecting the ‘roadmap’ function that requires the importers’ time and effort to acquire results. This reductive mutation of Cittaslow is pervasive in the member towns both in the East and the West.

Another kind of ‘fastness’ is built into the Cittaslow scheme. The present scheme postulates that Cittaslow is legitimised by community members when the local government applies for the membership, and that the community is capable of proactively making their slow city once the town has been accredited. The frequent absence of awareness and engagement among the residents in the

Cittaslow practice in the case studies demonstrated that this assumption was idealistic and over-optimistic.

Legitimacy is a prerequisite property for effective governance in human societies (Schmelzle 2012; Tyler 2006; Maguire & Cartwright 2008). I categorise legitimacy in a community into two types: institutional legitimacy and intrinsic legitimacy (Table 6-3).

Table 6-3 Institutional legitimacy and intrinsic legitimacy

	Actor	Basis	Process	Pace
Institutional legitimacy	Local government	Governing structure	Formal accreditation	Instant
Intrinsic legitimacy	Residents	Trust and social network	Collective activities	Gradual

Institutional legitimacy from the local government is based on the local governance structure. Institutional legitimacy can be instantly obtained through accreditation processes. In contrast, intrinsic legitimacy is an informal value constructed by continual micro-processes of communication centred around trust (Connelly 2011). Intrinsic legitimacy from the residents can be acquired only gradually in the process of building trust and social networks through collective activities. Cittaslow automatically attains institutional legitimacy from the local government on accreditation, but intrinsic legitimacy is not simply attained by the power mechanism of the authorities (Tyler 2006). The intermediate organisers in the Japanese case studies gained intrinsic legitimacy for their activities over time, as they built trust-based social networks with the residents. For example, the town official in Uchiko communicated with the residents daily for several years, and established robust relationships with them before developing the townscape/village-scape preservation activities. Similarly, the secretary of the local Cittaslow council in Jeungdo organised a number of meetings and workshops with the residents, and nurtured mutual trust and legitimacy prior to starting the Cittaslow activity. Having this preparation process was the secretary's original strategy, and did not come from the Cittaslow scheme. The current Cittaslow approach equates – or subsumes – intrinsic legitimacy to

institutional legitimacy, and neglects the process of building trust and social networks to acquire intrinsic legitimacy, which is a central value for mobilising residents. Skipping this process is a fastness implicitly set into the Cittaslow scheme, and results in the common absence of resident engagement in the local Cittaslow practice. These two types of fastness in the operation have undercut the function of Cittaslow, reducing it to only a 'title'.

The impact of Cittaslow on the key influencers of the adaptive cycles

In the earlier section, I hypothesised the impact of the Cittaslow approach on the key influencers of the Japanese adaptive cycles in terms of its 'title' function and 'roadmap' function respectively (see 6-1-1). Due to the curtailment of Cittaslow to a 'title', the drivers expected from the 'roadmap' function – i.e. vision sharing, resident engagement, multi-dimensional integrative development – were not provided in the case studies. Most of the residents were either not aware of – or only passively acknowledged – Cittaslow and resident engagement was largely missing. The coordination that encouraged synergetic interaction between the existing adaptive cycles was absent.

For the drivers associated with the 'title' function – i.e. accreditation, media coverage, intermediate organisers, institutionalisation and local-external interaction – only some of them were provided. The 'title' of slow city gave the town international accreditation and attracted frequent media coverage. On the other hand, the mayors and the local governments were dysfunctional as horizontal intermediators, and intermediate organisers were constantly absent. As a result, the institutionalisation of Cittaslow lacked implementation and became a mere formality. Local-external interaction with other member towns was offered. But periodical Cittaslow meetings were not always functional as knowledge exchange opportunities, and external knowledge that was attained from them was not shared with the local-level actors for neo-endogenous development.

In the Japanese case studies, the weak or no focus on local employment also weakened the impact of the adaptive cycles with regard to the resilience of the communities. Cittaslow created a small number of jobs in local tourism in some of the case towns. However, most of them were seasonal and low-skilled jobs that could not alleviate the outflow of the youth population.

To summarise, Cittaslow lost the 'roadmap' function in less advantageous case study towns. The drivers of the adaptive cycles offered by Cittaslow were therefore limited to the accreditation and media coverage given by the 'title' function. The 'title' function of Cittaslow gave the towns the identity as slow cities by relabelling existing adaptive cycles, but it was ineffective in generating new operative adaptive cycles or interactions between the adaptive cycles. The configurations of the adaptive cycles in the case studies were not changed significantly by Cittaslow.

6-8 The potential of Cittaslow in rural Japan

In this section, I speculate about the form of Cittaslow if the approach were introduced to rural Japan. I consider whether Cittaslow would function both as 'title' and 'roadmap' in the Japanese context in terms of the cultural perception of slowness, the influence of fastness in Cittaslow, and the socio-political structure in local governance.

The cultural perceptions of the notion of slowness are heterogeneous, and 'slow' can have negative connotations in some places. As observed in the German case study towns, the term can be a barrier in cross-cultural dissemination of the Cittaslow approach outside of Italy. In Japan, fastness and speed have long been favoured in time-compressed post-war modernisation. However, initiatives that seek slowness in life have emerged from the 2000s. For instance, some rural municipalities have introduced 'slow life' as the official city development vision. Thirteen municipalities[73] have joined the network, and held the annual Slow Life Summit since 2003 (Slow Life Summit 2016). There have also been the rising trends of counter-urbanisation and downshifting[74] among the younger generations (Brown & Vergragt 2016). Studies report a profound mental change among younger Japanese and the acceleration of these movements after the financial crisis in 2008 and the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 (Brown & Vergragt 2016; Schreurs 2014). The annual number of inquirers to the Furusato

[73] The member cities of the Slow City Summit are: Mikasa (Hokkaido), Kami (Miyagi), Iida (Nagano), Takayama (Gifu), Shimono (Gifu), Mino (Gifu), Gifu (Gifu), Kaitsu (Gifu), Ono (Fukui), Katsuyama (Fukui), Tottori (Tottori), Takamatsu (Kagawa) and Taku (Saga).
[74] Voluntarily shifting down a gear in life to more environmentally conscious, less materialistic, slow lifestyles (Brown & Vergragt 2016).

Kaiki-sien Centre, a main NPO that supports urban-rural migration, increased from 1,800 to 10,000 from 2008 to 2014, and the share of those between 20 and 40 years of age in the inquirers rose from 30% to 55% in the same period (MLIT 2015). Apparently, the concentration of the population in the Tokyo MA is still predominant at the macro level, but urban-rural youth migration is steadily on the rise. The socio-cultural outlook that values and looks for slowness has become prevalent in contemporary Japanese society, especially among younger generations.

Fastness in Cittaslow will be influential in shaping the form of Cittaslow in Japan. Regarding the fastness in Cittaslow's travel to Japan, it is presumably unavoidable that there would be a reductive mutation to only its 'title' function. The 'vanishing region' discourse coined by the Masuda report provoked a sense of urgency in the municipalities in the rural regions to de-stigmatise negative local images in order to attract populations. The focus of the regional revitalisation programme on the relatively advantageous rural areas has placed actors in the local governments under pressure to find a way to prove the quality and potential of locations to gain subsidy. The international slow city 'title' can be a convenient tool to create a positive appearance and attract youth migrants who are interested in counterurbanisation. There is a high possibility that Cittaslow would be narrowly reinterpreted by the local policy actors as a quick place-branding 'title'. This is not an utterly groundless assumption. Kesennuma, the first Cittaslow town in Japan, attained membership to overwrite its image as a disaster-affected city. The slow city vision is not incorporated into local planning in Kesennuma, and Cittaslow activity is limited to the promotion of local agricultural products as slow food.

As for fastness in terms of the implementation of the Cittaslow scheme, the ideal scenario of making a slow city with the proactive horizontal intermediation of the mayor and the local government would hardly be a reality. After the municipal mergers in the 2000s, the mayors and town officials have become less capable in terms of acknowledging and handling issues at the community level. The expansion of the jurisdictional areas distanced the local government from the citizens, and made shrinkage in the communities invisible to the local governments (Odagiri 2009). Furthermore, there is a deep-seated apathy among the residents in shrinking communities to act for local revitalisation. The

Japanese case studies demonstrated that mobilising the residents in shrinking communities could require years of effort to cultivate trust and intrinsic legitimacy through accumulative communication. It would be impractical to expect that the mayors and the officials in the local governments of the merged municipalities would be able to build interpersonal social networks with the residents in the dozens of communities in the enlarged towns. The mayors also wish to collect achievements that they can prove within the local election cycle, which is four years in Japan. There is no incentive for the mayors to make such time-consuming and energy-consuming effort, and there is no guidance from Cittaslow that supports the preparatory capacity building process of the community. In terms of scale, time and motivation, it is unreasonable to expect that the mayors and local governments would be able to perform as active horizontal intermediators. The absence of horizontal intermediators then results in the dysfunction of Cittaslow as a 'roadmap'.

The relationship between the local government and citizens has been vertical in Japanese local governance. The general attitude of the residents regarding the decisions of the local government is either indifference or silent consent, unless the decision is apparently threatening their living (e.g. construction of dams or roads). This asymmetrical socio-political power relation has an affinity with the focus on the mayor and the local government in the Cittaslow scheme. Looking at the Cittaslow operation in South Korea, which has a similar vertical local governance structure as Japan, the officials in the local governments decide the Cittaslow activities and implement them, leaving behind the majority of the residents (Choi 2016). If Cittaslow is introduced to rural Japan, the local Cittaslow could also be shaped by the officials in the local government in the absence of resident engagement like in South Korea, or simply become a mere façade.

