



A Study on the Birth of a Holy Land and the Role of Local Residents: The failure to establish a memorial facility for the victims of the Kyoto Animation's arson attack in 2019

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ABSTRACT

The study will first pay attention to the conflict between Kyoto Animation Co. and residents over establishing memorial facilities after the “Kyoto Animation 1st Studio arson and Murder Incident,” which occurred in Kyoto, Japan on the morning of July 18, 2019. And through on-site coverage and review of related TV program “Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land” aired by Mainichi Broadcasting System on August 17, 2019.

We reviewed what this conflict means by Japanese animation fans to set a “Holy Land” of specific regions and the resulting content tourism business model. The conflict between Kyoto Animation Co. and the residents resulted in a lengthy confrontation which did not get solved until late July 2020. It proves the cooperation of residents is essential for the success of content tourism, especially the cooperation model for development of Holy Land.

Key Words: Kyoto Animation, Holy Land, Arson, Content, Tourism

I . Introduction

On the morning of July 18, 2019, a man broke into the first studio building of the Kyoto Animation Co., an animation studio located in Momoyamacho-Inaba, Fushimi-ward, Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture, and set fire to it. As a result, 36 employees of the company perished and 33 people, including the man suspected of the arson attack, who was 42 years old at the time, were seriously injured.

At the site of Kyoto Animation's first Studio, where the incident took place, nearly a month after the case, white fences surrounded the burned-out office building (Fig. 1), there was a sign posted by Kyoto Animation that told people "No Graffiti" (Fig. 2). The Inaba-higashi Autonomous Council, a self-governing group of residents in question, posted a message throughout the residential area, reminding them that this is their residential area and asking them to keep privacy. Crucially, the altar in memory of the victims had been moved to the side of the road on the outskirts, far away from the place of the incident.

There are issues here that one should pay attention to. First, like the old building of Toyosato Elementary School in Inukami County, Shiga Prefecture, which is featured in the TV animation "K-ON!" (2009-2011), there were residents and owners of the facility who were featured in Kyoto Animation's works as 'a Holy Land'



Fig. 1 Burned-out wreck of Kyoto Animation first studio (Aug 17, 2019. Photo taken by the writer)



Fig. 2 'No Graffiti' sign posted by Kyoto Animation (Aug 17, 2019. Photo taken by the writer)

that showed the cooperative attitude of the victims and their fans¹⁾. We also have to pay attention to the defensive action of residents in Momoyamacho-Inaba, Fushimi-Ward, Kyoto-City, Kyoto Prefecture, where the first studio of Kyoto Animation was placed. It may be due to the difference in views of one object by those who visited each area. If so, what factors formed this difference in perspective? Perhaps the destruction of daily life and the defensive attitude of the residents were due to the sudden influx of unspecified crowds of people from all walks of life, including media officials who reported the incident day after day, and people who visited the site to pay their respects and offer flowers.

To resolve the question, we will look at how the members of Kyoto Animation and the residents should understand each other in deciding whether to sanctify the site or not by shedding light on the conflict between the management and the residents who opposed the monument on the site of the first studio, which was demolished after the Kyoto Animation arson attack that occurred in 2019. We will do so by predicting the consequences of the management and residents' choices.

Indeed, there are no Korean academic papers yet dealing with the tragedy that hit a medium-sized animation company based in Kyoto and not many in Japan. However, it is possible to detect the form of autobiography by officials from newspapers and broadcasters who reported the incident²⁾ or that revealed the intent and progress of the program's production³⁾, or bulletins verifying the media's reporting attitude regarding the disclosure of the victims' real names are being confirmed⁴⁾, as well as contributions from jurists written to the effect that the media should have a dialogue with society when reporting this kind of event⁵⁾. All of these documents were written by people who study media

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- 1) Okamoto, T. (2019, August 18) KyoAni's featured sites become 'real Holy Land'...Seeing Current State a month later of the incident [Honmono no Seichi'kashita KyoAni no Butai...Houka jiken kara Ikkagetsu go no imawo miru]. *Gendai Business*. <https://gendai.ismedia.jp/articles/-/66583?page=6>
 - 2) Kishimoto, T. (2019) Introduce hesitation and worries on the paper: Continue to explore what we should be. [Mayoiya Nayamimo Simende Shoukai: Arubeki Siseini Tsuite Mosaku wo Tudzureru]. *Shimbun Kenkyu*, 819, 8-11, Tokyo, Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association.
 - 3) Imoto, S. (2019) Thoughts put into the month's special "Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land [Aete Tantanto Tsutaeru : Ikkagetsu Tokuban – Inori no Natsu, Seichi no Koe(To dare to convey something calmly)]. *Shimbun Kenkyu*, 819, 12-15, Tokyo, Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association.
 - 4) Ukida, T. (2020) Publication of Real Names of Victims in the Case of the Arson Attack on Kyoto Animation [Kyoto Animation Houka Jiken ni Okeru Higaisya Jitsumei Houdou ni Tsuite : Media no Houdou wo Kensyou Suru]. *Research bulletin of Faculty of Social Sciences*, 9, 15-32, Osaka, Haboromo University of International Studies.
 - 5) Sokabe, M. (2019) Communicate with society throughout the press — Victim's real-name reporting principles in the internet network age [Houdoukai Agete Syakai to Taiwa wo : Netto Jidai no Higaisya Houdou to Jitsumei Houdou Gensoku]. *Shimbun Kenkyu*, 819, 16-19, Tokyo, Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association.

coverage. They offer significant alternatives to what journalists should be careful about when dealing with residents near the scene or dealing with the incident itself. Still, they do not attempt to make the scene 'holy' or take any approach to take issue with the actions that could cause it.

