

Recovery and Reinvention: Lessons for Tōhoku Communities from *Furusato-zukuri* Elsewhere in Japan

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- Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive
- *Furusato-zukuri* in Minamata
- Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation
- Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape
- Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?
- Lessons for Tōhoku?

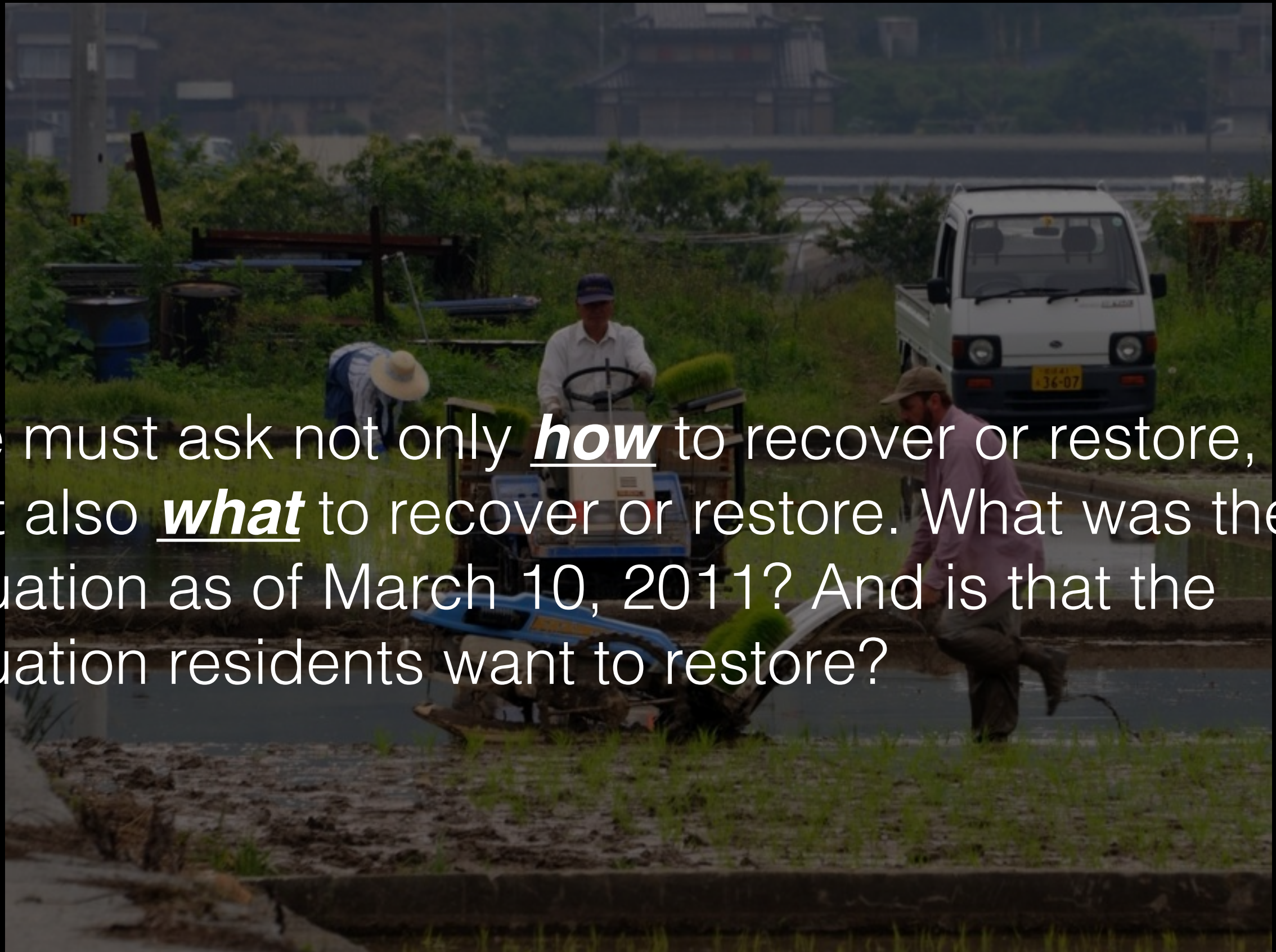
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Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive



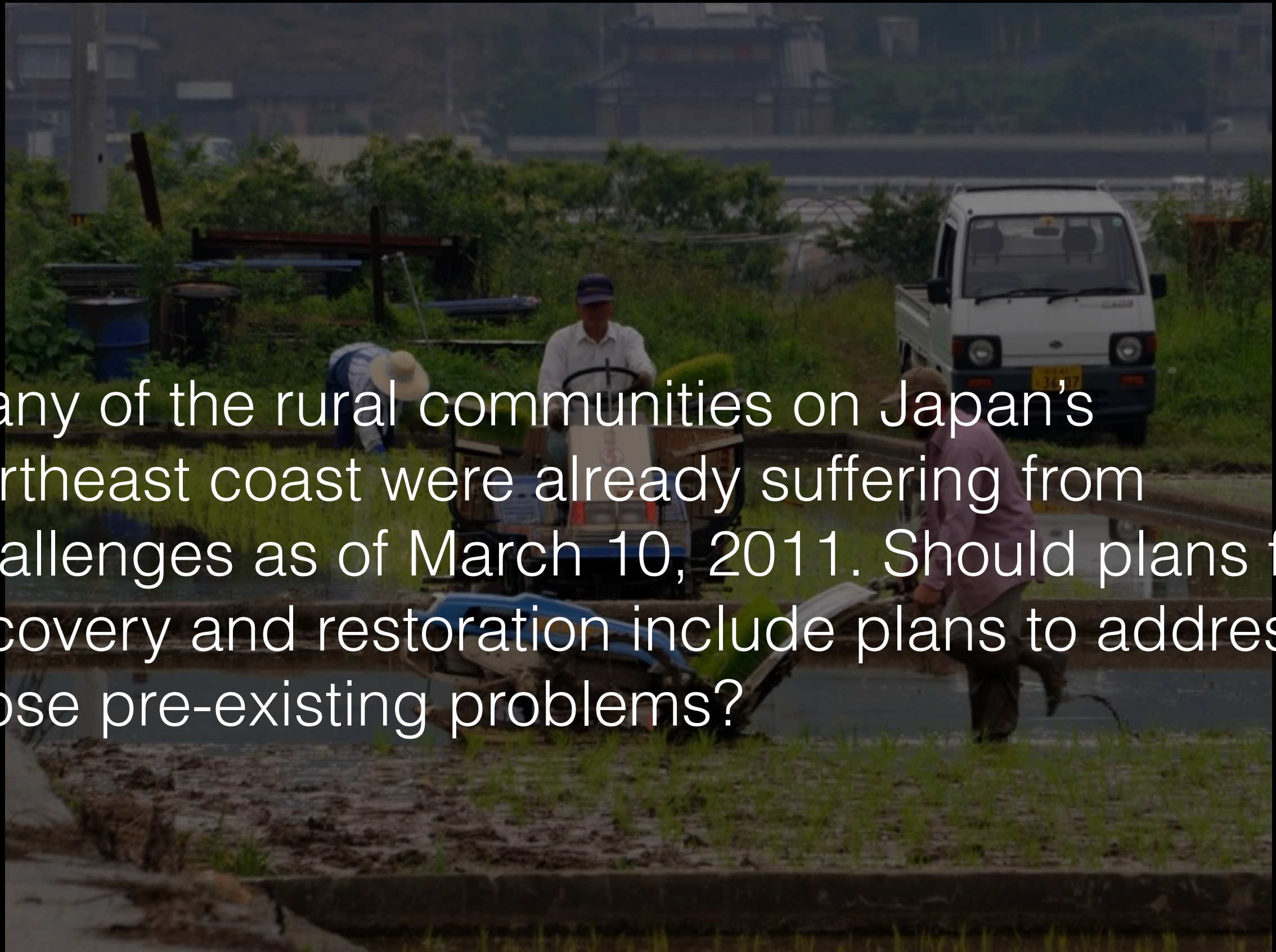
Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

We must ask not only *how* to recover or restore, but also *what* to recover or restore. What was the situation as of March 10, 2011? And is that the situation residents want to restore?