To summarise, the anticipated form of the Cittaslow operation in Japan is the 'no horizontal axis' pattern, in which Cittaslow loses the 'roadmap' function and has only a narrow and shallow impact on the community as a 'title'. Considering the growing interest in the concept of 'slow' in Japanese society, Cittaslow may help rural communities attract visitors and urban-rural migrants. It might also create some jobs in local tourism. However, Cittaslow will not be able to offer the primary drivers (i.e.

intermediate organisers and social networks) nor mitigate the primary barrier (i.e. the deep-seated apathy among community members) of the adaptive cycles. The adaptive cycle of job creation will be too weak in quality and quantity to improve the local employment market and alleviate the outflow of young people. Missing the 'roadmap' function, Cittaslow would not have any substantive impact on the performances and formations of the adaptive cycles that make Japanese rural communities more resilient to shrinkage.

6-9 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have investigated the Cittaslow practice in multiple member towns and considered the validity of the Cittaslow approach in terms of the extent to which it can help reinvigorating the shrinking communities in Japan. This corresponds to the research question Q3.

The results of the case studies demonstrated the constant absence of the 'roadmap' function in the Cittaslow operation in less advantageous towns. Considering the form of Cittaslow in the socio-political and cultural contexts of rural Japan, Cittaslow would also be curtailed to a 'title', losing the 'roadmap' function, and be practised without involving residents. Several factors behind this are: the rural municipalities' need to find a quick place-branding instrument; the impracticability of the mayors and local governments acting as horizontal intermediators; the pervasive apathy among community members; and the vertical public-citizen relationship in local governance. With only the 'title' function, Cittaslow will not make any substantive change in rural communities in Japan.

In order to better activate the 'roadmap' function, the resource scarcity and the 'fastness' in Cittaslow need to be dealt with. It will require some conditions, both for Cittaslow and the towns that want to introduce the concept. In terms of what Cittaslow can do, it should provide a support mechanism that offers instructions about building social networks and intrinsic legitimacy from the residents. This currently neglected preparatory process is a vital step to mobilise community members and attain a stable base for local Cittaslow activities. If Cittaslow does not aim to be a network of elite towns and keeps accepting less advantageous towns as members, the support for their capacity building process

will be indispensable. In terms of what the importing town can do, there should be agents who play the role of horizontal intermediators instead of the mayor and have the agency to make up for local resource scarcity with external resources. Their roles are almost equivalent to those of the intermediate organisers in the Japanese cases. As we saw in the previous chapter, securing such multi-skilled and motivated agents, either locally or externally, is increasingly difficult for shrinking communities and depends on randomness.

Should the town attain an active horizontal intermediator and Cittaslow work both as its 'title' and 'roadmap' functions, there would still be uncertainty about whether Cittaslow can address structural issues such as weak local employment and youth outmigration. The main strategy of Cittaslow for local economic development is promoting tourism with site-specific assets, but the case Jeungdo, which successfully developed slow tourism, shows that low-skilled employment in local tourism does not always alleviate the outflow of young people who seek stable, skilled and better paid jobs.

If applied in shrinking communities in rural Japan in the current scheme, Cittaslow will only work as a placebo or, at best, as a modest painkiller with its 'title' function. The approach will not be effective enough to make Japanese rural communities to be resilient to shrinkage and find a new pathway to the reorganisation phase (α) for local innovation.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

In this final chapter, I revisit the research questions and recapitulate the results and main findings in the previous chapters. I then illustrate the contribution of this thesis, describing the theoretical insights of the research results with regard to the literature on shrinkage, slow city and evolutionary resilience. I also provide policy recommendations for shrinkage management at the national and local levels, as well as suggestions for the operation of Cittaslow. Lastly, I offer a few directions for future research.

7-1 Research questions and findings

I have explored the dynamic multi-level social responses to rural shrinkage in post-war Japan, focusing on their development trajectories and performances over time. I have also looked at the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach in improving the community-level response to shrinkage. Drawing upon the perspective of evolutionary resilience, the following research questions were addressed:

Q1 a) How has rural shrinkage developed in post-war Japan?

b) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the national and prefectural levels, and to what extent have they contributed to the resilience of the rural regions?

Q2 a) What actions have been taken to address shrinkage at the community level, and to what extent have they contributed to community resilience?

b) What are the key influencers (i.e. drivers and barriers) that shape the performances of community-level responses?

Q3 To what extent can the Cittaslow approach be effective in improving the key influencers identified in Q2-b and help in enhancing the resilience of the Japanese communities?

To investigate the dynamic process of the social responses to shrinkage, I employed panarchy theory from the field of evolutionary resilience, in which resilience is regarded as the ability of constant self-transformation to adapt to ever-changing circumstances.

I first considered the trajectory of rural shrinkage in post-war Japan in association with socio-economic and demographic transitions. I then looked at the adaptive cycles produced in the main counter-shrinkage policy measures at the national and prefectural levels. I examined the nature of the adaptive cycles and the impact they have had on the resilience of the rural regions through visualising the configuration of the adaptive cycles in the growth period and the post-growth period (Chapter 4).

Subsequently, I investigated the community-level responses to shrinkage. I empirically examined five different types of adaptive cycles for local revitalisation generated in four shrinking communities in Minami and Uchiko. I delineated the development processes of the adaptive cycles in line with the four phases in panarchy theory, through illustrating the main agents, assets, and factors that influenced the trajectories of the adaptive cycles. In so doing, I identified the key influencers – drivers and barriers – of the performance and connectivity of the adaptive cycles and their impacts on the resilience of the case study communities (Chapter 5).

Lastly, I considered if another rural development approach could help to revitalise shrinking communities in Japan, choosing Cittaslow as a case study. Examining the operational patterns of local Cittaslow in five member towns in Italy, Germany and South Korea, I analysed the degree of positive impact Cittaslow had on the key influencers of the adaptive cycles identified in Chapter 5. Based on the analysis, I speculated about the pattern of Cittaslow operation in the socio-political and cultural contexts in rural Japan, and assessed the potential, as well as the limitations, of the Cittaslow approach for enhancing the resilience of Japanese shrinking communities (Chapter 6).

The findings corresponding to the research questions are as follows:

Q1-a

Rural shrinkage in Japan first appeared in the late 1950s, when a massive rural-urban migration occurred during industrial restructuring and post-war high urban economic growth. The intensity of outmigration reduced when Japan entered a stable growth period after the two oil crises in the 1970s, but the outflow of the youth population from rural regions to the urban areas seeking better jobs and

education opportunities continued. By the 1980s, the Tokyo MA had grown to be the dominant centre of politics, finance and industry, and the destination of the migrants converged to the capital zone. Concentration of capital, industry and population in the Tokyo MA continued to rely on increasing returns to scale; the prominent growth of the Tokyo MA was an epitome of the emerging process of large agglomeration in NEG.

During all these periods, the rural areas have experienced a constant outflow of young people, which slowed down briefly after the collapse of the bubble economy in the 1990s but never ceased. Shrinkage in the rural regions has deepened and geographically spread to all non-metropolitan regions. Many rural regions that have undergone demographic, economic, environmental and social decline have been trapped in the vicious cycle of shrinkage. The policy interventions by the central government to alleviate shrinkage and develop the regional economy often turned out to be adverse for promoting place-sensitive sustainable regional development. Through the concurrent population concentration in the Tokyo MA and shrinkage in the rural regions, regional disparities have kept intensifying and never reduced in the way that was foreseen by neo-classic economic theory and hoped by the central government.

The sprawling Tokyo MA has already faced diseconomies of scale and degradation of the living environment since the 1990s (Zheng 2001; Waley 1997), which are the background of the recent counterurbanisation trend. However, regional development is path-dependent (Boschma 2007) and shrinkage is a self-reinforcing process. It is now very hard to turn the trajectory of the shrinkage in rural regions, which has continued for decades. Furthermore, as seen in the mega urban-agglomeration vision in the Grand Design 2050 and the emphasis on competitiveness in the capital zone in Abenomics, the central government is still encouraging further urban concentration in the economic and regional development policies, prioritising the macro-scale success of the national economy rather than narrowing the urban-rural gap by the bottom-up approach of regional development. Today, not only rural areas but also a number of regional cities experience shrinkage, and an increasing number of small rural places face the risk of their inhabitants completely disappearing.

Q1-b

The central government intervened in terms of shrinkage with a range of policy measures from the 1960s onwards. The adaptive cycles produced in these policies are, however, insufficient and often counterproductive to increasing the resilience of the rural regions. The place-neutral, object-specific and myopic adaptive cycles of the public projects implemented in the CNDPs in a top-down manner undermined the rural municipalities' capacity to autonomously promote context-tailored development; they traded the long-term resilience of the rural regions for national economic growth and temporary stimulus of the regional economy. The narrow focus on hardware infrastructure improvement in the depopulation acts lacked sufficient support from the software aspect, such as social welfare and community revitalisation. Moreover, infrastructure improvement was neither sufficient nor a primarily important factor to effectively address the shrinkage process.

The policy approach to shrinkage did not change when the socio-demographic and economic patterns shifted from the growth paradigm to the post-growth paradigm. The central government has kept applying the same types of adaptive cycles, and the trade-off in resilience between the national level and the rural municipalities has become more explicit. The Grand Design 2050 has publicly introduced the 'selection and concentration' idea as the basic principle for the national spatial plan.