In this study we concentrate on the plan to build a memorial on the site of the first studio that was released by Hatta Hideaki(八田英明), president of Kyoto Animation, and the conflict of opinions of the local community against it. In particular, assuming that the fundamental reason for opposing the construction of the memorial by members of the local community or residents would be fear of property rights infringement, we looked at why the hypothesis gained validity. Finally, by anticipating what Kyoto Animation would make under these conditions and how it would change the atmosphere in the region, we will consider what would be right for Kyoto Animation and other members of the "Holy Land" to make after the incident and what should be important in their decision-making process⁶⁾.

The expected effects of this study are as follows. The first is to confirm what it means to lose one's appearance because of a terrible event in a place considered to be valuable for people of a specific cultural class in Japanese society. The second is to confirm how difficult it is to hope to overcome the terrible past and create a new place in which to have only beautiful memories.

II . Voices desiring the possibility of 'Producing a Holy Land'

1. Development of a real holy land

1) How is a 'holy land' created?

Before we get to the point, we will first take a look at how animation fans say the 'holy land' is formed and what cooperative models are needed between members to maintain it.

The birth of a Holy Land, in other words, the birth of a pilgrimage site, means that viewers visit certain places in the animation world and venerate them as places that connect fantasy and reality in

6) The relevant regional research for this study was conducted on August 17, 2019, by visiting the Kyoto Animation First Studio building, the site of the incident. Later, I tried to interview Okeda Daisuke, who served as a lawyer for Kyoto Animation, and a resident in the vicinity of the accident site (male, 40s). But I could not do so, because both of them refused to comment on the incident.

their work. This pilgrimage to the holy land can be seen as a kind of content tourism formed based on content enjoyed mainly by young people, such as animation, games, and cartoons. We believe that it will gain a faster understanding when approaching pending issues based on a schematic model.

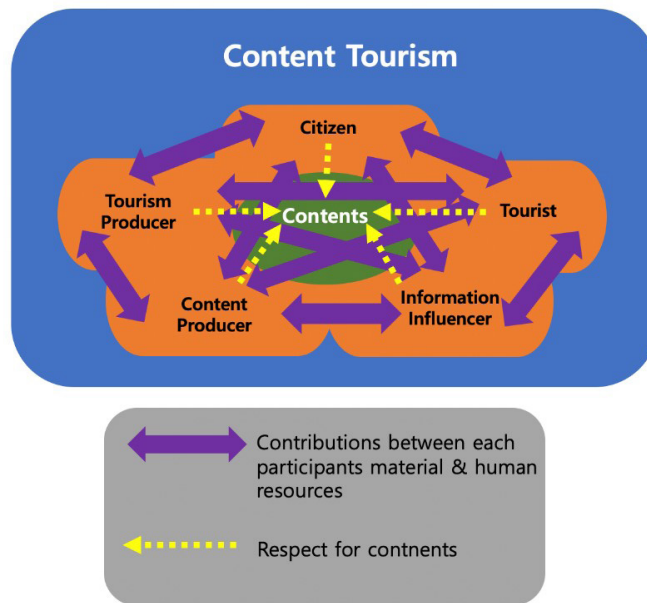


Fig. 3 The mixed model of Okamoto (2015) and Yamamura (2018)

In 2019, Lee proposed the cooperation model contributing to the prosperity of contents tourism (Table 1)⁷⁾ by mixing the existing models of Yamamura (山村 2018)⁸⁾ and Okamoto (岡本 2015)⁹⁾. Yamamura argues that ‘producers’, ‘locals’, and ‘fans (tourists)’ will love and stand in awe of specific content and try to form cooperative relationships with each other, to make a success of contents

7) Lee, J. (2019) Visits to Anime Locations in Japan and Tourism Strategies of these Cities: Centered on the Increase in Number of Tourists and Changes in Commercial Facilities in Numazu, Shizuoka [Ilbon e Animation Seongji Sunrye wa Dosi e Jeyonryak– Shizuokahyeon Numazusi e Gwangwanggaek Jeunggam mit Sangeopsiseol e Hyeongsang Byonhwa reul Jungshimuro–]. *Japanese Culture Studies*. 73. 325-355. Seoul. The Association of Japanology in East Asia.

8) Yamamura, T. (2018) Community development through anime and manga: Content tourism development that creates fans of the town. Consumer Edition [Fukuuyuban Anime·Mange de Chiiki Shinkou ~Machi no Fan wo Umu Kontentsu Tu-Rizumu Kaihatsuhou~]. Tokyo. PARUBOOKS.
https://www.amazon.co.jp/dp/B07B3NC5QT/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_6M6BDJE9SSQ7TC9N05JN

9) Okamoto, T. (2015) ‘12 : Actors of Content tourism [Kontentsu Tu-Rizumu no Akuta]’. *Research of Content Tourism [Kontentsu Tu-Rizumu Kenkyu]* (pp. 52-53). Tokyo. Fukumura Shuppan Inc.

tourism. On the other hand, Okamoto asserts that there are five groups of actors who are affiliated with contents tourism, such as 'Tourist', 'Citizen', 'Tourism Producer', 'Contents Producer' and 'Information influencer', and that these groups are supporting contents tourism by changing each other's roles or carrying them out at the same time.