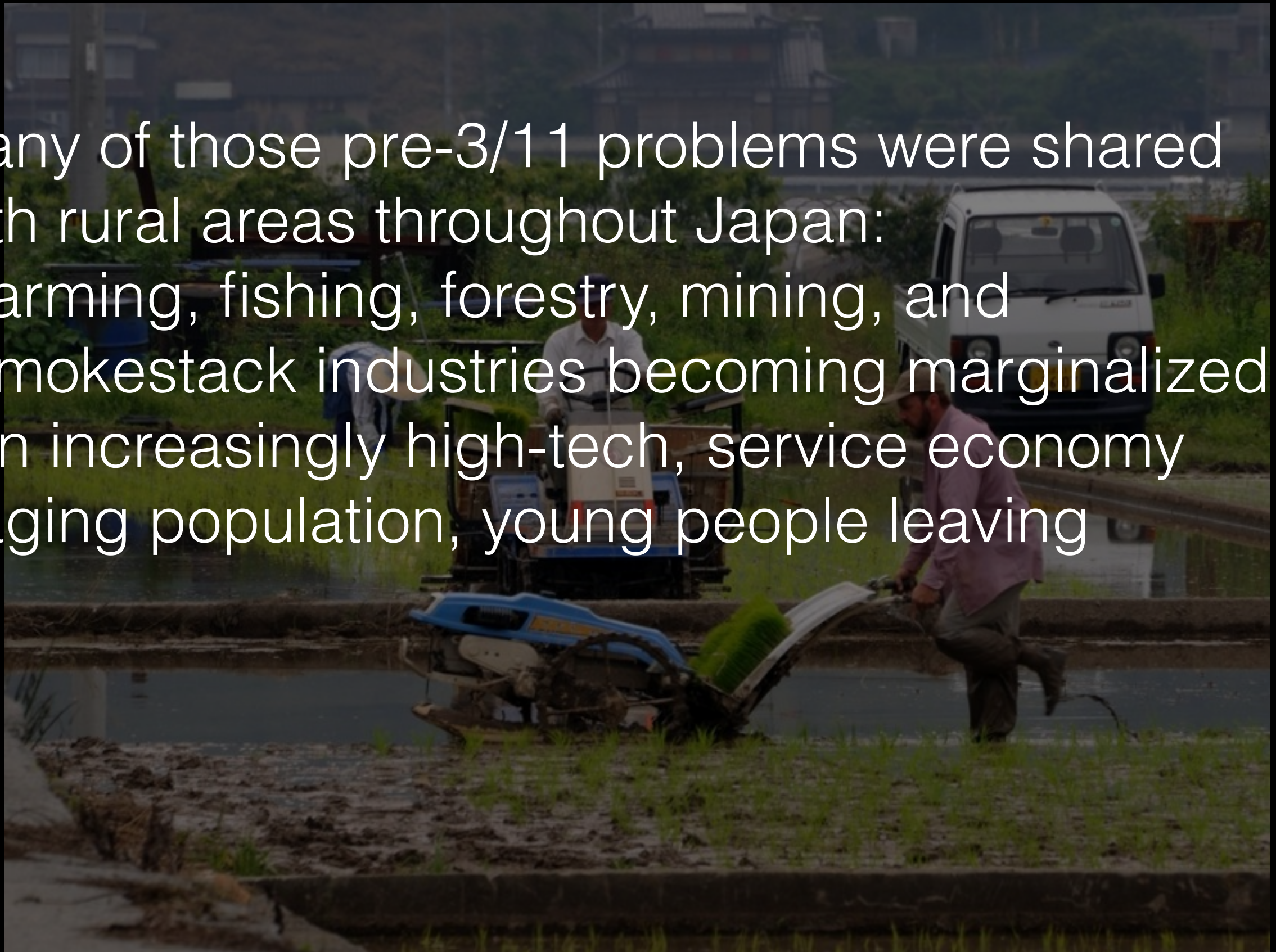
Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

Many of the rural communities on Japan's northeast coast were already suffering from challenges as of March 10, 2011. Should plans for recovery and restoration include plans to address those pre-existing problems?



Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

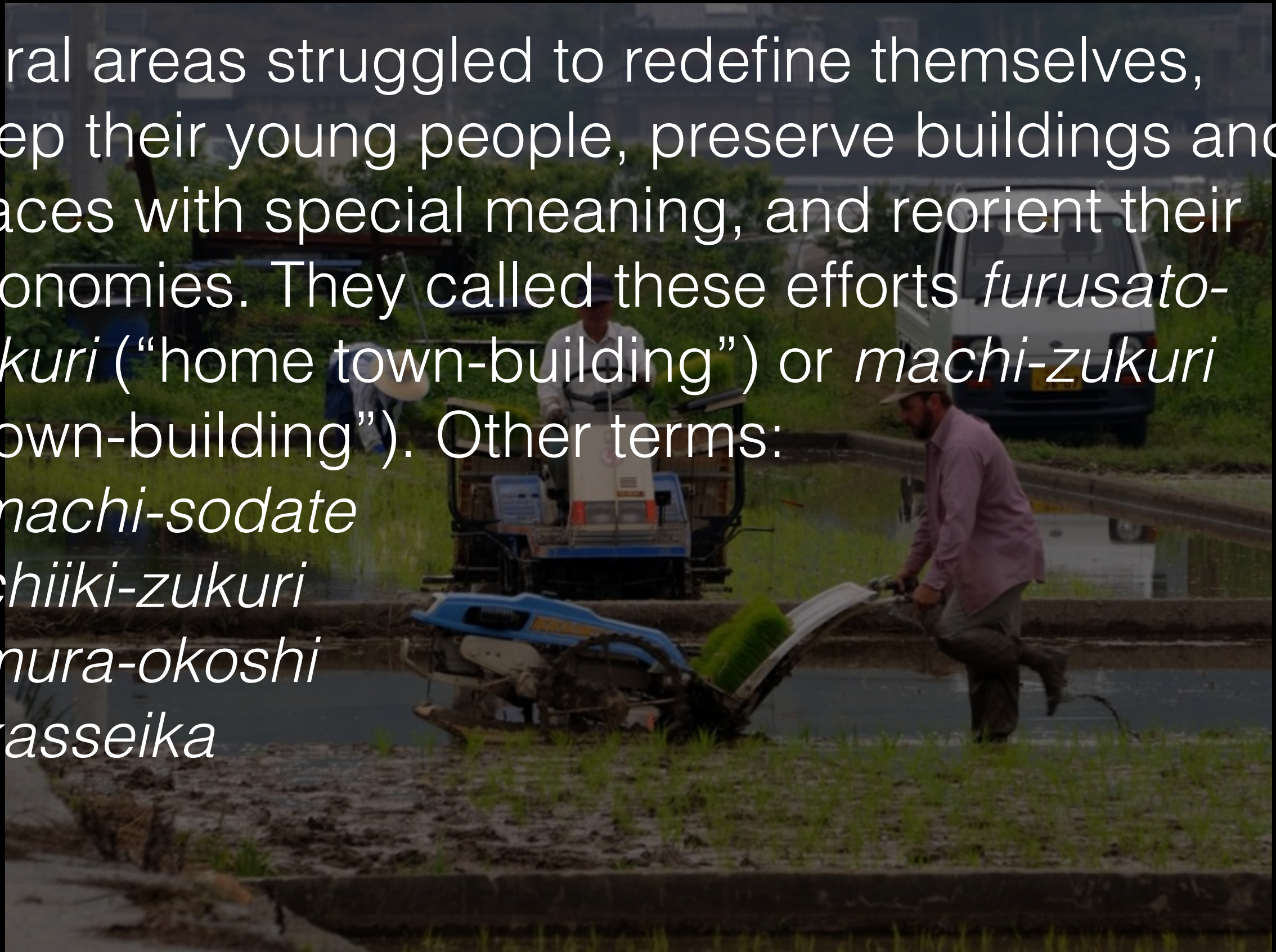
- Many of those pre-3/11 problems were shared with rural areas throughout Japan:
- farming, fishing, forestry, mining, and smokestack industries becoming marginalized in an increasingly high-tech, service economy
 - aging population, young people leaving



Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

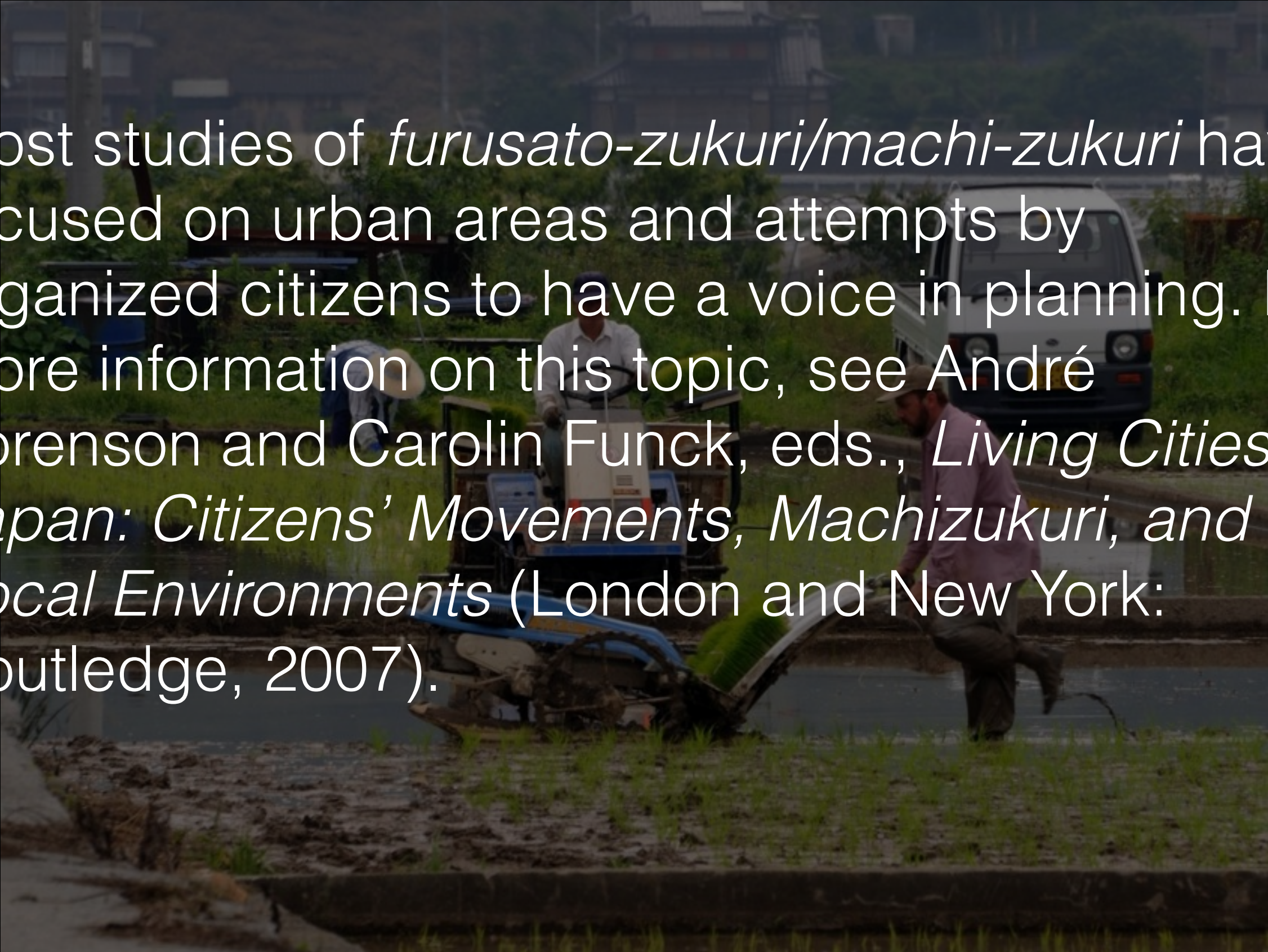
Rural areas struggled to redefine themselves, keep their young people, preserve buildings and places with special meaning, and reorient their economies. They called these efforts *furusato-zukuri* (“home town-building”) or *machi-zukuri* (“town-building”). Other terms:

- *machi-sodate*
- *chiiki-zukuri*
- *mura-okoshi*
- *kasseika*



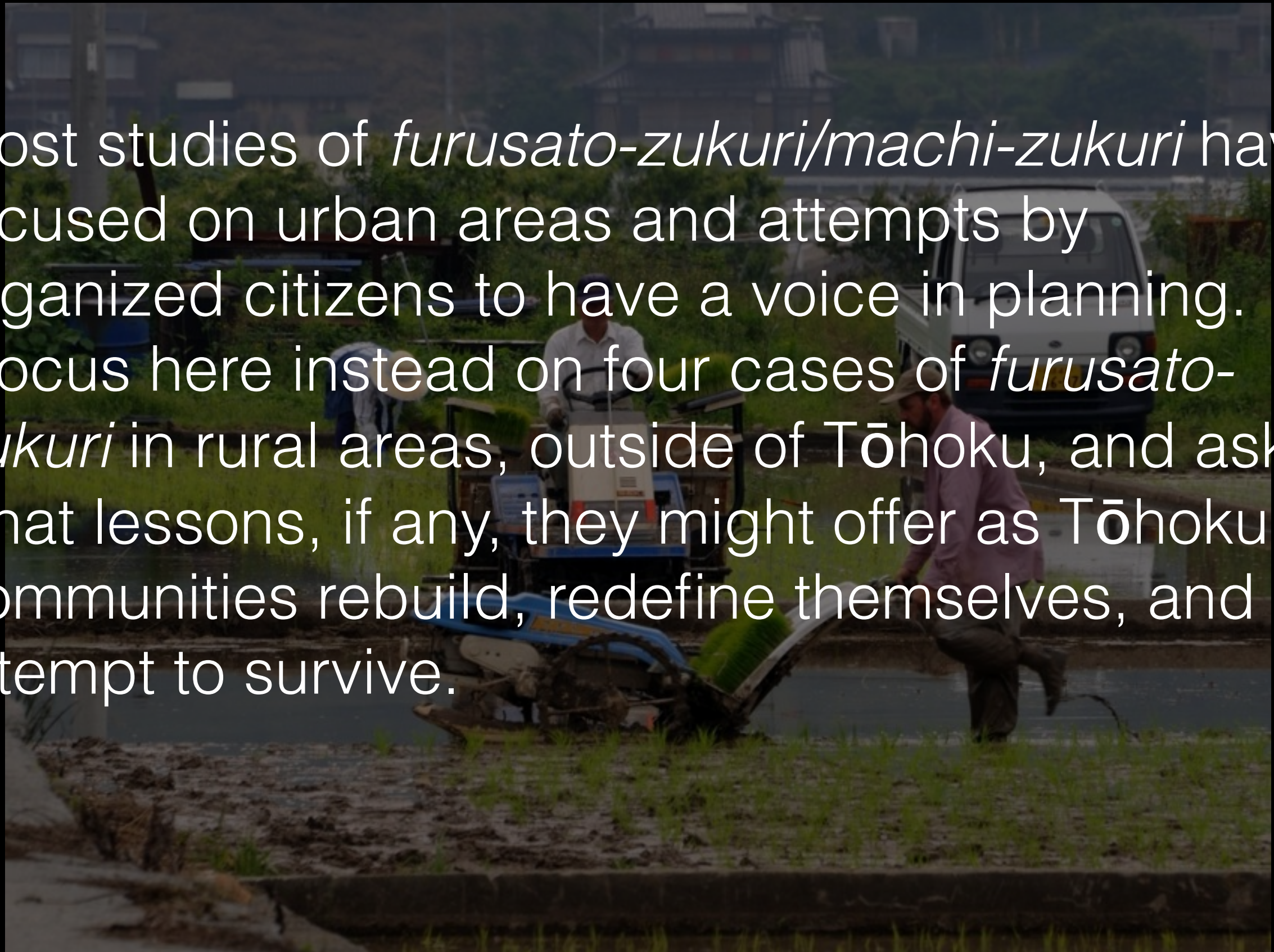
Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

Most studies of *furusato-zukuri/machi-zukuri* have focused on urban areas and attempts by organized citizens to have a voice in planning. For more information on this topic, see André Sorenson and Carolin Funck, eds., *Living Cities in Japan: Citizens' Movements, Machizukuri, and Local Environments* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).



Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

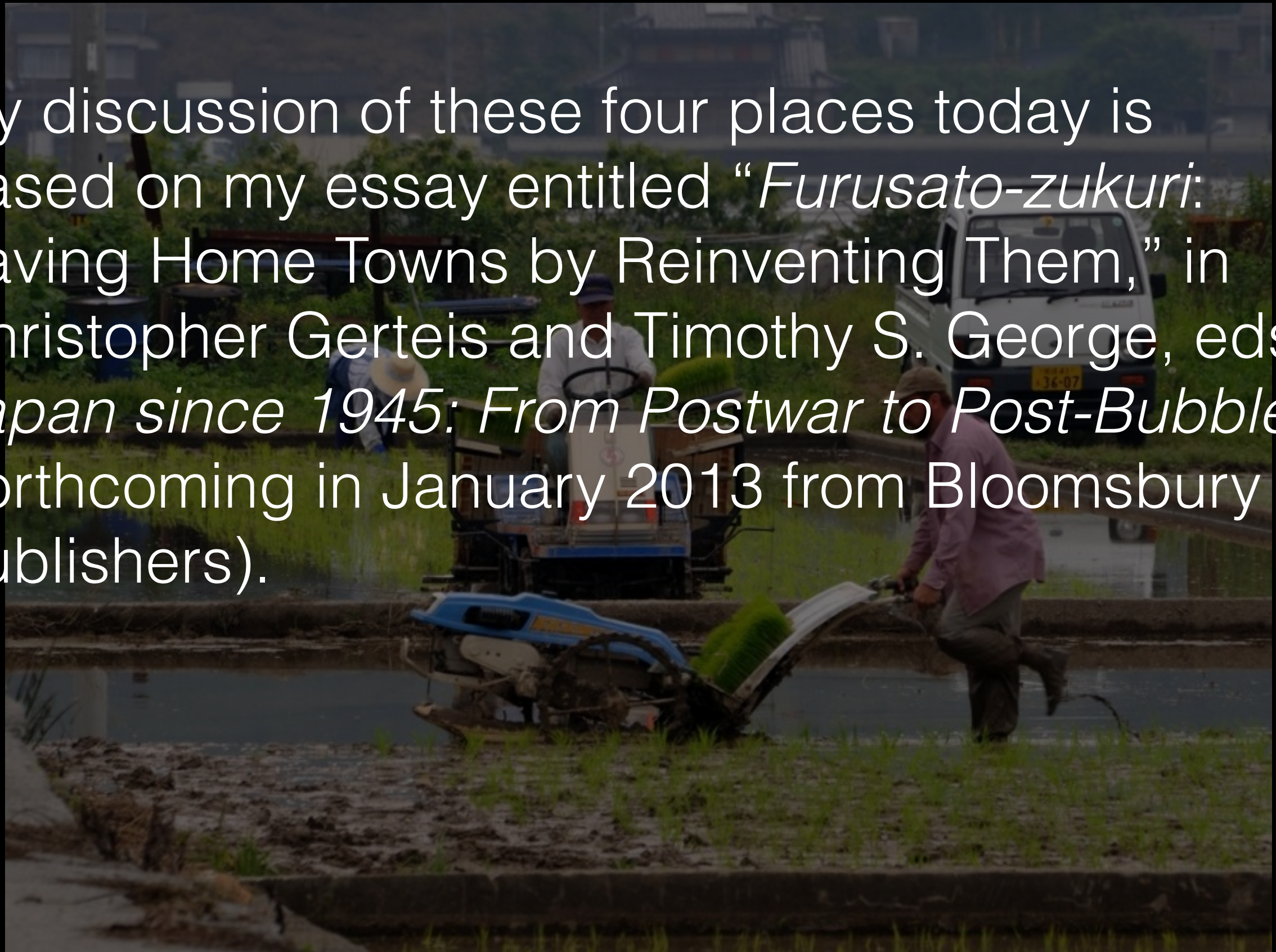
Most studies of *furusato-zukuri/machi-zukuri* have focused on urban areas and attempts by organized citizens to have a voice in planning. I focus here instead on four cases of *furusato-zukuri* in rural areas, outside of Tōhoku, and ask what lessons, if any, they might offer as Tōhoku's communities rebuild, redefine themselves, and attempt to survive.





Introduction: Keeping Rural Japan Alive

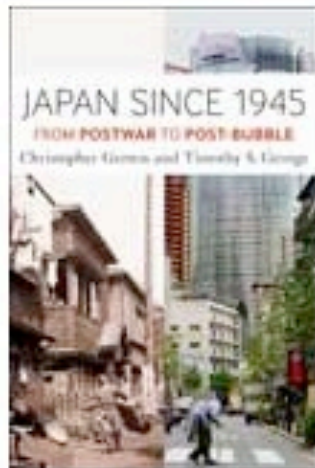
My discussion of these four places today is based on my essay entitled "*Furusato-zukuri: Saving Home Towns by Reinventing Them*," in Christopher Gerteis and Timothy S. George, eds., *Japan since 1945: From Postwar to Post-Bubble* (forthcoming in January 2013 from Bloomsbury Publishers).



Japan since 1945

From postwar to post-bubble

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edited by [Timothy S. George](#)



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Description

Does Japan really matter anymore? The challenges of recent Japanese history have led some pundits and scholars to publicly wonder whether Japan's significance is starting to wane. The multidisciplinary essays that comprise *Japan Since 1945* demonstrate its ongoing importance and relevance. Examining the historical context to the social, cultural, and political underpinnings of Japan's postwar development, the contributors re-engage earlier discourses and introduce new veins of research.

Japan Since 1945 provides a much needed update to existing scholarly work on the history of contemporary Japan. It moves beyond the 'lost decade' and 'terrible devastation' frameworks that have thus far defined too much of the discussion, offering a more nuanced picture of the nation's postwar development.

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Attempts to recover from the tragic mercury poisoning that made it the ultimate symbol of the dark side of Japan's high growth and also the symbol of the rise of the citizens' movement. For more background on this, see my book on Minamata: Timothy S. George, *Minamata: Pollution and the Struggle for Democracy in Postwar Japan* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2001).

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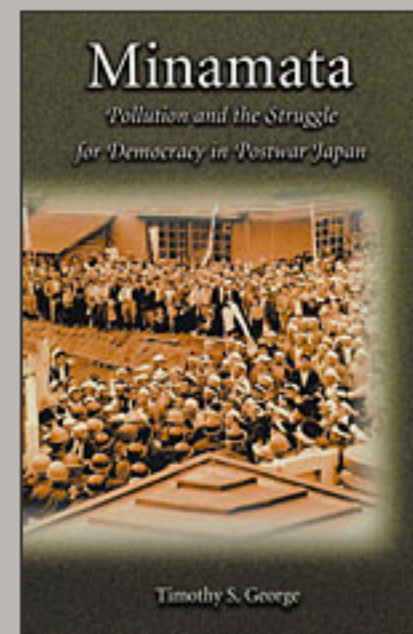
Minamata**Pollution and the Struggle for
Democracy in Postwar Japan**

Timothy S. George

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Nearly forty years after the outbreak of the "Minamata Disease," it remains one of the most horrific examples of environmental poisoning. Based on primary documents and interviews, this book describes three rounds of responses to this incidence of mercury poisoning, focusing on the efforts of its victims and their supporters, particularly the activities of grassroots movements and popular campaigns, to secure redress. George argues that Japan's postwar democracy is ad hoc, fragile, and dependent on definition through citizen action and that the redress effort is exemplary of the great changes in the second and third postwar decades that redefined democracy in Japan.

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Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Minamata, in addition to dealing with the persistent legacies of a long-term industrial pollution disaster, was responding to many of the sorts of problems common to many other areas throughout Japan.

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

- Chisso Corp. chemical factory built 1908
- from village, to town, to city of 50,000 by 1956
- Chisso fell from leading edge of technology; 5,000 workers in 1950, 2,000 in 1970, 680 in 1994
- population down to 30,000 by 1990
- 5% of population over 65 in 1955, over 30% now

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

mercury poisoning
discovered in 1956



Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Four “solutions” to the Minamata disease problem:

- 1959
- 1973
- 1995-96
- 2010

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata:

- Minamata Disease Center Sōshisha



Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



Minamata disease patients at the
Minamata Disease Center Sōshisha

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata:

- Minamata Disease Center Sōshisha
- ways for patients to make a living
- *moyainaoshi* movement



Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



Minamata disease patient Hamamoto Tsuginori
tells his story at the
Minamata Disease Municipal Museum

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



Mayor Yoshii Masazumi apologizes
to Minamata disease victims
and calls for *moyainaoshi* reconciliation

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



a meeting of the Minamata
Study Group

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata:

- Minamata Disease Center Sōshisha
- ways for patients to make a living
- *moyainaoshi* movement
- Yoshimoto Tetsurō's *jimotogaku*
- city policies and goals: “zero garbage city”
- links with other victims