The efficiency-based 'trade-off' approach has ambiguously attained consent from society as inevitable in the social atmosphere created by the prevalent 'vanishing region' discourse. Rural shrinkage is depoliticised and narrowed down to a question of efficiency in the administrative structure, whose focus is about which area should be protected and which should not in order to maintain the core national system. In social systems that consist of myriad human actors with diverse and often contested interests, resilience building is a power-laden process in which resilience is traded off in the power hierarchy in society (Davoudi 2012, Fabinyi et al. 2014). In Japan, the constant trade-off of resilience in shrinkage policies stems from the privileging of national interests over local interests in the vertical power structure of urban governance.

Nevertheless, the nested structure in panarchy theory shows the interlinkages of resilience at different levels. Rural areas provide basic materials – e.g. food, energy and water – that sustain the functioning of the urban areas, and the resilience of the rural areas and the urban areas are closely interlinked. The excessive unilateral trade-off of resilience prioritising the national interests and the benefits of the capital zone is double-edged – or even self-destructive – that could destabilise the urban areas and eventually the entire society. The current efficiency-based trade-off policy might look like a rational action, but it could be an irrational misjudgement based on short-sighted and narrow issue framing. There is a pressing need to appropriately re-politicise shrinkage and reframe it with a wider multidimensional perspective in which various functions of the rural areas in cultural, economic, environmental and social domains are taken into consideration through a long-term perspective.

There are several structural factors underpinning the absence of innovation in counter-shrinkage policies: the centralised policymaking process; the sectionalism in the central bureaucracy; the financial dependency of rural municipalities; and the nostalgic obsession for the growth period among politicians. Borrowing Wilson's (2014) term, these factors have made a hard and narrow "transitional corridor" that has confined the possible development trajectories of the rural regions by neglecting their contextualities. Widening the transitional corridor by providing higher autonomy and fiscal devolution to the local government requires a drastic change of the country's highly centralised governance system, and that will not be easily realised. This is evidenced by the decentralisation in the last two decades that has not been coupled with sufficient resource transfer and has preserved the authoritative power of the central government. Furthermore, transferring decision-making and financial power would not be sufficient to change the situation in shrinking rural regions. Most of the local municipalities that have had the responsibility of implementing state-made prescriptions in a top-down manner for decades are not equipped with – or have lost – the skills to formulate and implement their original development. Building the capacity of the rural regions by improving the knowledge and skills of local actors, and empowering them to create and promote place-based development from a long-term perspective should come first. Only with such ability will the rural municipalities be able to take advantage of decision-making autonomy and financial resources effectively to address shrinkage.

Q2-a

I investigated five adaptive cycles for community revitalisation activities in four shrinking communities in Minami and Uchiko. They were diverse in their foci, agents, durations and development stages, but all of them were commonly neo-endogenous in their approaches. They developed through combining site-specific local assets and external human, knowledge and monetary resources in various ways. The facilitators of the adaptive cycles were aware of the limitations of dealing with the structural shrinkage process only within the locales, and they promoted local-external interaction to broaden the resource bases for the adaptive cycles. To varied degrees, all the adaptive cycles invigorated the communities in social and psychological domains by (re)building social networks among the residents, connecting the communities to wider society, and salvaging local confidence. They were important elements for retaining community resilience to address shrinkage.

However, in order to proceed from the declining release phase (Ω) to the reorganisation phase (α), the communities need to have adaptive cycles that relate to local employment creation so that they could retain or attract the younger populations that could take care of the places in the future. The adaptive cycles studied were either not related to job creation (i.e. the SFV programme, the townscape preservation and the village-scape preservation) or only had weak impacts on it (i.e. the SO project and the Karari project), and were not able to mitigate youth outmigration. They did not effectively address the issues of a lack of local employment and job-seeking youth outmigration. Additionally, frequent absence of wider resident engagement and the disconnection with other local activities also restrained the performance of the adaptive cycles. The impact of the adaptive cycles on community resilience was, by and large, limited to avoiding the revolt process for accelerated decline, and not large enough to enable the case sites to get out of the Ω phase. All the adaptive cycles (except the SO project) have already faced the ageing of the main actors and a lack of their successors, and their performances have been gradually attenuating without being firmly institutionalised in the communities.

Q2-b

Various factors that influenced the development paths and performances of the adaptive cycles were found across the case studies. The determinant driving factors among them were the existence of the intermediate organisers and the trust-based social networks of the residents facilitated by the intermediate organisers. The intermediate organisers were the vital catalysts who activated all other assets. They played the central role in developing the adaptive cycles demonstrating their multiple skills, namely: proposing the new community development vision; (re)building trust-based social networks of the residents; organising collaborative activities involving the residents in the social networks; and bringing in external resources by creating connections with external actors. Boschma (2014) argues that gatekeepers' resource-networking function can prevent the place from lock-in situations (i.e. being trapped in the Ω phase) by diffusing external resources to local actors. The intermediate organisers' agency of local-external interaction made the adaptive cycles neo-endogenous, and promoted the positive feedback loop of the drivers in the development of the adaptive cycles. The intermediate organisers who spent their youth in/near the case sites commonly had a strong sense of belonging to the communities. The strong emotional attachment to the communities underpinned their enduring passion and dedicated efforts for local revitalisation. The local actors' social networks initiated by the intermediate organisers were a prerequisite for the residents' collective actions by the residents, and a vital characteristic of the community capacity to act for change.

Securing skilled and motivated local actors who can act as intermediate organisers is becoming increasingly difficult in shrinking communities that have undergone consistent outmigration. In terms of the possibility of attaining potential intermediate organisers from outside, external actors normally do not have the same emotional attachment to the locations as the residents do, and their commitment tends to be temporary. The impact external actors can have on community resilience will be limited unless they make an effort and build trust relationship and legitimacy with the residents over the time. Returners who have both local and external identity have more potential to act as intermediate organisers than external actors and make substantive change in the community. However, majority of the returners are post-retirement seniors that are generally less active in initiating community

revitalisation activities. Whether many of the returners will be interested and skilled enough to take the initiative for local revitalisation is highly uncertain and unpredictable. There is no established or promised way in which shrinking communities can secure actors who can play the role of intermediate organisers.

Nonetheless, it does not absolutely depend on randomness. The local actors in the case studies became the intermediate organisers through proactively and purposefully seeking unexpected opportunities and taking advantage of them. The official in Uchiko visited many advanced sites of cultural-scape preservation, and the people he encountered there turned out to be external knowledge resources for the townscape and village-scape preservation activities. The first PR campaign in the city by the residents in Izari triggered the opportunities of the reunion event and the launch of the supporter group, which were previously unforeseen. The communities should seek the opportunities and prepare themselves to capitalise on unexpected events. Preparedness for random opportunities and the attitude to make the most of them for self-improvement is the core quality of evolutionary resilience. Cultivating the mind-set of the local actors to take proactive actions for unpredictable chances will be a central characteristic for building local capacity and attaining – or developing – intermediate organisers.

The most prevalent barrier was the apathy among the community members, which was ingrained through decades of shrinkage. The 'vanishing region' discourse has also contributed to deepening their sense of powerlessness and resignation in terms of revitalising the communities. Together with population ageing, apathy appears as the status quo attitude in local institutions and the absence of resident engagement in local revitalisation activities.

The organisation inertia associated with the senior members' reluctance to change in the seniority-based hierarchy is a reflection of the cultural power structure embedded in Japanese society. Stemming from the basic value system of the Japanese, seniority-based networks in institutions have worked as an influential social capital to maintain internal order and equilibrium rather than encouraging innovations. In order to incentivise the seniors to make changes, one possible way could be trying out

experimental projects where the senior members are not responsible for their outcomes. For instance, the elderly members in the agriculture cooperative in Minami were hesitant to collaborate with the SOs due to the uncertainty of the benefits; they preferred to avoid the risk of failure. Implementing a small-scale project as a trial would enable them to see the benefits and challenges of collaboration at no cost and risk. If the project is successful and the concrete profits of the scheme are realised, it could motivate the senior members to develop it organisationally. Active support from the public sectors would be required to promote and implement such trial projects.

Indifference and lack of resident engagement were pervasive in the shrinking communities with a high proportion of elderly people. The intermediate organisers and the actors in the social networks in the case studies could develop adaptive cycles to some extent, but many of them faced the lack of successors in the absence of wider community engagement. Redundancy refers to resourcefulness, the extent to which elements are substitutable in the event of disruption and degradation (Norris et al. 2008). Community engagement increases the redundancy of the adaptive cycle's personnel by nurturing a sense of ownership in the residents and encouraging supportive actions. Wider community engagement can also help the adaptive cycles to have more robust institutional structures than those in the Japanese case studies. Motivating the people in shrinking communities is a formidable and time-consuming process, but constant effort to invite the community members to the activities and attain broader resident engagement gradually will be vital for the better performance, stability and continuity of community revitalisation activities.