For the success of content tourism, these five groups must assist each other in their roles, at least to the extent that they can practice or, in some cases, act on their behalf, and sometimes need an agency that takes on those multiple roles or introduces a third party that can perform them. For this exchange to take place, mutual respect between objects is essential, and mutual understanding for it will also be indispensable.

Which group will take charge of each function in Momoyamacho-Inaba, Fushimi ward, Kyoto city, Kyoto prefecture, where Kyoto Animation's first studio is located? The role of tourist will be given to 'pilgrims'. 'Citizen' means all people who live in the town. Kyoto Animation is equivalent to 'Contents producer'. The press and the social-network service user will cultivate the role of the 'Information Influencer'.

'Tourism producers' are the only ones whose identity is not clear. Still, one can assume that some of these general fans were playing the role of tour producers in a limited way, given the presence of a person who drove a car decorated with Kyoto Animation's Lucky☆Star (2007-2008) character and visited the first studio and other Kyoto Animation work-related sites, including those who shared the route on a blog¹⁰.

2) The real image of a 'Truly Holy Land' and attitudes of fans

A month after the incident, Okamoto claimed that Kyoto Animation's Holy Land was no longer only a place for fans to gather and suggested what was going on around Kyoto Animation's production works, including Washimiyacho Town, Satte City, Saitama Prefecture (埼玉県幸手市鷺宮町), which is well-known as the main background of 'Lucky Star' (らき☆すた)¹¹. This is also the order in which a 'pilgrimage' takes place.

The flow is as follows. First, animation fans watch the animation, then find out the background and release related information on the Internet. Then others actually visit the area as a 'pilgrimage', relying on the released information. During the course of these tours, there are no clear actors who play an important role in establishing tourism, such as travel agencies and tourism associations,

10) HARU (2009) Thank you for supporting Moemi 2009 [Moemi 2009 Otsukaresama Desita]. *Minkara*.
<https://minkara.carview.co.jp/userid/351376/blog/14119898/>

11) Op. cit. 1.

which means that no independent tourism producers exist. For the Kyoto Animation First Studio's location, the number of Internet users who disclosed the First Studio building as a Holy Land itself has been written down, so it is hard to say that the role of tourism producers that they performed on behalf of some of them has also been properly visualized.

Okamoto defines animation as a reasonable condition of 'the holy land', "a place where animation plays its role as connecting person and person, as well as connecting person and local, cherished by many people"¹²⁾. As an example, he showed that some fans move to the area where they live or rediscover the merits of their place because of these fans, as well as creating a venue for exchanges between fans and local residents and ideas, such as related products and events.

Also, Okamoto defines animation fans who visit the Holy Land as "a kind of play that mixes reality and fiction" by taking pictures of individual scenes of animation or finding objects that appear in the settings. His definition seems to assume that the fans themselves on the pilgrimage mix reality and fiction, but in fact, not only the individual fan but also the group's emotions can mix reality and fantasy. Many of the Holy Lands of Kyoto Animation's works, including the old building of the Toyosato Elementary School, the holy land of 'K-ON!', have fundraising boxes, memorandum notes, and bouquets. Also, suppose you look at Illustration, where characters of Kyoto Animation are walking to somewhere full of ash before the issue of pilgrimage¹³⁾. In that case, Kyoto Animation fans are determined to remember the sorrow of the incident by mixing the real world and the fictional world.

2. The 'holy landization' and 'deification' seen on MBS' documentary film "Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land"

1) The deification performed by broadcast media

So far, we have checked how fans enjoy the place and how they communicate with residents in the Holy Land that animation fans visit. This time, we will review how the media make victims into saints, by means of a TV documentary that sheds light both on the hearts of fans who visit the holy lands of Kyoto Animation's works for remembering their world after the incident and the feelings of bereaved families and acquaintances remembering families who were victimized by injustice.

Nearly a month after the incident, Mainichi Broadcasting System (MBS), a private broadcaster in Kansai, Japan, aired a series of planned coverage of "Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land"

12) Op. cit. 9

13) Ethan Seth Abrea (2019, July 19) *A piece I made for Kyoto Animation*. Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=3331933883490885&set=a.2076410192535>

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for five days. On August 19 of the same year, the entire collection was reconstructed and aired in a documentary film format. The program visited six background stages of TV and theater animation produced by Kyoto Animation and attempted to shed light on how fans who visited 'The Holy Land' have memories of Kyoto Animation's works and how residents feel when they meet them.

<Table 1> The list of 'Holy Lands' featured in the documentary film 'Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land'¹⁴⁾

Date	Newspaper title (Original)	Temple name	Related person/group
1	2019. 8. 12	# 1 "Sound! Euphonium"	Uji City, Kyoto Prefecture
2	2019. 8. 13	# 2 "Free!"	Iwami-cho, Tottori Prefecture
3	2019. 8. 14	# 3 "Hyouka"	Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture
4	2019. 8. 15	# 4 "K-ON!" and "The melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya"	Toyosato-cho, Shiga Prefecture and Nishinomiya City, Hyogo Prefecture
5	2019. 8. 16	# 5 "A Silent Voice"	Ogaki City, Hyogo Prefecture
6	2019. 8. 19	Document J "For KyoAni ¹⁵⁾ : Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land"	All of the above areas except for Toyosato-cho, Shiga Prefecture

So what was the purpose of this program? As a chief pressman of the MBS, Imoto (井本, 2019), who initiated the production of the program, presented the program's plan to his trusted cameraman with the following contents:

The program will collect fans' voices at the places which KyoAni fans call their holy land. By featuring not only mournful voices but also a theme of gratitude, it will show how victimized creators influenced people so hugely(...).¹⁶⁾

14) Miyahara, R. (2019, August 18) MBS will broadcast a tribute program for KyoAni 'Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land: Words of thanks for KyoAni'. It will be shown at 1 a.m. 25, 18 August [MBS ga KyoAni Tsuitou Bangumi 'Inori no Natsu-Seichi no Koe~KyoAni ni Tsutaetai Kansya no Kotoba' Hachigatsu Jyuhachinichi Sinya Ichiji Nijyugo kara Housou]. *Netolabo*. <https://nlab.itmedia.co.jp/nl/articles/1908/18/news030.html>

15) Animation fans and workers usually call Kyoto Animation KyoAni.