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata



Minamata disease patient with a citizens' group leader in Soweto, South Africa

Furusato-zukuri in Minamata

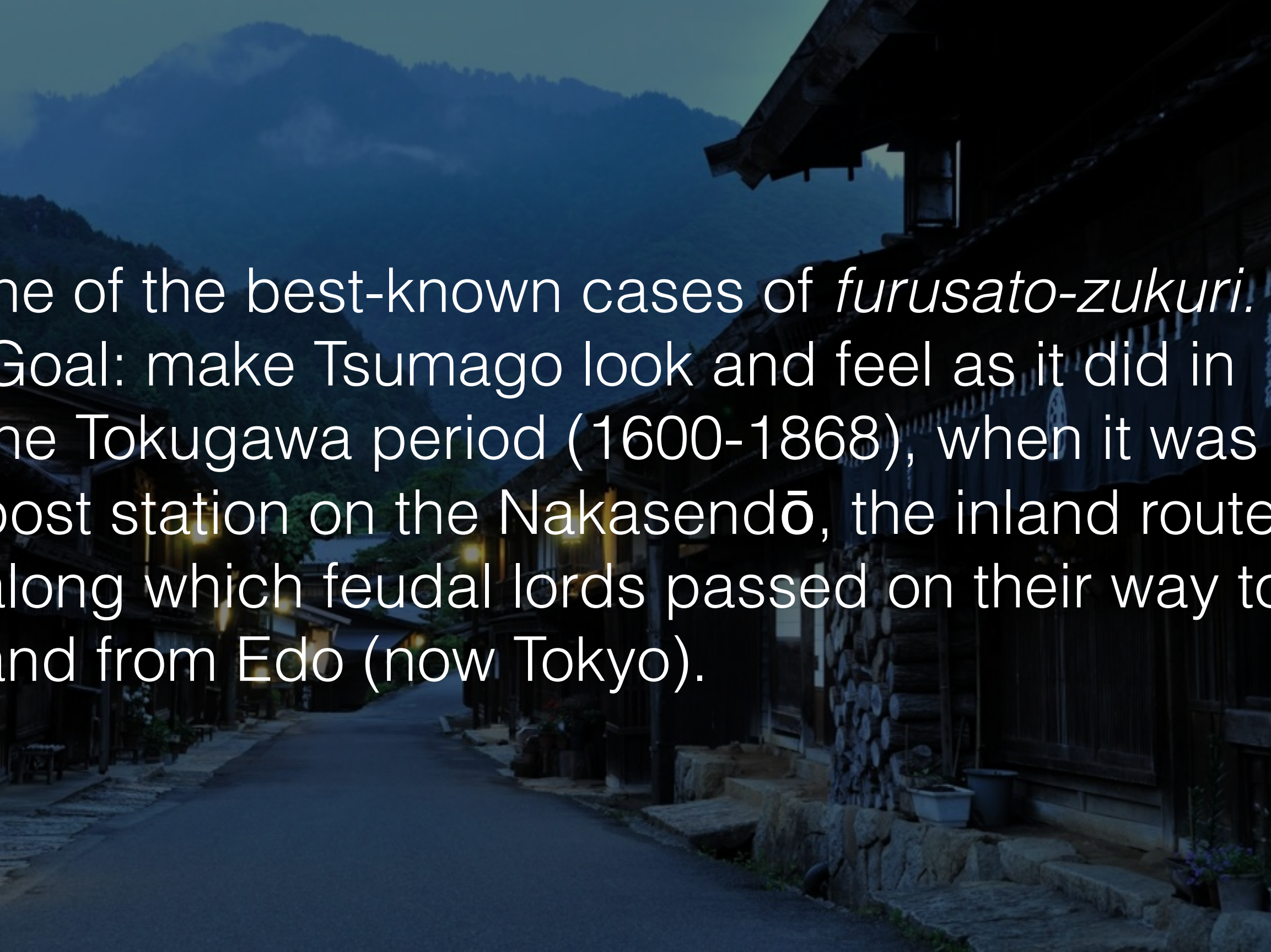
Can Minamata's *furusato-zukuri/machizukuri* be a model?



Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation



Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation

- 
- One of the best-known cases of *furusato-zukuri*.
- Goal: make Tsumago look and feel as it did in the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), when it was a post station on the Nakasendō, the inland route along which feudal lords passed on their way to and from Edo (now Tokyo).

Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation

Tsumago-toppage

<http://www.nagiso-town.ne.jp/english/engtop.htm> tsumago

妻籠

Tsumago

When you come here, you can return to the Japan of 300years ago.

Welcome to Tsumago Website.
We hope you enjoy them!

Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation

妻籠宿 - 妻籠宿観光協会

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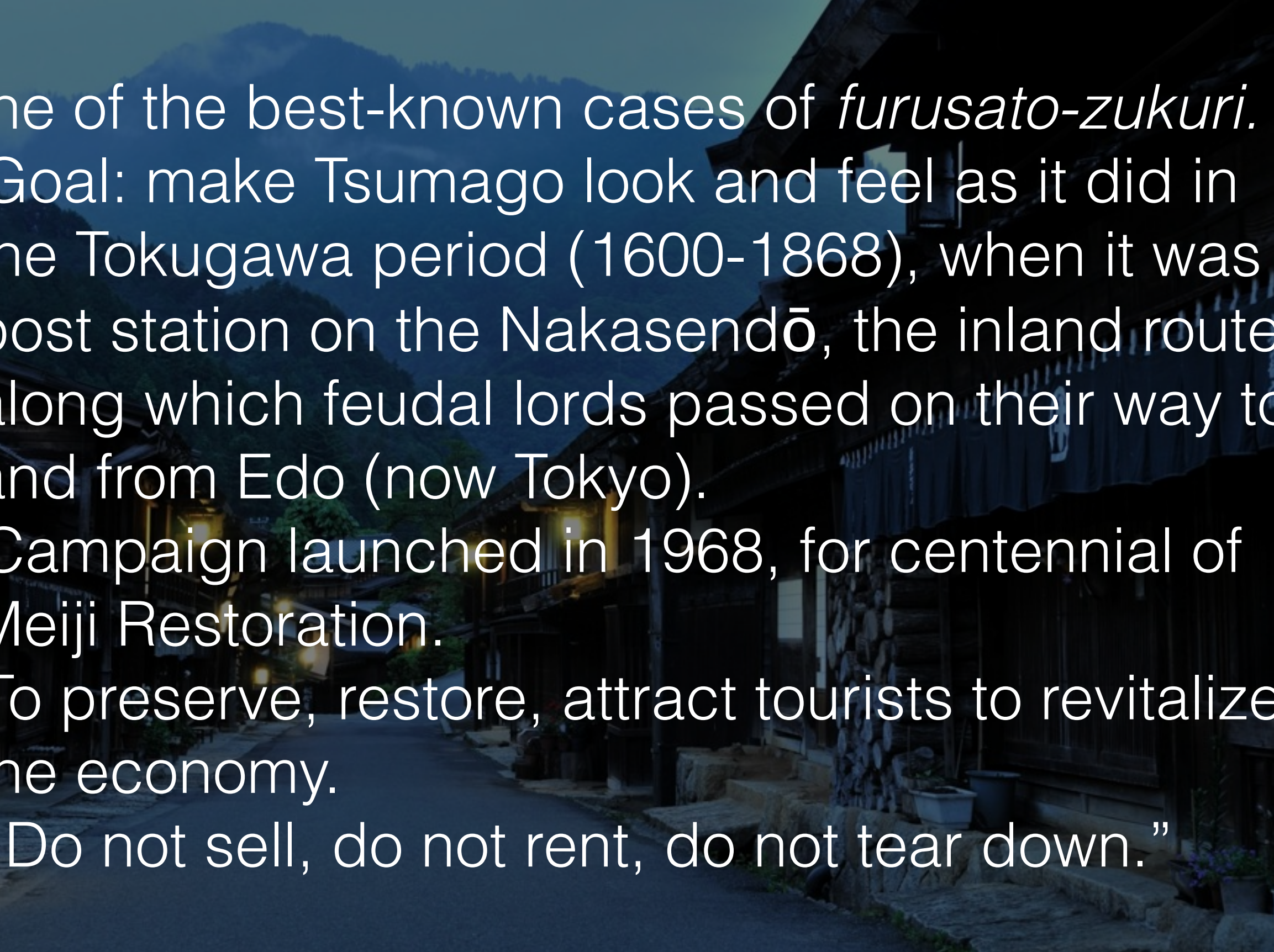
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Tsumago: Historic Townscape Preservation

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- One of the best-known cases of *furusato-zukuri*.
- Goal: make Tsumago look and feel as it did in the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), when it was a post station on the Nakasendō, the inland route along which feudal lords passed on their way to and from Edo (now Tokyo).
 - Campaign launched in 1968, for centennial of Meiji Restoration.
 - To preserve, restore, attract tourists to revitalize the economy.
 - “Do not sell, do not rent, do not tear down.”