Q3

The principles and scheme of Cittaslow show a strong hypothetical potential for providing favourable effects on the key influencers of the adaptive cycles in the Japanese case studies. However, the Cittaslow practice in the selected member towns has demonstrated that the operational scheme of Cittaslow hardly functions as intended, and that the 'roadmap' function of Cittaslow is absent in the less advantageous towns. This stems from the scarcity of human and monetary resources in the towns and the two types of 'fastness' in the current Cittaslow operation: the reductive interpretation of

Cittaslow as a ‘title’ by hasty importers; and the neglect of the process of building intrinsic legitimacy, which is time-consuming but necessary to activate Cittaslow as a ‘roadmap’ for local development. Missing the ‘roadmap’ function, the benefits of Cittaslow were limited to providing the drivers that were automatically given by the ‘title’ function – i.e. accreditation and media coverage – without making substantive change in the case towns.

If Cittaslow were brought to rural Japan, it would be difficult to activate its ‘roadmap’ function. Firstly, the importers in the rural municipalities would interpret Cittaslow narrowly as a convenient ‘title’ for instant town branding to de-stigmatise their negative local identity as depopulating areas. Furthermore, it is almost unfeasible to expect that the mayors and the local governments in the rural municipalities would act as horizontal intermediators who coordinate the local activities and actors by using the slow city vision as the ‘roadmap’. The distance between the local government and the residents has been enlarged by the mergers. Additionally, the mayors prefer to reach achievement targets before the next election, and there is no incentive for them to make time-consuming effort for building intrinsic legitimacy through accumulative interpersonal communication with the residents. Cittaslow will likely be used by the local government as a device for place marketing in the absence of resident engagement.

The ‘title’ function of Cittaslow will bring some benefits to Japanese shrinking communities by giving them a positive local image and may help in attracting youth migrants in the recent trend of counterurbanisation. However, Cittaslow will not provide primary drivers – i.e. intermediate organisers and social networks – or mitigate the major barrier – i.e. the apathy in the community members. The impact of Cittaslow on the local adaptive cycles and their formation will be constrained to insignificant level. Even if Cittaslow were to function in its full form both as ‘title’ and ‘roadmap’, the approach would still hardly address structural issues such as lack of local employment and youth outmigration, insofar as Cittaslow creates only low-skilled jobs in tourism. Cittaslow may work at best as a modest painkiller, but not a panacea that enhances the resilience of Japanese rural communities and offer them new development pathways to better cope with shrinkage.

Tomlinson (2007) regards Cittaslow as a representation of a particular spatio-cultural constituency in modern society. Many Cittaslow member towns have served as destinations for the slow therapy of people living the fast urban life. But the case studies demonstrate that Cittaslow towns are not an attractive enough to live for younger people when they create only seasonal low-skilled jobs in tourism. In contrast, the SO project provided conditions where people could do fast-paced IT work in a slow-paced idyllic rural place. The availability of "constant reflexive re-balancing" (Tomlinson 2007) between fastness and slowness, instead of causing only deceleration, has attracted young people from the cities. This suggests the importance of finding the site-specific assets and flexibly combining them to optimise the local potential, rather than limiting the possible development directions within one model, such as the slow city.

Comparing policy responses to shrinkage in Japan with the Cittaslow practices, the place-neutral method of the CNDPs and the neo-endogenous Cittaslow approach look very different. However, they are similar in their methodology, which distributes certain prefix development models to multiple places. The CNDPs distributed 'industrial hubs', 'technopolis' and 'resort towns' in the rural regions, and Cittaslow disseminates 'slow city' as the universally applicable town development model. The slow city vision that emphasises local distinctiveness is apparently less rigid than the specific prototypes in the CNDPs, but it implies the idyllic rural town as its classic form and envisages diversity within that tacit typology. Shrinkage appears differently in different locations in the interaction of macro-scale factors and the socio-political, economic and cultural contexts of the place. The prescriptions for shrinkage therefore need to be tailored based on the site-specific assets, skill sets, actors and power relations in the location. Furthermore, the performances of the various approaches to shrinkage in the case studies were not constant but changing – often becoming less effective – as the circumstances changed. Applying a specific development model or a framework a priori, regardless of the contextualities and circumstance changes, has drawbacks in exploring the possible development options that make the most of the potential of the locale at that time. The focus should not be only about what specific prescriptions to adapt, but should be more about how to build the local

capacity in formulating context-specific approaches and transforming them with high sensitivity to the changing circumstances.

7-2 Contributions

Theoretical insights

This thesis has made several contributions to the literature on shrinkage, rural development and Cittaslow. In terms of shrinkage studies, this thesis is one of the first studies that applied panarchy theory to investigate the multi-level dynamic social responses to rural shrinkage in post-war Japan. At the policy level, I have illustrated three main pitfalls into which Japan has fallen while dealing with rural shrinkage: the application of a place-neutral, object-specific regional development strategy; the lack of policy innovation which stems from the insensitivity to socio-demographic changes; and the constant trade-off of resilience between the national level and the rural regions with a narrow framing of shrinkage. Resilience trade-off often takes place in devolution in Western countries with the co-option of resilience by neoliberal discourse of self-reliance (Cheshire et al. 2015; Joseph 2013; MacKinnon & Derickson 2012). In Japan, the notion of resilience is not linked to the notion of self-reliance or self-responsibility to rationalise any drawbacks of the central government. Instead of resilience, the 'vanishing region' discourse has been deployed as an instrument to normalise the resilience trade-offs and depoliticise rural shrinkage. The term resilience is more used as engineering resilience for re-labelling and legitimising the conventional infrastructure-development regional policies. This demonstrated that contemporary decentralisation is not necessarily accompanied by neoliberal use of resilience discourse.

I have also identified main structural lock-in factors underpinning the policy anachronism as: the centralised policymaking process; the sectionalism in the central bureaucracy; the financial dependency of the local municipalities on the central government; and the pro-growth mind-set in politicians. The inability of modern society to deal with shrinkage has often been argued in the shrinkage literature (Wiechmann & Bontje 2013; Hollander et al. 2009; Pallagst, Mulligan,

Emmanuèle, et al. 2017). The research findings of this thesis illustrate the decisive impact of the political system and the pro-growth ideology in shaping the counter-shrinkage policy approach, and provide the pattern of policy failure of a modern society with the centralised governance system. They have contributed to a better understanding of the structural impediments embedded in contemporary society to address shrinkage at the policy level.

At the local level, I have examined the multiple local revitalisation activities in the shrinking communities. One main finding across the case studies was the necessity for shrinking communities to take a neo-endogenous approach to broaden the resource base for the formulation and development of community revitalisation activities. This supports the argument that advocates neo-endogenous rural development (Ray 2006; Petrick 2013; Sonnino et al. 2008).

Another significant finding was the constant change of the performances of the different revitalisation approaches over time in the transition of the circumstances. I have detected a range of key influencers that shaped the trajectories and performances of the activities in the case studies, and the determinant drivers and barriers were both about human capital. The intermediate organisers and the social networks of the local actors were the primary driving force of the revitalisation activities, and the pervasive lassitude in the residents and local institutions was the main barrier that confined the performances of the new initiatives led by the drivers. The main focus of existing shrinkage research has been on the approaches to address the shrinkage phenomenon (Wiechmann & Bontje 2013; Tietjen & Jørgensen 2013; Kotilainen et al. 2013). However, the research findings indicate the importance of building the local capacity to create and navigate revitalisation initiatives that can endure circumstance changes, and the centrality of human capital in local capacity. The result of this thesis raises a call for more attention to the process of local capacity building in shrinkage studies, which is the prerequisite for the formation, implementation and transformation of the approaches to address shrinkage.

In terms of slow city studies, I have offered an evidence-based evaluation about the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach to help revitalise shrinking communities. I have illustrated the resource scarcity, the reductive interpretation of the importers, and the neglect of building intrinsic legitimacy, which

disabled Cittaslow's 'roadmap' function. Studies that advocate Cittaslow have emphasised the benefits of the 'title' function (Karabag et al. 2012b; Presenza et al. 2015; Doyduk & Okan 2016), but this thesis has illustrated the limited impact of the slow city 'title' for the revitalisation of less advantageous depopulating towns.

Additionally, against the interpretations of Cittaslow as an option for adapting and utilising shrinkage or the de-growth approach (Hospers 2013; Wirth et al. 2016), the research results have shown that Cittaslow does not necessarily use shrinkage as opportunity or opt for a de-growth development. In fact, the Cittaslow approach cannot easily be positioned in the continuum of pro-growth to de-growth development. Furthermore, this study has recognised the vulnerability of Cittaslow to the local power shift and the lack of continuous commitment of the local government leadership as a common and major challenge in the Cittaslow practice. This differs from the top-down implementation and gentrification risks that are frequently pointed out in existing slow city literature (Nilsson et al. 2011; Radstrom 2011; Ball 2015; Semmens & Freeman 2012; Still 2015).

Evaluation of panarchy theory

Panarchy theory has shown several strengths in framing social responses against shrinkage. Firstly, as predicted, the adaptive cycle model has shown its strength in representing the different responses to shrinkage from the macro-scale policy level to the micro-scale community level in one picture. It was very useful to visually comprehend the formations of the counter-shrinkage policies and the variations of the community revitalisation activities.

Secondly, panarchy theory has provided the framework to evaluate the performance of the counter-shrinkage approaches beyond the success-failure binary. The investigated community revitalisation activities in the case studies had different timescales, ranging from several years to several decades. The longer the duration of the activity is, the harder it is to measure its success. For instance, townscape preservation has a history of several decades, and the evaluation of its success changes depending on the time frame. It would be seen as a success in five years, a failure in 15 years, and a mixture of success and setbacks in 40 years. The SO project that started several years ago can be seen as a success,

so far. But the growth of the project may be tempered and could decline at some point in the future. There is no end or goal in the local revitalisation practice as far as there is people living in the place. The infinity-shaped adaptive cycle has captured the transient statuses of the case activities with its circular four phases, instead of dualistically judging their success at a certain point of time. This emphasis on process also suggests that what matters is whether the initiative is able to adapt to the new circumstance and navigate its trajectory through enduring changes, rather than what prescription is adopted.