16) Op. cit. 3, p. 14.

Unlike most of the news coverage focused on the tragedy of the incident, fans, the grief of the bereaved families, and the identity of the assailant, the program focused on the emotional aspects of the program by looking back on the achievements of those who had already left and letting fans and their families talk about memories rather than sadness.

The content of “Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land” does not explicitly refer to Kyoto Animation’s first Studio as a ‘Holy Land’, but from the beginning of the narration, it reveals how great the First Studio was. Imoto (2019) says that when writing this phrase, he wrote it with a body trembling with anger, reflecting on the anger, sadness, and desperation of all who were suddenly cut off from their peaceful and ordinary daily lives. Still, the program clearly reveals what meaningful products were created inside the burnt-out First Studio building. According to the content, what was produced here was an animation that gave people dreams and hopes. Suppose you refer to the preceding definition of ‘the pilgrimage’ as ‘the site of animation, cartoons, and dramas’. In that case, you can define it as being qualified to be related to animation or ‘the holy land’, in the sense that it is the space of production in which the animation was created. Unlike most of the news coverage focused on the tragedy of the incident, fans, and the grief of the bereaved families, and the identity of the assailant, the program focused the emotional aspects of the program by looking back on the achievements of those who had already left and letting fans and their families talk about memories rather than sadness.

“Normally, it’s clear that everyone must have worked hard today at this place to create a piece of hope for people.”¹⁷⁾

Soon after, remarks proving the value of this place as a “Holy Land” are not just narration but are again proved by means of the oral statements of ordinary mourners who visited the site.

“It means just a life. I think KyoAni made me who I am now.” (Female Mourner A)

“It was divine. Maybe it is unrivalled work, and it’s so great that it will be ranked first or 2nd in Japanese animation.” (Male Mourner A)

“Because of KyoAni, I started to watch animation films. By that, I came to love animation

17) Mainichi Broadcasting System(2019, August 19) *Summer of Pray, Voice of Holy Land~Words of thanks for KyoAni [Inori no Natsu-Seichi no Koe~KyoAni ni Tsutaetai Kansya no Kotoba~]*. Osaka. 00:23~00:38

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and got a job in the animation industry with no hesitation.” (Male Mourner B)¹⁸⁾

Comments honoring works produced at Kyoto Animation's workplaces, including the first Studio, continued to be received overseas. “Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land” also introduces memorials from overseas fans who used #PrayforKyoani hashtags in Twitter.

“I finished: It's actually 1000 cranes this time Or rather 1001 cuz of that big one on top. Eleven Arts¹⁹⁾ hasn't said anything about a deadline yet. And since I may be in Japan at the end of September, I wonder if I could just bring it myself” (Twitter user @kellyxzhang, United States).

“I raised a silent prayer at the scene. After that, when I crossed over a small bridge in Rokujizo, I took a picture of the same scenery casually, as I saw in anime.” (Twitter user @mao_sama_hk, Hong Kong)²⁰⁾

The custom of calling the space where contents such as cartoons and animations were produced as “holy places” has already existed. Given that it has been done since the Tokiwa-Sou (トキワ荘) era²¹⁾, it is clear that fans of Kyoto Animation, both at home and abroad, thought the place where the incident took place resembles a “holy land”. Looking at Japanese fans who came to the scene of the accident in person and paid tribute to the victims, as well as U.S. fans who said they would take a thousand origami cranes to the site, one can see that they are also following almost the same customs as in the past.

2) The canonization of KyoAni's staff and their films performed by Broadcast stations and Internet

“Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land” sheds light on the arson and murder of Kyoto Animation First Studio, showing how important were the creators who lost their lives in the incident,

18) Ibid., 00:41~01:31

19) An American company that distributes several Japanese animation films, including works of Kyoto Animation. Eleven Arts (2020) *Anime Distribution*. <https://www.elevenarts.net/anime/films>

20) Op. cit. 17, 01:40~02:18

21) Asahi Shimbun (2020, February 28) Visiting 'Holy Land' of Manga: Footprints of gods remained at the area surrounding the site of Tokiwa-Sou [Manga no 'Seichi' wo Tazuneru Tokiwasou Atochi Syuuhen ni Nokoru Kamigami no Asiato]. *Craft Works*. <https://craft.asahi.com/article/2020/03/tokiwasou/>

how big their dreams were, and how precious they were to their families and teachers. The comments on Mainichi Broadcasting (MBS) after the airing seem to have conveyed the intention well.

“The stance of mourning and remembrance for KyoAni was so touching.”

“I honor the deceased, noting what the victims have done so far and what works they have made. I think it’s one of the ideal types of reporting cases.”

“Thank you for creating an hour-long program at this time.”