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape



Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape



First major movement to preserve a 20th century townscape.

- Population greater than Sapporo's until 1920s.
- Major trading port with many banks: "the Wall Street of the north."

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape



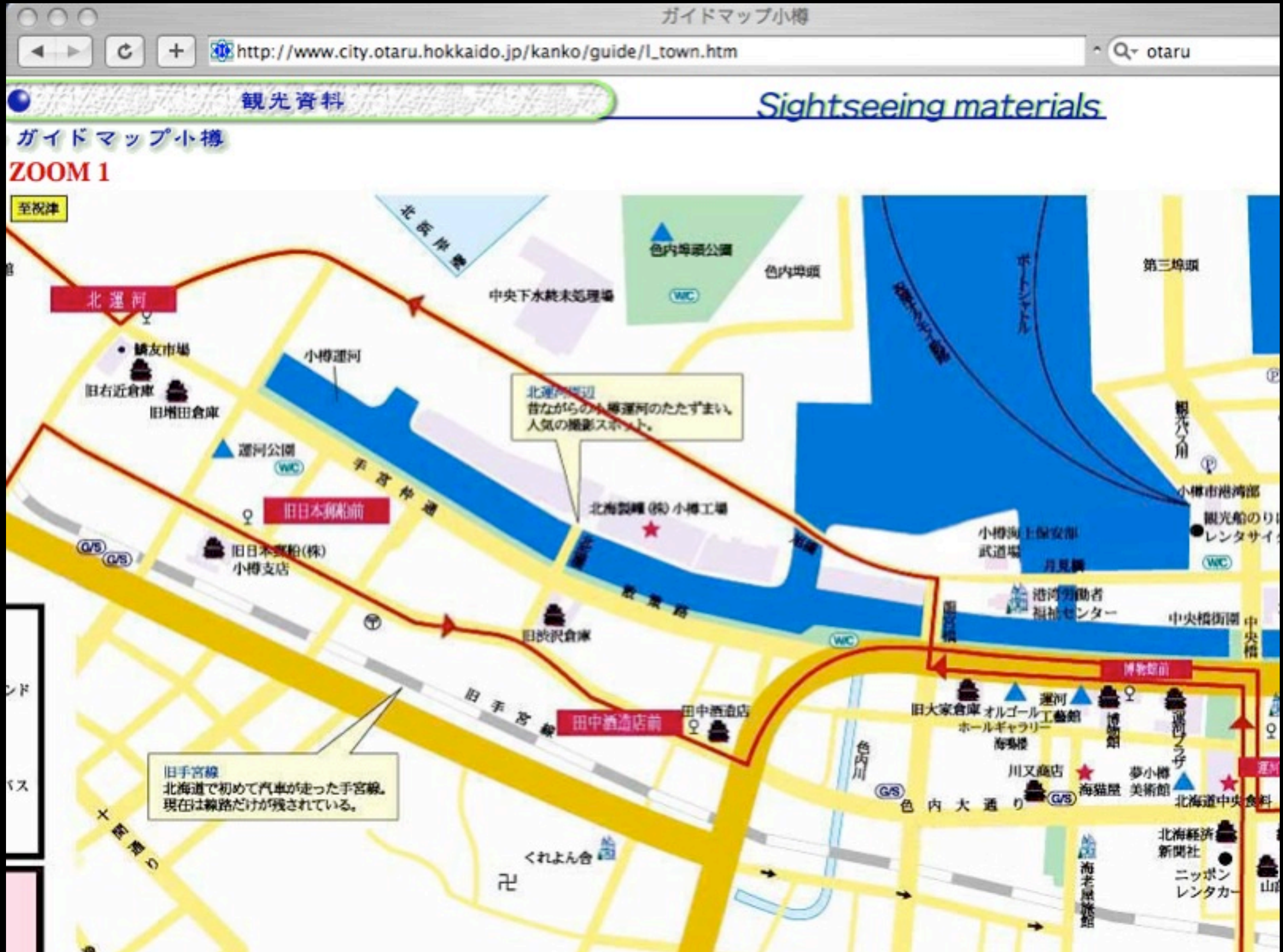
the Otaru branch of the Bank of Japan
built 1912 and designed by Tatsuno Kingo

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape

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- Population greater than Sapporo's until 1920s.
- Major trading port with many banks, "Wall Street of the north."
- Canal built in center of city, 1914-1923, so barges could dock at downtown warehouses.
- City declined after the Asia-Pacific War; planners decided to pave over the canal.
- Citizens' movement began in 1973, to protect canal and warehouses to protect Otaru's identity.

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape



First major movement to preserve a 20th century townscape.

- Concerns about “rootless,” “souvenir-oriented” tourism with little benefit for Otaru.

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape



tourists visiting the canal and
warehouses in Otaru

Otaru: Preserving a 20th Century Cityscape

First major movement to preserve a 20th century townscape.

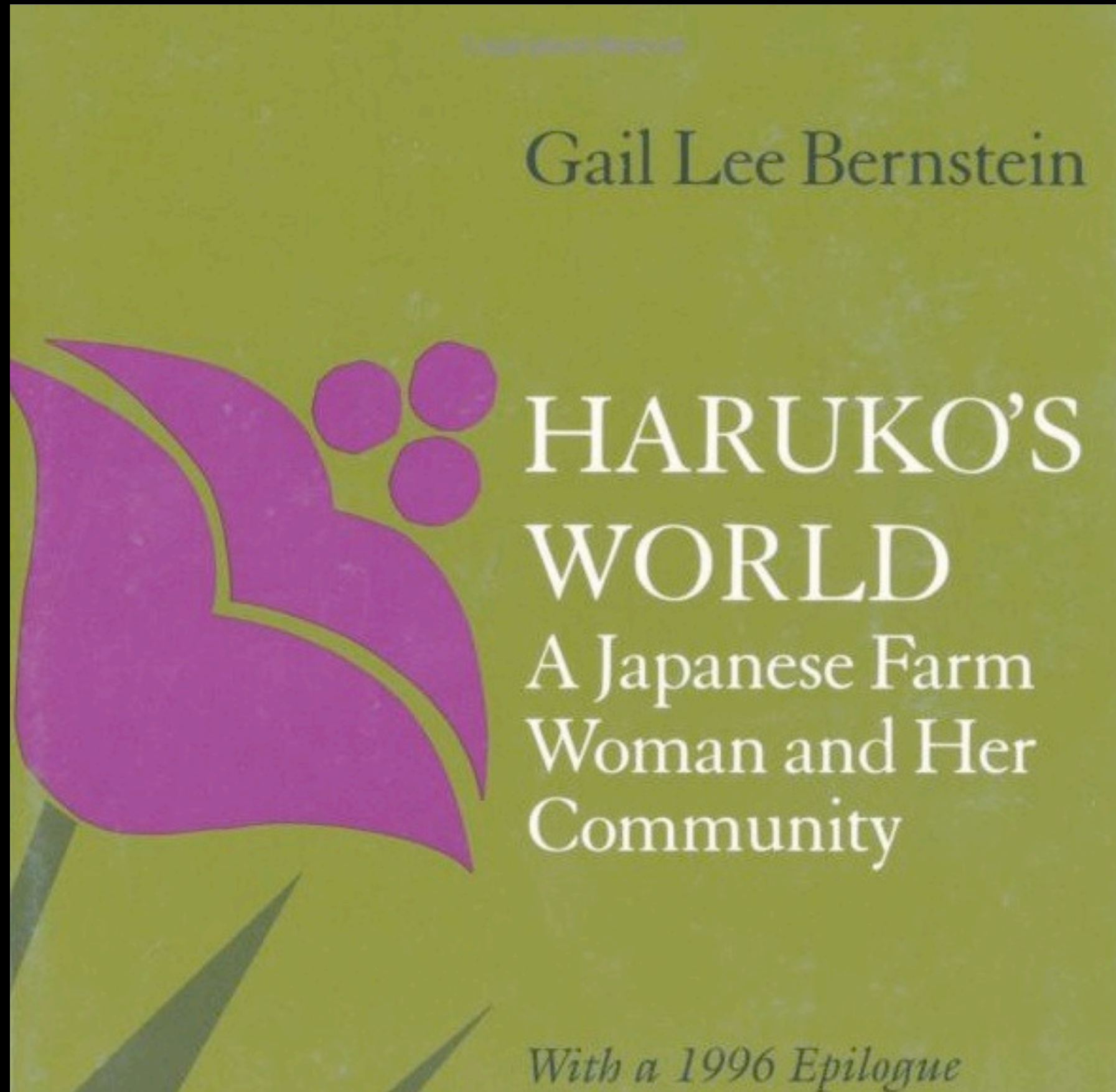
- Concerns about “rootless,” “souvenir-oriented” tourism with little benefit for Otaru.
- Communities as meaningful “place” (*ba/basho*), not just “space” (*kūkan*).
- “An old town for a new society.”

Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?

Gail Bernstein lived with the Utsunomiya family for her research in the 1970s; I stayed with them in 2008.



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?

Utsunomiya Shōichi:

- Reorganized rice fields in early 1970s after studying U.S. farming in 1950s.



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?

Utsunomiya Shōichi:

- Reorganized rice fields in early 1970s after studying U.S. farming in 1950s.
- Served as mayor from 1982 to 2004.
- Education and economic changes -> fears that young people would reject farming and leave.
- Strategy: get funding from national and prefectural governments, but focus on projects providing necessary services and many jobs, and encouraging young people to stay or return.

Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri*?

Uwa - Rice Museum

http://www.city.seiyo.ehime.jp/uwa/uwa/tourism/e_komehaku.html


town of Uwa

宇和

The Rice Museum

The museum displays a wide array of tools, maps, and other items. The museum explains the history of rice farming in Uwa, the wide selection of strains of rice available to the modern rice farmer all over the world, and the future of rice farming. The strains of rice on display range from those that were farmed in ancient times in Japan to modern strains grown in an experimental rice field.

Built in 1928, the building that now houses Uwa's Rice Museum used to house the Uwa elementary school. It's 109 metre-long hallway is reputed to be the longest school building hallway in all of Japan. This makes it quite the popular attraction, understandably.



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?

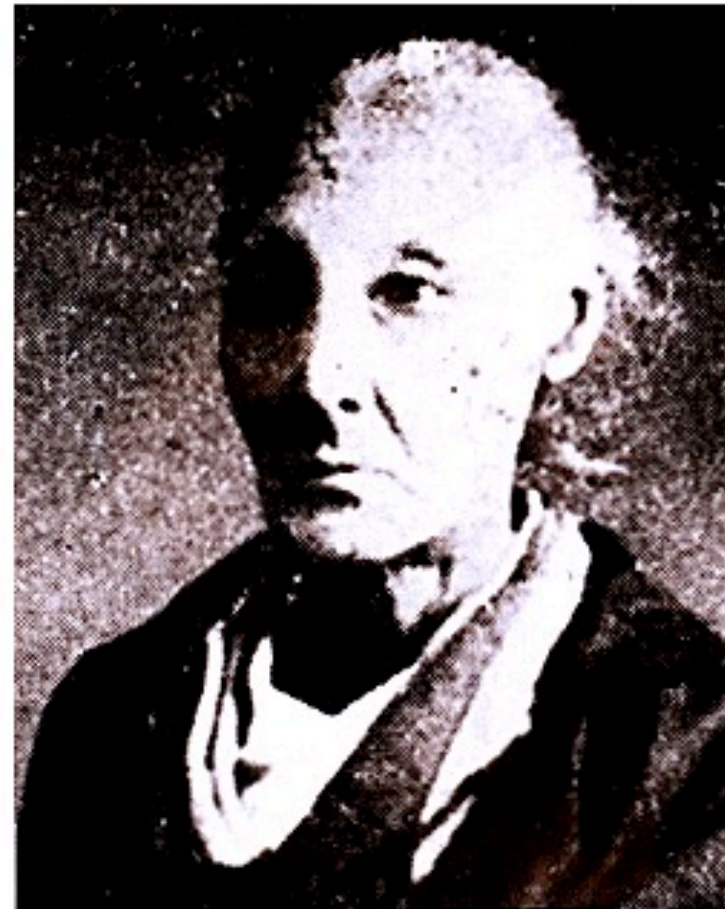
preserved buildings
in Uwa



Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?



Ine Kusumoto



Ine Kusumoto was [Siebold](#)'s daughter. She was born in Nagasaki Prefecture in 1827, only two years before her father was to be forever exiled from Japan. Ine was brought to Uwa town at the age of 14 and was looked after by Siebold's good friend and former pupil, [Keisaku Ninomiya](#). Ninomiya not only looked after Ine, but also taught her the medicine that he had learned from her father years before.

Ine Kusumoto went on to become the first German female doctor in Japan, and later became an obstetrician for Japan's Imperial Household Agency.

Uwa: A More Typical *Furusato-zukuri* ?



Lessons for Tōhoku?



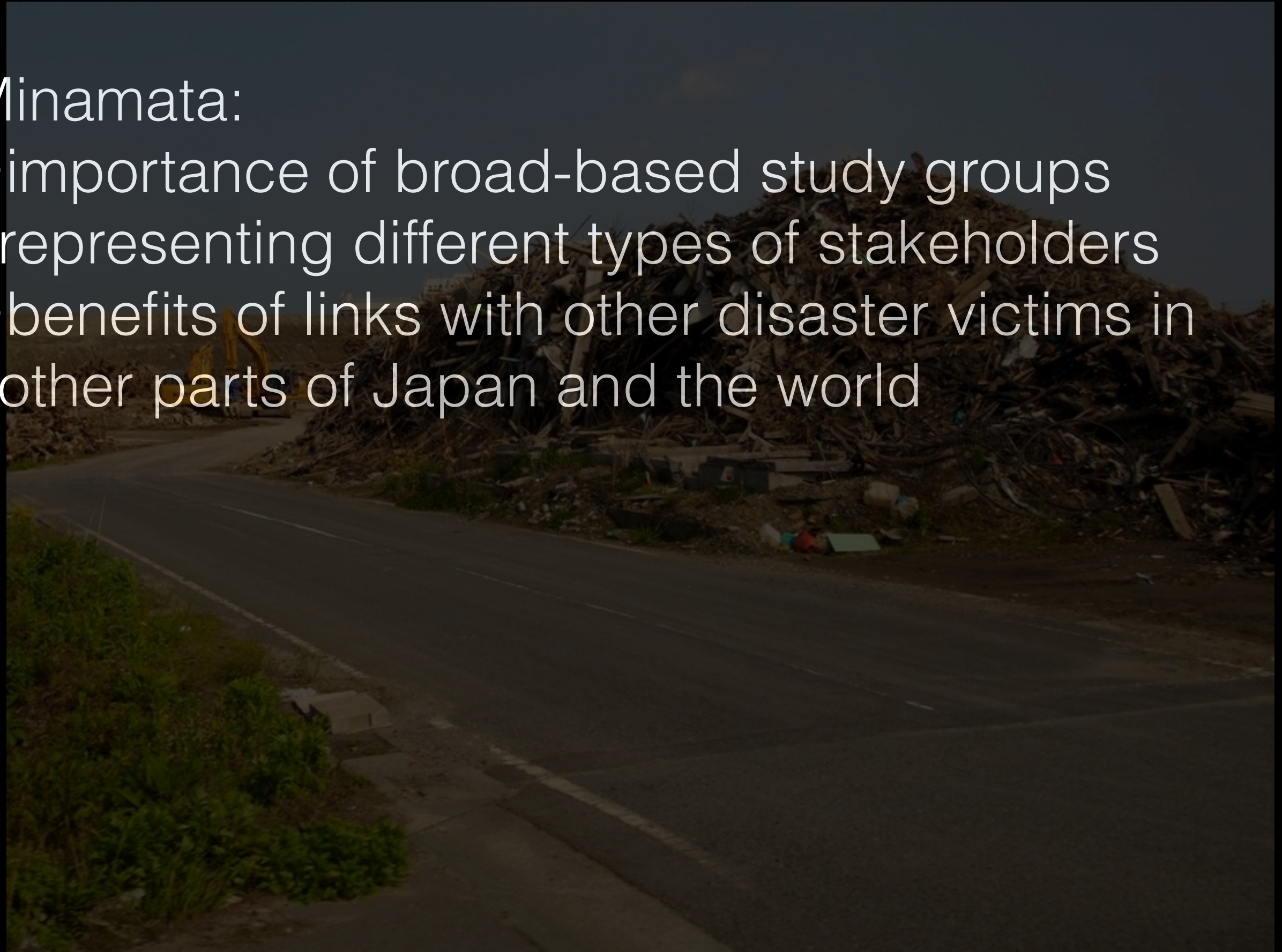
Lessons for Tōhoku?