Thirdly, as a normative implication, the nested structure of panarchy theory has suggested the interconnectedness of resilience at the local, municipal, regional and national level. They are essentially an interdependent development system that co-evolves over time through the interaction of their constituencies (Martin & Sunley 2014). Sacrificing the resilience of rural municipalities for the resilience of the urban areas and the country may seem workable, as it can cope with immediate concerns. But the collapse of the rural system can trigger the cross-level revolt process, and could eventually diminish the long-term resilience of the entire country. This is not a new insight, but particularly suggestive and raises concerns over the increasingly trade-off-orientated policy approach to rural shrinkage in Japan.

This thesis has also confirmed the weakness of panarchy theory in capturing human factors such as agency, social assets and power relations that are often criticised in resilience literature (Berkes & Ross 2016). Various social factors like the agency of the intermediate organisers, trust and social networks, the vertical urban governance structure, and seniority-based hierarchy in local institutions were influential in shaping the trajectories of the adaptive cycles, as well as the degree of interaction between them. These factors are, however, almost invisible in the current representation of the adaptive cycle model.

Originating in ecology, panarchy theory treats adaptive cycles as neutral entities, and the resilience of a system can be equated to the sum of the nested adaptive cycles. However, adaptive cycles in human systems are highly multifarious entities. They are human activities with diversified purposes and

interests operating in a given complex power structure. There are not only synergies, but also tensions and frictions between the adaptive cycles. For instance, in townscape preservation, the lack of social network and mutual distrust impeded collaborative interactions between the existing adaptive cycles and aborted the generation of new adaptive cycles. In the SO project, the inertia from the seniority-based power relations in the local industrial institutions hampered the creation of adaptive cycles. The resilience of the community is not the mathematical sum of the local adaptive cycles, but arises from their entangled interplay. Such complex power relations is beyond the notation of the present adaptive cycle model. Panarchy theory can only represent the result of the dynamics, and cannot complexly explain the background behind that. Additionally, each adaptive cycle has a different impact. The current adaptive cycles model cannot precisely express the dissimilarity of the impacts of the adaptive cycles.

Panarchy theory has the strong advantage of framing multi-level and multidimensional social behaviours with sensitivity to the time dimension and the interconnectivity of the constituents. Abandoning the application of panarchy theory to investigate social dynamism due to its weakness in capturing social factors does not seem appropriate. This limitation is also a dilemma between visual conciseness as a theoretical model and the high complexity of the real world. To better incorporate social factors in the resilience perspective, for instance, Fabinyi et al. (2014) propose interdisciplinary dialogue between social anthropology and political ecology. Using panarchy theory in combination with insights from other disciplines that pay detailed attention to human factors, instead of attempting to make it a unifying grand theory, can provide an effective tool for analysing dynamism in social systems without losing the succinctness of panarchy theory.

Policy recommendations

Several recommendations for policymakers and the actors engaged in local revitalisation activities in shrinkage communities were drawn from the research findings. In terms of national policy, a policy turn from the trade-off approach with a narrow framing of resilience to the capacity building approach with a broader framing of resilience is needed. The main focus of the capacity building policy measure

should be human capital improvement. The Area Regeneration Assistance programme supplies external human assets to shrinking rural communities by sending interested urban dwellers, but more emphasis needs to be placed on the empowerment of local actors. Such empowerment will include a programme that provides local actors with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills that are instrumental in creating and carrying out context-specific development plans of the place. Nurturing the proactive mindset that seeks and capitalises on random opportunities for local revitalisation will be an important part of the programme. The capacity building programmes can be promoted as part of the software aspect of support in the depopulation acts, which have started to pay more attention to software projects. Together with the capacity-building measures, the rigid framework that fixes the usage of funding in the depopulation acts should be relaxed, and more discretion be given to the municipalities. Allowing the local municipalities to use the subsidies for their context-specific issues and purposes that exist outside of the state-made framework will improve the efficiency in the use of public funding. Additionally, an inter-ministerial policy coordination mechanism would help to improve the disproportionate policy emphasis on specific fields and enhance the multidimensionality and consistency of the policies made in different ministries for total optimisation.

For community-level shrinkage management, the identified drivers and barriers of the local revitalisation activities in the Japanese case studies will help the local practitioners to acknowledge vital elements and main challenges for their activities. There are several suggestions that can be drawn from them. Firstly, the community needs to improve the quality of human capital and attain actors who initiate and/or support the community revitalisation activities. It will include developing entrepreneurial skills of local actors and taking advantage of opportunities brought about by incomers – urban-rural migrants and returners – from outside the community. For the local actors, institutionalisation of social learning opportunities, in which the residents can obtain knowledge and skills from external experts, will be an effective way for collective learning, just as the chiteki nōson jyuku in Uchiko fostered the entrepreneurship of the local farmers. Empowerment of young people and of women who normally have small or no voice in the local decision-making process is also important. The scheme of a trial project (mentioned earlier in Q2-b) could be one way to realise the

younger generation's ideas for innovation in local institutions. For the empowerment of local women, organising lectures and seminars inviting pioneering female figures as part of the social learning programme could promote a mental shift among local women through the direct exchange with role models. For the external actors and returners, having some designated intermediators who coordinate the interests and perspectives of the incomers and the local residents will help the process of building mutual trust and social networks between them. This will set a base for the circumstances where the community can take advantage of the knowledge, skills and opportunities brought by the incomers.

Secondly, the actors of the local revitalisation initiatives should make constant effort to disseminate information about their activities to the residents through daily communication. Various collaborative opportunities with the residents can encourage more active resident engagement as well as enhance the legitimacy and stability of the activities in the community.

Thirdly, neo-endogeneity is an important quality to broaden the resource base for community revitalisation and to rediscover the assets and potentials of the place through external perspective. The attitude that proactively seeks interaction with external society and obtains various tangible (e.g. awards, funding and media coverage) and intangible (e.g. knowledge and skills) assets from outside the community is crucial for resource-scarce shrinking communities.

Attaining neo-endogeneity largely relied on the personal agency of the few intermediate organisers in the studied Japanese cases. As the abrupt decline of the townscape preservation in Uchiko after the departure of the official (i.e. intermediate organiser) shows, depending on specific individuals for reaching external resources has the risk of suddenly losing the asset base of the activities. More institutionalised form of accessing external resources and promoting local-external interaction is to be sought for the stable continuity of community revitalisation projects. Attempts for neo-endogenous rural development requires not only building local capacity but also enhancing institutional capacity that alters the structures inhibiting local agency and fosters unexpected emergence of innovation (Shucksmith 2010). Multi-scaler effort from the local level to prefectural and national level is needed for the realisation of neo-endogenous development.

The results of this thesis also offer some suggestions on the operation of Cittaslow for the better functioning of the scheme and for enhancing its effectiveness in less advantageous towns. Above all, a mechanism that supports a preparatory process for capacity building of the community will be vital to activate Cittaslow's function as a 'roadmap'. It will include assistance and guidance for finding local intermediators who can take on this role when the mayor is inactive, building social networks and attaining intrinsic legitimacy from the residents, and promoting their engagement with the local Cittaslow practice. Having an increased number of less advantageous towns in the Cittaslow network, the need for initial capacity building support is becoming ever greater. Intrinsic legitimacy and community engagement will also enhance the stable continuity of Cittaslow, ensuring that it is not influenced by local power shifts.

The status reassessment system in Cittaslow will need to be more rigorous to incentivise the member towns to use Cittaslow as a 'roadmap' in order to keep their slow city status. Related to that, a mechanism that delivers the voice of local Cittaslow practitioners in the higher-level Cittaslow meetings will help the Cittaslow association to grasp the current situation of the member towns. Encouraging more informal knowledge-exchange opportunities between the member towns, other than periodical official meetings, would strengthen the neo-endogeneity of the Cittaslow approach, which is not currently functioning as well as intended.

7-3 Future research agenda

Several conditions – such as the type of research method, selection and number of case study sites, and duration of the fieldwork – shaped the amount and nature of the data collected in this thesis. These limitations, as well as findings of this thesis, have set a foundation for several possible future research agendas on rural shrinkage, Cittaslow and panarchy theory.

Most severely shrinking communities

This study investigated the shrinking communities that still had the capacity to generate local revitalisation activities to address shrinkage. They were at the second stage in Kasahara's diagram of

the community degradation process (Figure 2-3, Chapter 2) and well before the 'critical point' where most of the community functions are lost and residents give up hope about maintaining the community. They do not necessarily represent the majority of the shrinking communities in Japan. In fact, many of the rural areas are closer to the 'critical point' than the case study sites, and an increasing number of places have passed through the critical point and entered the third stage. Some studies propose planned community closure (Hayashi & Saito 2010) for the severely shrinking places that are near the critical point as a realistic choice. Studying the possible development options for these vulnerable places will be an important research topic to get a comprehensive picture of the future of rural Japan. Case study sites for that can be found in almost all the regions other than the capital zone,[75] but tend to concentrate on intermountain or coastal areas in geographically remote regions such as Shikoku, Chūgoku, Tōhoku and Hokkaidō, as well as remote islands.