“Thank you for trying to convey politely and sincerely the beautiful achievements and enthusiasm that the KyoAni’s victims left behind.”²²⁾

The documentary does not mention only a portion of the 36 victims or even parts. What’s interesting is that only Takemoto Yasuhiro (武本康弘, 1972-2019) appeared, even though the victims included two director-level figures who were at the core of the animation production company. It is not only because of his ability to produce animations but also because the social influence of his works was more significant than that of Kigami Yoshiji (木上芳治, 1957-2019), a senior director who passed away.

“I think no one would be able to work together with someone like him. His drawing skill is genius. When I saw signboards in front of a theatre, I noted there were posters of ‘Free!’ and ‘Harry Potter’. It was amazing” (a high-school alumnus of Takemoto Yasuhiro).²³⁾

The documentary introduces Takemoto’s TV animation film “Free!” which mentions that fans of the piece created a social phenomenon called “Pilgrimage” when they visited Iwamicho, Tottori Prefecture (鳥取県岩美町), the background stage. Before this work, Kyoto Animation also published several real-world background works, including “Lucky Star” (2007-2008), “K-On!” (2009-2011), “Hyouka” (2012), “Love, Chunibyo, & Other Delusions” (2012-2014, 2018), and the “Tamako Market” series (2013-2014). Among them, Takemoto has been the director of many outstanding works, such as “Lucky Star” and “Hyouka,” so he can be regarded as a great contributor to Kyoto Animation’s becoming the epitome of “Pilgrimage Animation.”

The incident also claimed the life of Nishiya Futoshi (西谷太志, 1981-2019), a character designer

22) Op. cit. 3, p15.

23) Op. cit. 17, 04:36-04:53

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who holds an essential position in the animation production company as well as being a director, character designer, and general drawing producer of the anime film “A Silent Voice” (2016). He was the only victim in “The Summer of Prayer, Voice of the Holy Land” to have a video of his life interview.

“Shoya (将也) was the hardest character to create. The most difficult problem was how to handle and draw him. It took the most time then.”²⁴⁾

As to how much Nishiya was capable of, a narration introduces his character like this, “The delicate movements of emotions look like facial expressions, so fans say they are alive.”²⁵⁾

However, it is difficult to judge from fans whether they really deserve to be a “Member of the Holy Land” by their acquaintances and fans alone. At least a factual basis to support this would be the work made by everyone who served in Kyoto Animation, including those who died as well as survivors, proving that fans and the media praise them by using the prefix ‘divine’. Among them, drawing is most worth noting, in that it is a practical skill that expresses the movement of animation characters more vividly.

As a result, we identified how many site searches each product was in by entering the search terms ‘KyoAni (京アニ)’ and ‘divine(神)’ simultaneously on Yahoo Japan (<https://www.yahoo.co.jp>). Although it is simply impossible to look at the many sites that have been derived in this way, at least there is nothing more certain than checkinthe number of searches for any word with ‘divine’ in it to confirm the codification of Kyoto Animation.

<Table 2> Yahoo! Japan’s autocomplete search results comparison of Kyoto Animation-related keywords (<https://www.yahoo.co.jp>, surveyed on June 21, 2020.)

Rank	Keywords	Translated	Results Counted
1	京アニ 神アニメ	KyoAni, divine-quality anime	about 8,020,000
2	京アニ 神社	KyoAni, shrine	about 658,000
3	京アニ 神作画	KyoAni, divine-quality drawing	about 410,000

24) Ibid., 06:13~06:28

25) Ibid., 06:28~06:39

Rank	Keywords	Translated	Results Counted
4	京アニ 神谷浩史	KyoAni, Kamiya Hiroshi	about 295,000
5	京アニ 神輿	KyoAni, Mikoshi	about 82,200
6	京アニ 神格化	KyoAni, deification	about 55,400
Total			about 9,520,600

In this study, when two words were entered in the search box of “Yahoo! Japan,” the results were obtained by listing keywords marked with autocomplete in the number of searches. First of all, it was the third ‘KyoAni, holy-quality drawing’ that clearly identified which of the Kyoto Animation works might be called ‘divine’. ‘KyoAni, holy-quality anime’ had no background on what was called ‘divine’ in the animation of the company, and ‘KyoAni, Shrine’ was about the “Washinomiya Shrine” (鷲宮神社) in Satte City, Saitama Prefecture, which appeared in the company’s TV animation “Lucky Star.” ‘KyoAni, Mikoshi’ and ‘KyoAni, deification’ are also difficult to use, for the same reason. So we think that ‘KyoAni, holy-quality drawing’, which has a total of 410,000 search results, would be the best keyword to represent the new aspect of KyoAni’s work.

So what is Kyoto Animation’s ability at drawing? Sakakana (さかかな), who works for a company that runs a movie theater and serves as the managing director of the webzine “Machikado Creative” (街角のクリエイティブ), gave three reasons why its works could be called “Holy-Quality Drawing,” referring to the anime film “Violet Evergarden: Eternity and the Auto Memory Doll(ヴァイオレット・エヴァーガーデン 外伝 永遠と自動手記人形)” released by Kyoto Animation on Netflix in 2019²⁶.

First of all, Time Lapse, which means, first, a technique of expressing the passage of time by means of moving images into cuts, second, the expression of hand tremors similar to that of real life, and third, the blurred feeling of a single focus in the animation world. What’s noteworthy is the use of single-focus effects, which in traditional Kyoto animation works, key frame staff’s ‘Beautiful Characters’ and ‘Detailed Background Descriptions’ and ‘Detailed Change of Expression’ by in-between drawing staffs, this time for a blurry background.