- Before 3/11, rural areas and regional cities drew relatively little attention in English-language scholarship on postwar Japan. Only 4.9% of Japan's workers in 1996 were farmers.
- Since 3/11, the fact that most of the areas severely affected by the earthquake, tsunami, and radiation leaks were rural, and were already struggling with the same sorts of difficulties as other rural areas, makes a strong case for looking to see what might be learned from those areas.

Lessons for Tōhoku?

Minamata:

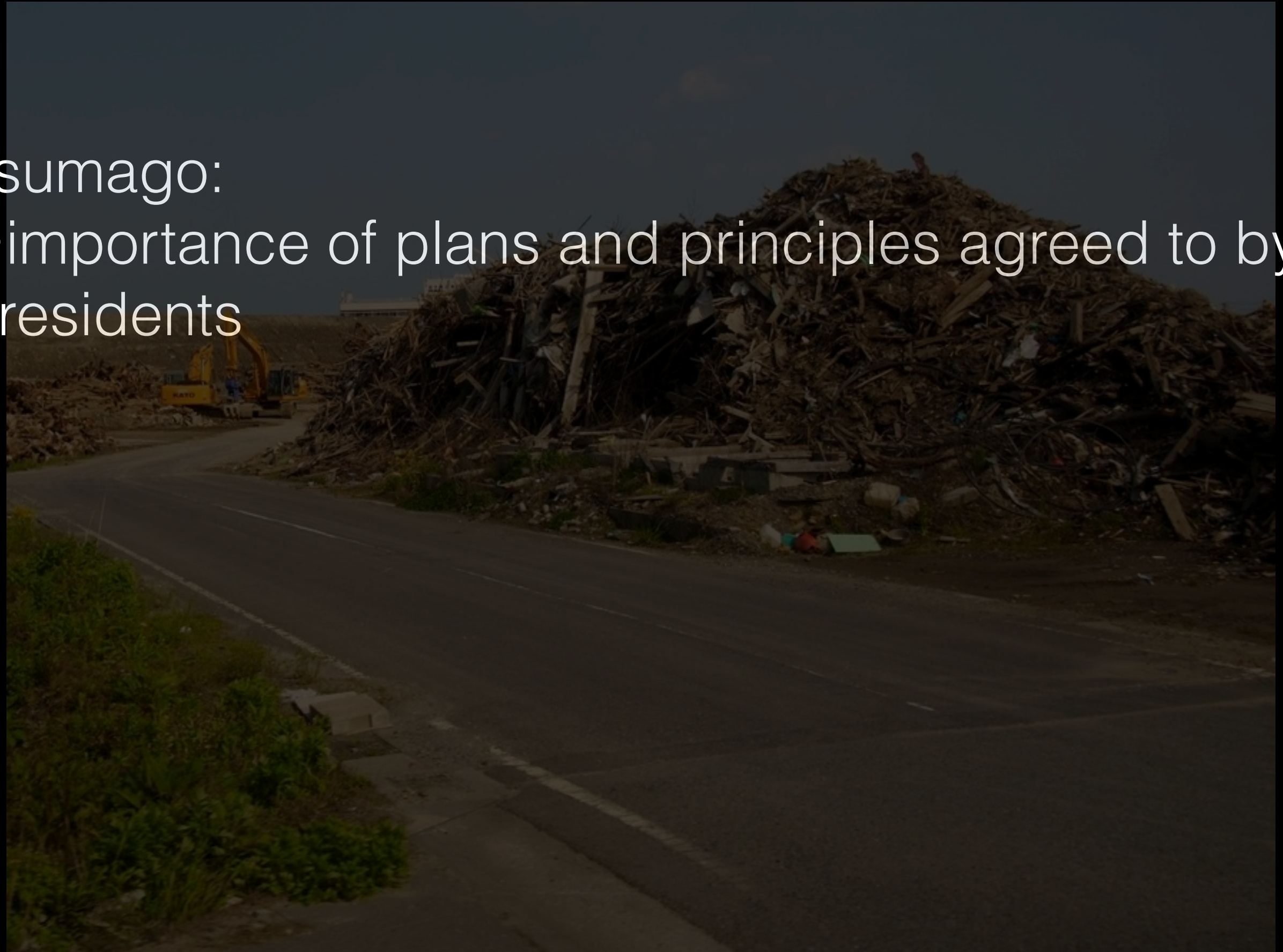
- importance of broad-based study groups representing different types of stakeholders
- benefits of links with other disaster victims in other parts of Japan and the world



Lessons for Tōhoku?

Tsumago:

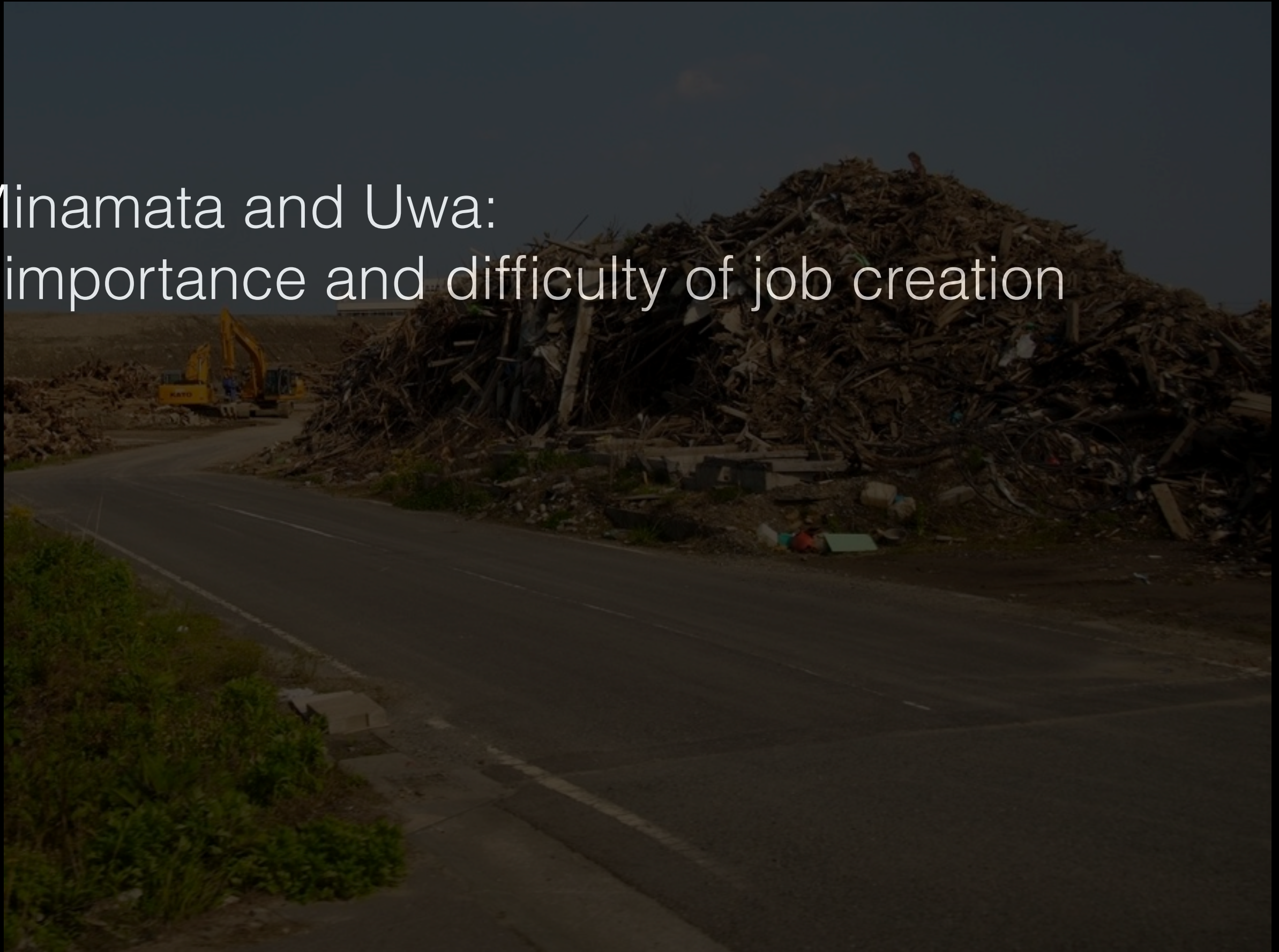
- importance of plans and principles agreed to by residents



Lessons for Tōhoku?

Minamata and Uwa:

- importance and difficulty of job creation



Lessons for Tōhoku?

Otaru:

- importance of local control and local economic benefit from tourism