Human capital in shrinking places

This thesis has highlighted the importance of human assets in community resilience building to address shrinkage. Human capital improvement should be a focus of future studies on rural shrinkage management. In terms of local actors, how local people can gain knowledge and skills for local revitalisation and how to empower younger people and women who tend to be silent in a seniority-based and male-orientated rural society can be explored. As for non-local actors, what roles returners and urban-rural migrants can play and what conditions are needed to optimise the potentials and opportunities they bring are still mostly unknown and are worth studying.

Ways to loosen lock-ins

Another possible research topic is about structural lock-ins. This thesis has identified several socio-political and cultural factors that were embedded in Japanese society and restrained the potential development paths of the rural areas. The political reluctance to accept shrinkage and pro-growth ideology to counter shrinkage are not unique in Japan but pervasive in a number of shrinking cities

[75] Shrinking towns – e.g. old dormitory towns – exist within the capital zone, but they are located in more suburban areas than rural areas.

and towns in Western countries (Pallagst, Mulligan, Emmanuèle, et al. 2017; Wiechmann & Bontje 2013). Identifying common structural blockages to address shrinkage through cross-contextual comparative studies and examining whether and in what way these lock-ins could be relaxed are significant agendas to explore.

Cittaslow in less advantageous towns

This thesis has found three operational patterns of the Cittaslow scheme from five case study towns and illustrated the potential and limitations of the Cittaslow approach in shrinking communities. However, Cittaslow has over 240 member towns, and an increasing number of them are demographically and economically declining. More empirical work on other depopulating Cittaslow towns will be needed to generalise the findings discussed in this study. Further investigation on less advantageous member towns might find other operational patterns of Cittaslow and will increase the precision of the effectiveness of the Cittaslow approach in the context of shrinkage.

Ways to improve panarchy theory

To improve the validity of panarchy theory as a tool to analyse complex social dynamics, I suggest using it in combination with some concepts that can complement panarchy theory's weakness in depicting social factors, instead of making panarchy theory a more overarching model by sacrificing its neatness. Finding relevant 'partner' theories from disciplines – such as social innovation, social development, and cultural politics – that deal with human factors in social transition will be a future research agenda for the better application of panarchy theory in social systems.

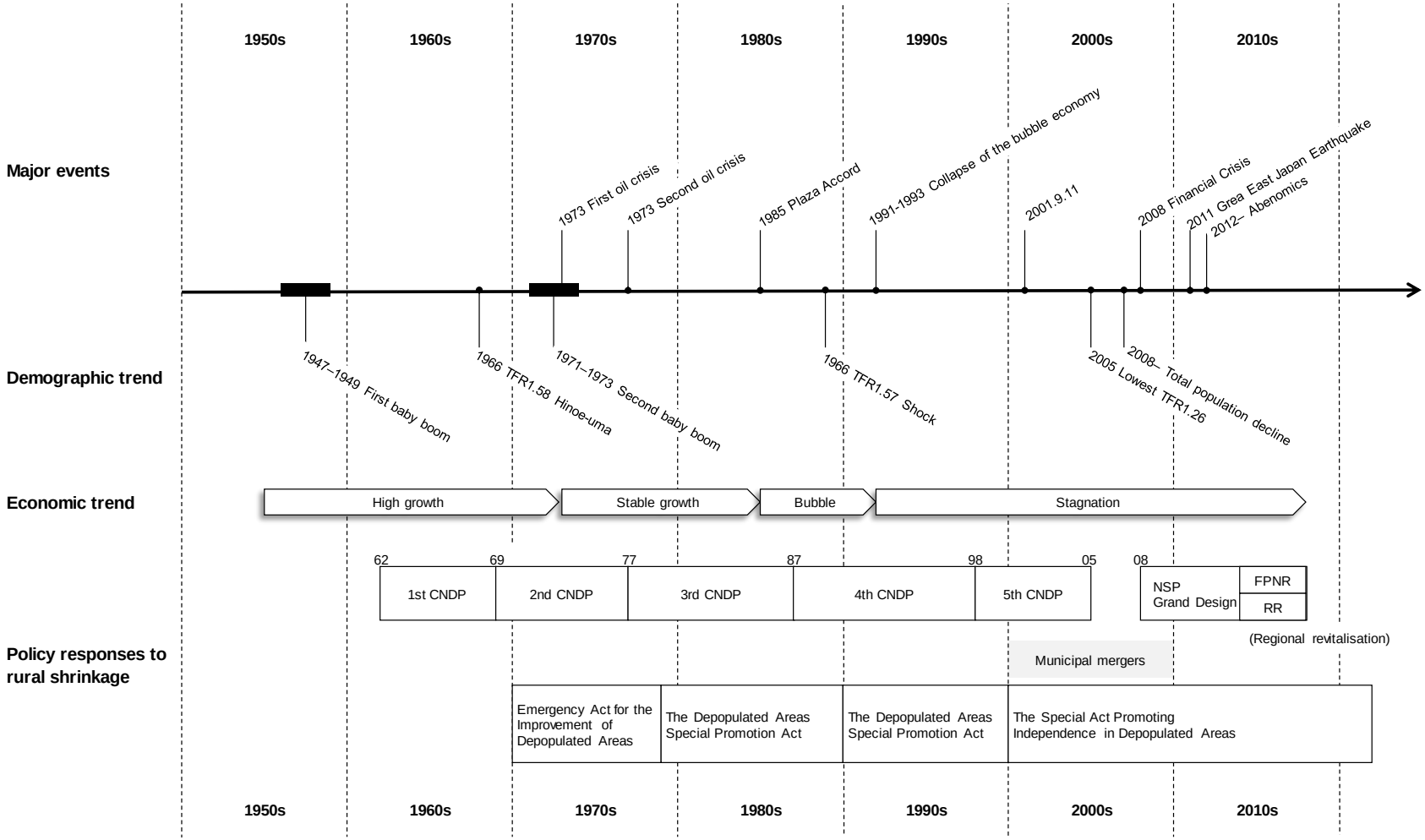
7-4 Final remarks

This thesis highlighted the importance of capacity building in rural places to promote a context-sensitive approach to shrinkage instead of implanting pre-fixed development models. It also called for the policy turn from the trade-off approach to a bottom-up approach that focuses on the capacity building of the actors in the rural areas.

The challenge is that local capacity cannot be improved instantly and necessitates a certain amount of time for its construction. As we have seen in the Japanese case kostudies, trust and social network building – a prerequisite process for local capacity building – can take years. Empowering the local actors and nurturing their capacity to act for change may require multiple years of effort until results are seen. A number of shrinking communities are already at the verge of losing their local functions today, and the time they have left to develop their local capacity is very limited. It is unknown to what degree a major policy turn can be realised within their time limit, and how many places can build up their capacity in time to empower their communities before their local lives are irretrievably undermined.

Rural shrinkage in Japan will intensify in the next decade. Quantitatively, depopulation and ageing in the rural areas is expected to accelerate. Qualitatively, the generation who know the culture and tradition of Japanese rural society before World War II as a lived experience will disappear. The generations who stayed in the rural areas and have sustained local agriculture for decades will reach their 80s and retire with almost no successors. Due to these demographic, cultural and economic watersheds, Japanese society will experience fundamental social transitions in the coming years. The constellation of social behaviours and the dynamic interplay between change and persistence will offer a valuable precursory model for a modern society's struggle and, hopefully, innovation in its transformation into a shrinking and ageing society.

Appendix I Social trends and the main counter-shrinkage policies



Appendix II Full list of the interviews

Interviews in Japan					
ID	Place	Date	Number of informants	Informants	Affiliation / engaged programme
M01	Tokushima	07/05/2014	3	Civil servants	Urban Regeneration Department, Tokushima Prefectural Government
M02	Tokushima	08/05/2014	1	Professor	Tokushima University
K01	Kamiyama	09/05/2014	1	Director	Green Valley
K02	Kamiyama	09/05/2014	2	Staff members	Green Valley
K03	Kamiyama	09/05/2014	1	Staff member	Plat-ease (SO)
K04	Kamiyama	09/05/2014	1	Resident	
K05	Kamiyama	10/05/2014	1	Immigrant	Designer
K06	Kamiyama	10/05/2014	1	Immigrant	Awa Café
K07	Kamiyama	10/05/2014	1	SO staff member	Web design office
M03	Minami	11/05/2014	1	Resident	Hiwasa Voluntary-guide group
M04	Minami	12/05/2014	4	Officials	General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Minami Town Office
M05	Minami	12/05/2014	1	SO staff member	IT Fureai Café
M06	Minami	13/05/2014	1	Official	Management Planning Department, South Region Brunch of Tokushima Prefectural Government
M07	Minami	13/05/2014	1	SO staff member	Suzuki Syouten (SO)
M08	Minami	13/05/2014	1	SO staff member	Hyōdō Design (SO)
M09	Minami	14/05/2014	5	Residents	Hiwasa machokishi kyōryokutai (local NPO for community revitalisation)
M10	Minami	14/05/2014	1	Director	Awae Ltd.
M11	Minami	14/05/2014	6	Residents	Hiwasa Voluntary-guide group
M12	Minami	15/05/2014	1	Resident	Hiwasa Tourist Office
M13	Minami	15/05/2014	2	Staff member	Agricultural cooperative
M14	Minami	15/05/2014	1	Staff member	Fishing union
M15	Minami	15/05/2014	1	Staff member	Awae Ltd.
M16	Minami	16/05/2014	1	Resident	Junior Society
M17	Minami	16/05/2014	1	Resident	Senior Society
M18	Minami	16/05/2014	1	Resident	Women's Society
M19	Minami	16/05/2014	1	Resident	
M20	Minami	17/05/2014	1	Secretary	Resident association
M21	Minami	18/05/2014	1	Staff member	Izari Café
M22	Minami	18/05/2014	1	Staff member	Resident association
M23	Minami	18/05/2014	1	Mayor	Minami-town
M24	Minami	18/05/2014	2	Staff members	Resident association
M25	Minami	19/05/2014	1	Principal	Izari School
M26	Minami	19/05/2014	1	Immigrant	
M27	Minami	20/05/2014	2	Immigrants	SFV programme
M28	Minami	20/05/2014	1	Researcher	Minami-town Regeneration Centre, Tokushima University
M29	Minami	20/05/2014	1	Resident	Residents' group for Kiki area management