This has the same effect as when a single-focus lens was taken in a real-life movie. It is worth

26) Sakakana (2019, October 18) Seeing KyoAni’s Visual Beauty from the film ‘Violet Evergarden: Eternity and the Auto Memory Doll’ [Vaioretto Evag-ga-den Gaiden Eien to Jidou Syuki Ningyou’ni miru KyoAni no Eizoubi]. *Machikado no Creative*. <https://www.machikado-creative.jp/introduction/75232/>

noting that it clearly shows the distance between the subject and the background. Not only the director but also the cinematographer in the digital production era and the staff who edit the video on the computer must have a clear understanding of the camera to implement the video. Because of this rare appearance from other animation companies, we believe that KyoAni could hear the title 'KyoAni, Divine-Quality Drawing' not only from fans but also from film industry workers like Sakakana above.

III. Conditions that obstruct 'Producing Holy Land'

1. KyoAni and Local Residents' Opinions Conflict

1) Lack of measures to guarantee residential rights

After the incident, Kyoto Animation set up a formal flower bed on July 20, which was located on one side of a two-lane road near the Keihan Railway Rokujijo Station (京阪電鉄 六地藏駅, Fig. 3 and 4) instead of in front of the first studio. On August 17, 2019, when we toured the site in person for research, it was still located on the sidewalk near the Rokujijo Station.

Kyoto Animation decided to set up a flower bed outside the residential area. But most mourners were first visiting the office building of the First Studio, where they were first paying their respects to the victims, before moving on to put flowers on the flower bed. Most of the mourners were Japanese, and they held silent prayer with their hands together. However, some foreigners were paying tribute to the victims in their respective faiths and languages, such as by making the sign of the cross on their foreheads or writing letters in their languages (Fig. 5).

However, there were others besides sincere mourners. On the day of the visit for this study, a



Fig. 4 A flower bed set up on the side of the road near Rokujijo Station (Aug. 17, 2019; Photo taken by the writer)

Japanese woman wearing a black kimono appeared and took selfies against the backdrop of the burned-out First Studio building and acted in ways that were inconsistent with universal etiquette in a place where a people had died or were injured. Reporters from newspapers and broadcasters who attempted to interview mourners were also travelling between residential areas and the flower beds.

Given these circumstances, Kyoto Animation's choice to minimize mourners and media reporters' infringement of the residential rights did not work very effectively. Even though the Inabahigashi council had posted posters everywhere (Fig. 6) appealing for restraint from violating residential rights along with mourning for the victims, the number of people decreased. Still, the situation did not improve much until at least August 25, when the flower bed was demolished. Even after the demolition of the flower bed, a few people visited the scene for remembrance of the victims after the suspect's arrest. Also, the chances are high that residents would have encountered outsiders coming to mourn the victims²⁷⁾ in the future,



Fig. 5 Memorial letters and illustrations enlisted on the flower bed
(Aug. 17, 2019; Photo taken by the writer)



Fig. 6 Wreaths and memorial letters dedicated to the flower bed by a Chinese fan
(Aug 17 2019; Photo taken by the writer)

27) Jiji Press Inc. (2020, May 27) KyoAni Arson Attack: Residents want people to look directly at the incident : Seldom were people seen at the site [Jyumin 'Jiken to Mukiatte' Sarachi no Genba, Hitokage Sukunaku – KyoAni Houka]. *Jiji.com* <https://www.jiji.com/jc/article?k=2020052700836&g=soc>

with a local monk voluntarily coming to pray²⁸⁾.

2) Conflicts between the Developing Memorial Park and the Opposition

After the incident, the Kyoto Animation First Studio building was utterly demolished in April 2020. Hatta Hideaki, CEO of Kyoto Animation, first revealed a use for the site of the company building at a press conference held two days after the incident took place on July 19, 2019. He said, “The residents nearby would not want to

see the building. … We will remove the screen quickly… . In my personal opinion, I would like to create a park and build a memorial if possible”²⁹⁾. From managers who lost as many as 36 precious employees’ lives because of hard-to-understand motives, the background behind this claim is fully understandable. Since there were voices from the bereaved families and fans wishing for a place to commemorate the victims, Hatta’s opinion could be said to represent them.

So how were the locals reacting to these company and fans’ voices? The Inabahigashi council chairman revealed that all 23 households agreed at a meeting on December 14, 2019, to demand that facilities such as parks and memorials not be established, citing the fact that “A peaceful daily life could be ruined by the visit of an unspecified number of people.” He also called for “Clearing the decision of the use of the site by late April 2020 when the demolition ends”³⁰⁾.