M30	Minami	20/05/2014	1	Official	Management Planning Department, South Region Brunch of Tokushima Prefectural Government
M31	Minami	10/01/2015	1	Staff member	Takaranoyama (SO)
M32	Minami	11/01/2015	1	Resident	Hiwasa machokishi kyōryokutai (local NPO for community revitalisation)
M33	Minami	11/01/2015	1	Resident	
M34	Minami	12/01/2015	1	Immigrant	Area regeneration assistant programme
M35	Minami	12/01/2015	1	Immigrant	Area regeneration assistant programme
M36	Minami	13/01/2015	1	Director	Awae Ltd.
M37	Minami	13/01/2015	1	Official	General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Minami Town Office
M38	Minami	14/01/2015	1	Staff member	Cyphertec (SO)
M39	Minami	14/01/2016	1	Staff member	Shikoku University (SO)
M40	Minami	15/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme
M41	Minami	15/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme
M42	Minami	16/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme
M43	Minami	16/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme
M44	Minami	17/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme
M45	Minami	17/01/2015	1	Immigrant	SFV programme

U01	Matsuyama	22/05/2014	1	Professor	Matsuyama University
U02	Matsuyama	23/05/2014	4	Civil Servants	Regional Planning and Development Department, Ehime Prefectural Government
U03	Matsuyama	23/05/2014	1	Professor	Ehime University
U04	Uchiko	24/05/2014	1	Resident	
U05	Uchiko	25/05/2014	1	Resident	Local General Shop
U06	Uchiko	26/05/2014	1	Official	Town Regeneration Department, Uchiko Town Office
U07	Uchiko	26/05/2014	1	Senior staff	Uchiko Townscape Preservation Centre
U08	Uchiko	27/05/2014	1	Immigrant	Community Development Supporter
U09	Uchiko	27/05/2014	1	Ex-official	Uchiko Town Office (retired)
U10	Uchiko	28/05/2014	1	Vice Mayor	Uchiko-town
U11	Uchiko	28/05/2014	2	Officials	Self-governing and Learning Department, Uchiko Town Office
U12	Uchiko	29/05/2014	1	Official	Industrial Development Department, Uchiko Town Office
U13	Uchiko	29/05/2014	1	Shipping farmer	Fresh Park Karari
U14	Uchiko	29/05/2014	1	CEO	Fresh Park Karari
U15	Uchiko	30/05/2014	1	Official	General Administration Department, Uchiko Town Office
U16	Uchiko	30/05/2014	1	Immigrant	Independent farming
U17	Uchiko	30/05/2014	1	Official	Environmental Policy Department, Uchiko Town Office
U18	Uchiko	30/05/2014	1	Resident	Sun Love (local environmental NPO)
U19	Uchiko	30/05/2014	1	Immigrant	Area regeneration assistant programme
U20	Uchiko	01/06/2014	1	CEO	Fresh Park Karari
U21	Uchiko	01/06/2014	2	Members	Omou-kai
U22	Uchiko	02/06/2014	2	Staff members	Ishidatami-no-yado

U23	Uchiko	02/06/2014	2	Members	Omou-kai
U24	Uchiko	02/06/2014	2	Immigrants	Charcoal making company
U25	Uchiko	02/06/2014	1	Resident	Ishidatami Primary School
U26	Uchiko	02/06/2014	1	Staff member	Ishidatami-no-yado
U27	Uchiko	03/06/2014	1	CEO	Green Tourism Association
U28	Uchiko	03/06/2014	1	Director	Nanse (Antenna shop of Uchiko-town)
U29	Uchiko	03/06/2014	3	Local shop owners	Association for Uchiko-town Shopping Street Development
U30	Uchiko	04/06/2014	1	Immigrant	Area regeneration assistant programme
U31	Uchiko	04/06/2014	1	Director (same as U28)	Nanse (Antenna shop of Uchiko-town)
U32	Uchiko	04/06/2014	2	Officials	Uchiko Tourist Office
U33	Uchiko	04/06/2014	1	Representative	Association for Uchiko-town Shopping Street Development
U34	Uchiko	05/06/2014	1	Official	Town Regeneration Department, Uchiko Town Office
U35	Uchiko	05/06/2014	1	Senior staff (same as U17)	Uchiko Townscape Preservation Centre
T01	Tokyo	10/06/2014	3	Architects	Kamiyama SO project
T02	Tokyo	16/06/2014	1	Professor	Meiji University
T03	Tokyo	16/06/2014	1	Professor	Keio University
T04	Tokyo	17/06/2014	1	Civil servant	Depopulation Issue Department, MIC
T05	Tokyo	17/06/2014	1	Civil servant	Depopulation Issue Department, MIC
T06	Tokyo	19/06/2014	1	Official	Tokyo Brunch Office, Ehime Prefectural Government
T07	Tokyo	20/06/2014	1	Business man	Itoki Co.
T08	Tokyo	23/06/2014	1	Professor	Housei University
T09	Tokyo	24/06/2014	1	Official	Regional Development Centre
Interviews in Cittaslow member towns					
ID	Place	Date	Number of informants	Informants	Affiliation / engaged programme
ITALY					
I01	Abbiategrasso	20/06/2015	1	Founder	Cittaslow association
I02	Orvieto	28/09/2015	1	General Secretariat	Cittaslow association
I03	Rome	29/09/2015	1	Coordinator	Scientific Committee of Cittaslow
P01	Pollica	30/09/2015	1	International President Mayor	Cittaslow association Pollica Municiparity
P02	Pollica	30/09/2015	1	Official	Pollica Municiparity
P03	Pollica	01/10/2015	2	Residents	Local accommodation
P04	Pollica	01/10/2015	1	Resident	Local café
P05	Pollica	02/10/2015	1	Resident	Olive products company
P06	Pollica	02/10/2015	2	Staff members	Dieta Mediterranea
P07	Pollica	02/10/2015	2	Staff members	Museum of Dieta Mediterranea
P08	Pollica	03/10/2015	1	Resident	Local restaurant
A01	Altomonte	06/10/2015	1	Mayor	Altomonte Municiparity
A02	Altomonte	06/10/2015	1	Town councillor	Representative of Cittaslow Altomonte
A03	Altomonte	07/10/2015	1	Staff member	Tourist Office
A04	Altomonte	07/10/2015	1	Resident	Local grocery shop

A05	Altomonte	08/10/2015	1	Resident	Local liqueur shop
A06	Altomonte	09/10/2015	1	Ex-councillor	Local hotel
GERMANY					
H01	Hersbruck	19/10/2015	2	Official and town councillor	Hersbruck Town Office
H02	Hersbruck	19/10/2015	1	Resident	Cittaslow working group
H03	Hersbruck	20/10/2015	1	Ex-mayor	Representative of Cittaslow Hersbruck
H04	Hersbruck	20/10/2015	1	Staff member	Tourist Office
H05	Hersbruck	21/10/2015	1	Resident	Local restaurant "Hans aufm Teller" programme
H06	Hersbruck	21/10/2015	1	Town councillor	Hersbruck Town Office
W01	Wirsberg	22/10/2015	1	Official	Wirsberg Town Office
W02	Wirsberg	23/10/2015	1	Resident	Local hotel
W03	Wirsberg	23/10/2015	1	Resident	Local grocery shop
SOUTH KOREA					
K01	Seoul	03/01/2016	1	Director	National Cittaslow Corea Network
K02	Seoul	04/01/2016	1	Ex-coordinator	Cittaslow Council in Jeungdo
K03	Seoul	04/01/2016	1	Researcher	University of Oxford

Appendix III Examples of the interview topics and summarised transcriptions

Example-1

ID	M10
Place	Minami (Hiwasa), Japan
Date	14-05-2014
Informant(s)	Director of Awae Ltd.