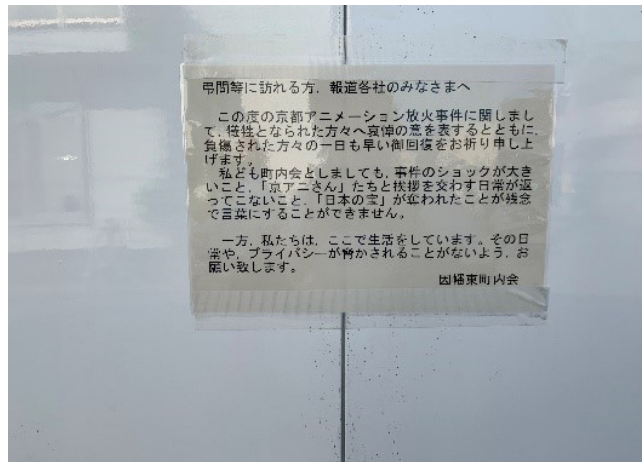


Fig. 7 A notice put up by the Inabahigashi Municipal Council appealing for stopping the infringement of residential rights (Aug 17, 2019; Photo taken by the writer)

28) Sankei Shimbun (2020, June 21) Local Buddhist monk chants sutra for monthly anniversary of KyoAni’s disaster by keeping promises to the families of the victims [KyoAni Izoku tono Yakusoku Muneni…Jimoto Souryo, Tsukimeinichi ni Dokkyou]. *Sankei.com*. <https://www.sankei.com/west/news/200528/wst2005280035-n1.html>

29) Kyodo News (2020, April 28) KyoAni finished demolition of the studio: How to use the vacant site is not confirmed [KyoAni, Genba Stazio no Kaitai Syuuryou Sarachi ni, Atochi Riyou wa Mitei]. *Yahoo! Japan News* <https://news.yahoo.co.jp/articles/dda3a0a836a50cda1cb22aee08ff2f69e7cf447b>

30) Mainichi Shimbun (2020, June 21) Local Neighborhood Association requests Kyoani not to develop a memorial monument that causes unspecified people’s visits [KyoAni Atochi Riyou Jimoto Chounaikaiga Youbousyo ‘Futokutei Tasuu Houmon no Ireihinado ni Seibi Sinaide’]. *Mainichi.jp* <https://mainichi.jp/articles/20191225/k00/00m/040/257000c>

What should be noted in the opinion of the residents is what kind of people are the “unspecified number of people.” Since the incident, animation fans and officials from all over the country or from around the world had flocked to create a somber atmosphere, and the fear and rejection of reporters’ groups, so-called media scrums (メディアスクラム), attempting to make indiscriminate interviews with their fans and residents can be well anticipated. It is natural to expect that the scope of “an unspecified number of people” includes people who could thus undermine the peaceful and safe lives of residents. But then, what if only “people who don’t undermine a peaceful and safe life” could choose the direction of development in a situation where only “people who don’t hinder a peaceful and safe life” can come and go in the region? The other opinion of the residents, “It will reveal the direction of the use of the site by late April 2020, when the demolition is completed,” may mean that there was no reason to take issue with redevelopment that did not adversely affect their interests in a comprehensive manner.

The following section will interpret the ‘benefits’ as related to property values and the income of local merchants and infer what the residents have suffered from this incident based on the customs of Japanese society and general economic common sense. In other words, assuming the status of the damage is a means of looking into what type of interests the residents most want.

2. Damage to the residents’ profit

1) The real reason why residents oppose memorial facilities: effect on real-estate prices

The incident caused massive damage to Kyoto Animation in terms of both life and property, but local residents also suffered from property-rights violations for some time. The average land price in the Rokujijō Station area of Keihan Railway, which had maintained 592,000 yen per tsubo (3.3 square meters) until the beginning of the month of the incident, fell to 518,000 yen in December 2019. The market began to grow in January 2020, when the demolition of the first studio began. As of May 2020, when the demolition finished, it rose to 635,000 yen, apparently shaking off the bad news of the past and recovering the peacetime market. In particular, it is easy to guess that erasing the traces of an incident helped restore the market price, given that the market had risen steeply between February and March 2020, when much of the demolition took place³¹⁾.

31) SUUMO (2020) *Examine market trend of the land price around Rokujijō Station [Rokujizō Eki<Kyotofu>no Dochi Kakaku Souba]*. https://suumo.jp/tochi/soba/kyoto/ek_41480/