Topic	Subtopic	Summary of the transcription and key comments
Elements	Agents	- 県・町は、春に「あわえ」に誘致作業を委任。まだ、仕事と海遊びの共存が可能であることの魅力発信は不十分。 - ムーヴメントを起こすには、0 を 1 にするキーパーソンの存在が必要。現状はそうした人材がいるとこに変化が起こっている。そうした人材がいない地域はダメなのか、そうした人材無しに可能な手法はあるのか、というのは自分にとって未解決の問いであり、「あわえ」がこれから模索していくテーマだ。
	Assets	- 海と山に恵まれた豊かな自然環境、おおらかで開放的な地元の気質、ブロードバンドネットワーク、安価な居住費などが、美波町で SO を開くことの魅力。
	Activities of Awae	- 写真のアーカイヴ作業：地域の記憶、知恵を残していく。保存に止まらず、資料は観光や、地域コミュニティの交流に活用するシステム。各自治体に販売予定。 - SO、SO 関連のリノベーション：地方だけではなく、都会も病んでいる。都会の企業に非日常の環境で仕事をすることは商品価値を持つ。
Process	Vision of the SO project	- 数ある問題の中で、最も深刻なのが若者の流出。東京と比べて、必要のない焦燥感を抱いている。S0 は、若者に魅力ある大人の背中を見せていく取り組みである。 - NPO などは立ち上げた人の力量に依存して、何かその個人の力が低下すると脆い。株式会社は持続・成長・世代交代を宿命づけられている存在。地域も持続性・発展性が必須の存在。両者は本質

		的に通底しており、地域活性に取り組む存在として会社は適性がある存在ではないか。 - 儲かるかについては、日々悩んでおり、明確な答えは持っていない。儲けなければという覚悟の中で、知恵が出てくると信じている。 - 間違いなく日本は減少社会。「縮小型を前提としたビジネスモデルをいやでも作っていけなくてはいけなくなる」美波町はその先端社会。減少型社会の中でビジネスを産むことのモデルを作る。そのノウハウはこれから多くの会社に有益であり、求められるコンテンツである。 - SO という切り口で、限界集落に近い過疎地域に仕事と人材、明るい話を呼び込む処方箋。人口数十人などのそうした小さな集落では、SO が１～２社来ることの影響力は大きい。 - 地域活性化は、来訪者が金を落とすことではない。外部からの人間の視点や考え方に触れて地元の人たちが行動をおこしていくこと。
	Reaction of the local residents	- SO の意義を感じている人はまだ少ない。実際に SO ができた地区のご近所は、変化を感じていると思う。SO は多くの地元民にとって、まだ遠い存在。徐々に広がっているのは感じている。認知度を広めるのにドーピングはしたくない。積み重ねていきたい。 - SO の目標や性格は、環境・状況の変化に伴って変化していくべきもの。県は当初、ブランチオフィスのイメージだけだったが、想定外の状況、サイファーテックや studio23 などの存在が出てきている。SO の言葉の定義も、プロジェクトのあり方も、変わっていくことを不安に思わず、変わっていくことに安心するべき。
	Impact of the SO project	- 職業の選択肢の拡大がひとつの効果。これまで農業・漁業・公務員（ベスト）という少ない選択だった。IT 企業の SO を見て、こうしたスキルを身につければ IT の仕事が現地でできる。という思いを地元の小学生・中学生に与える。働き方の受け皿の可能性を作る。実際に中学校などで、IT スキルの講習などを行っている。その効果が表れるのは数年後だろうが、大きいと考えている。 - ビジネスマインドの育成が地元に育ちつつある、と感じる瞬間がある。 - 都会でできる仕事を、環境が良くて安い地方で行っている、という側面が現在あるのは事実。今は

		まだ、可能性の土台づくりに投資する性格が強い。 - 都会からの視察が増えている。メディア取材が多い。他地域からの視察を受けている。美波町でできるならうちもできるという思いを他の自治体に与えることができた。働き方・生き方を問うきっかけを与えることができたと思っている。
Others	The SO project in 10 years' time	- 将来的には、日本全国の地方に広めていきたい。IT ベンチャー企業の経営者は独立心が強い。神山の大南カラー、日和佐の吉田カラーに染まることが嫌で別の地域を目指す企業は必ず出てくる。自分自身がそうだったのでわかる。楽観視するなら、神山バレーに対する、小さいながら美波コーストができている。IT, クリエイティブ企業、ロハス的生き方を志向する人たちが集まる場所になっている気もしている。 - 大学を 1 年休学して、「あわえ」で研修生を行っている学生がいる。一過性のブームではなく、次の世代に繋がっていく動きだと考えている。世代交代が起きれば、続いていく。その中で、大きく化ける会社が出てくるかも知れない。そこはデザインできるものではない。磁場を作っていきたい。 - 地域の存続が可能なだけの、適正規模の集積が起きればいい。（山・川・海が好き、暑いところ・寒いところが好きなど）志向の多様性に併せて、多様な SO の集積地が全国にできればいい。東京の人口の５％でも地方に散れば、今より歪みの少ない社会になっているだろう。 自分たちが必要なものを数え上げるだけではなく、それがどれだけ必要なのか、という必要量を問い直す発想が大切。小さな規模でも豊かになれることがわかれば、社会が小さくなることを怖がる必要はない。

Example-2

ID	H01
Place	Hersbruck, Germany
Date	19-10-2015
Informant(s)	A) town official (administrator of Cittaslow Hersbruck) B) town councillor (ex-vice mayor and the organiser of the working group)

Topic	Subtopic	Summary of the transcription and key comments
Elements	Agents	The main actors changed from the ex-mayor to the working group after the last election.
	Assets	Barrier - human resource scarcity B: "One of the local Cittaslow problems is the lack of personnel. The person who is in charge of Cittaslow website is not in Hersbruck. No other person can or want to do that." B: "At the beginning, we had a town manager who was working for Cittaslow. So it was easier. But the majority of town council decided that the position was not necessary, and the position was cancelled. Cittaslow slowed down after that." Fiscal burden The town has to pay the membership fee €2500 (€1500 to the international network and €1000 to the German network). It is not a small amount in the budget of the town.
Process	Development of local Cittaslow	Mr XX (carpenter who makes local wood products) and Ms XX (leader of local Slow Food) a leader of conservation centre (the leader of the Hunt Hunger project) proposed the Cittaslow idea to the mayor of the town at the time. B: "It was very concentrated in those people, not all the town, not all the citizens. That has been a problem in the first ten years." Local power shift as a barrier A: "We have a partnership with San Daniele (Italy 2008-), but the town will go out of Cittaslow. They had an election last year, and they changed the policy. Our mayor is not the biggest friend of Cittaslow, either." After the last election, the new mayor was indifferent to Cittaslow. To support Cittaslow, the voluntary working group was established in 2012 with the moderation of the ex-vice mayor (i.e. B). The working group discussed how to win the people, and has started some new projects that are not only about drinks and eating, but also the ones involving children.

		Working group have official meetings three or five times a year. The ex-vice mayor calls for people. They talk about projects, opinions, Cittaslow ideas. Little groups in the working group work on projects such as Potato project.
	Resident engagement	Resident engagement has been very low. B: “The most difficult for me is, only part of town councillors and citizens want to be Cittaslow. It needs long time to make sense of this idea, because it’s a philosophy. I believe it will make change, but it’s a long way.”
	Impact of Cittaslow	<u>More media coverage</u> A: “In the recent two or three years, we Hersbruck was often introduced as Cittaslow by local media. For example, young children of 8-12 years learn to cook local dishes with regional products in a restaurant in our food education programme. Their parents are also involved, and local media to take photos.” Such media exposure and the fact that Hersbruck is one of the oldest Cittaslow outside Italy put some pressure to the town not to leave the network. <u>Small or no impact to the local community</u> A: “Can we feel the change? ...not really.” B: “It’s very difficult to answer. Hersbruck has a long tradition of trying to have a good quality of life. It’s not only from Cittaslow. There was a process beforehand, based on the sustainable development agenda in Rio (e.g. Local Agenda 21). Cittaslow suited the already existing direction.
Features	Neo-endogeneity	<u>Knowledge exchange between German Cittaslow towns</u> B: “We would wish it. But it isn’t. We meet two times a year, and we talk a lot about administration and organisation. But we never have time to talk about projects. It really is a pity. I believe it would be very, very necessary.” A: “It is a network, but you don’t profit from the knowledge of it. You don’t know what others are doing. We are a network of 12 towns. There is a high potential, but we are not using it.” They are considering a bus tour to learn about other Cittaslow towns in Bavaria, which they expect will be the beginning of the knowledge exchange.
	Multidimensionality	Hersbruck has a range of local activities in different dimensions that are now regarded as the Cittaslow elements in the town. Main activities of Cittaslow Hersbruck are diverse. - Heimat auf Teller: a network of about 12 restaurants and 30 farmers in this region (HP for numbers). - Hut Hunger project: nature conservation

		- Tolle knolle (fantastic potato): cultivating and cooking local particular potato in Bavaria They existed before the town joined Cittaslow.
Others	Symptoms of shrinkage	<u>Outmigration issue – not existing</u> Outmigration is not the town's problem. The population is having a natural decrease, but the town has many young families. Hersbruck provides the residential area for young families, elementary school, secondary school and high school that are the good reason to live in town. The proximity to Nuremberg 15 minutes by train attracts the young generations. The town have more inflow than outflow due to the refugees from mostly Syria and Ethiopia, Ukraine at the moment. <u>Decline of the local economy – not serious</u> Many residents are commuting to Nuremberg. There are some empty shops, but comparing to the other towns, the town has many local shops. However, local shops and restaurants are not very well paid, and the lack of successors in younger generation is an issue. <u>Loss of local confidence</u> Low self-esteem is not an issue at Hersbruck. People are very proud of being "Hausbruker".
	Mobility of Cittaslow	<u>Cultural difference to the concept of slowness</u> B: "The meaning of Cittaslow is not just being slow but being liveable. But we are living in a very fast world characterised by Amazon and Google. The slow slogan of Cittaslow is not well perceive in Germany. In Italy, slow is much more respectable. It's something negative here."

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