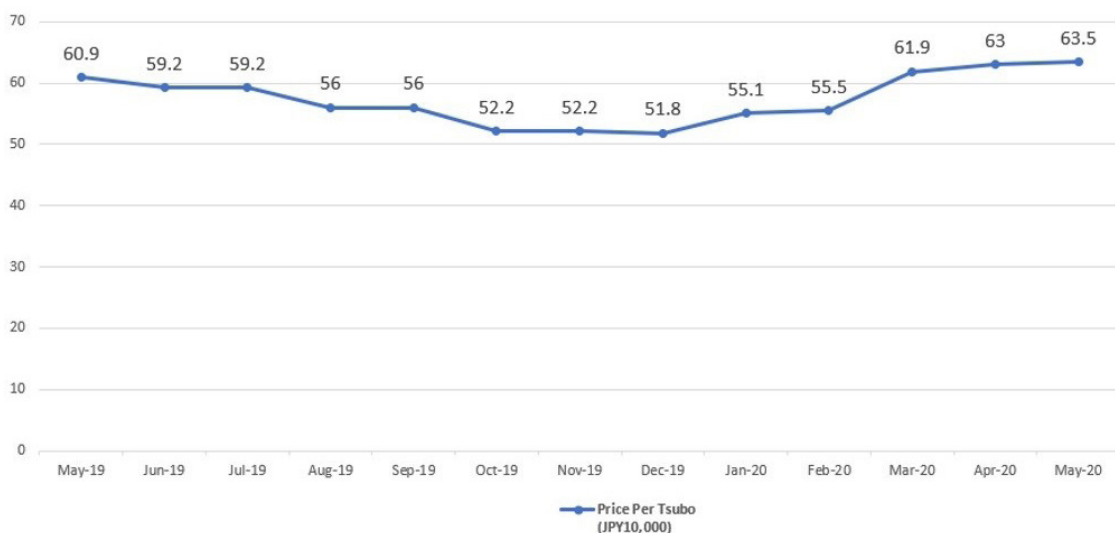


Fig. 8 Land-price listing per tsubo near the Keihan Railway Rokujijyo Station³²⁾

However, just because the market price of the land had recovered, it is hard to say that the terms of ordinary houses, such as monthly rent, had become favorable to their owners. In particular, the houses of Momoyama-cho Inaba, the block where the incident took place, still had room for the tenants to be treated for ‘psychological defects’; they wanted to stay away out of fear, because of the massive disaster near them. Among these ‘psychological defects’, buildings where a person died a lonely death because of suicide, crime, fire, etc., should be called ‘accidental items’³³⁾. When recruiting new tenants for these buildings, the seller must inform them of the relevant history, and if the seller neglects this, the tenant can claim damages. However, no clear legal guidelines have been set for the content and duration of the notice. So how long owners and real-estate companies should reveal relevant facts, or how many time they should announce them for a building with frequent transfers of tenants, depends on their decisions, in the worst case, about legal disputes.

In other words, the tenant contract itself can be completed if the agreement goes well with the prospective tenant. Some would like to move in, knowing that it is an ‘accidental item’, citing price, transportation, and location conditions rather than the facts of past crimes or accidents; then the

32) Ibid.

33) HOMES (2020) *How to distinguish accidental items: By when should they be known? [Jikou Bukken wo Miwakeru Tame no Sagasikata ya Sirabekata. Kokuchi Gimu wa Itsumade?]*. https://www.homes.co.jp/cont/rent/rent_00470/

owners and real-estate agents would like to avoid further negative factors that might cause the other parties to change their minds.

Although it does not amount to an ‘accidental item’, there was also property affected by the market price because of the proximity of ‘hate’ facilities. In Japan, adjacent houses, such as crematoriums, cemeteries, and funeral halls, are examples of such houses, are sometimes referred to as ‘environmental defects’³⁴. In this case, the memorial that Kyoto Animation CEO Hatta mentioned also had something in common with the avoidance facilities related to ‘death’, in that it is a ‘place to remember victims’.

In other words, the memorial might remain a “place of commemoration and memory” for the company and industry officials, bereaved families, and animation fans. Still, it would likely be seen as a ‘scarlet letter’ that would discourage anyone seeking a residence as a third party unrelated to them. Also, if the anniversary of the victims or the memorial service is held on July 18 of every year, ‘an unspecified number of people’, an element of anxiety raised by the Inabahigashi community, would come every year. It includes people like rude uninvited guests posing as mourners, who were seen during their visit on August 17. It is a situation that can never be accepted by household owners who opposed the construction of memorials in local councils and is similar to local residents’ opposition to the over-tourism phenomenon³⁵, in which their lives are threatened by the increase in tourists.

2) Possibility of local small-business owners’ profit losses because of the deaths of KyoAni’s employees

Property damage related to real estate is not the only damage suffered by residents in this incident. Small-business owners who run cafes, restaurants, and convenience stores in nearby areas lost the Kyoto Animation employees who had always visited their workplaces as regular customers, making them inevitably suffer losses in sales.

No accurate measurement of store sales’ losses after the incident exists. Still, it can be inferred how much economic loss there has been per month in the following forms: 69 people were killed and injured in the incident on the Kyoto Animation side, and first of all, assume that they usually ate a meal a day at the company, a local restaurant, or a convenience store.

According to Shinsei Bank (新生銀行), an Internet bank company in Japan, the average price of

34) Ja.wikipedia.org (2020) *Defective Item [Wakeari Bukken]*. <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%A8%B3%E3%81%82%E3%82%8A%E7%89%A9%E4%BB%B6>

35) Lee, S. (2019) Over-Tourism and Social Dilemma [Overtourism gwa Sahoejeok Dilemma]. *Issue & Diagnosis [Issue wa Jindan]*. Gyeonggi Research Institute <http://www.gri.re.kr/%EC%9D%B4%EC%8A%88-%EC%A7%84%EB%8B%A8/?brno=14161&prno=6772>

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lunch for Japanese workers was 550 yen for men and 581 yen for women as of 2019³⁶). If they worked up to 22 days a month under the five-day workweek, it is possible to predict that the casualties who worked at Kyoto Animation used 83,900 yen to 88,958 yen for lunch every month. And considering the cost of the items purchased during rush hour and the expenditure for entertainment for outside personnel, depending on the employee's inclination, it is highly likely that they actually spent more money in the local community.

Kamata Tomoyo (鎌田朋代), the owner of the restaurant "Cafe Lapin (カフェ ラパン)" located near Kyoto Animation's First Studio, expressed pity in an interview with the Sankei Shimbun. "Many employees came to the cafe to take a rest from work. Please, I hope they're safe." Especially for the four female employees in their 20s who visited the store every Wednesday, they were about to close in November 2018 because of financial difficulties and said, "Please don't get rid of our resting place. Please hang in there a little longer," she said, testifying that the four had come to lunch together on July 17, the day before the incident³⁷).

This episode shows that the employees of Kyoto Animation were a small but essential source of income for small-business owners in the region. In some cases, they catalyzed the continuation of the store. In the case of "Cafe Lapin," only four female employees in their 20s who always used the shop are mentioned. But with more people working in the studio than that, we can assume that people in Kyoto Animation actually had more commercial interaction with small-business owners.

The question is how to restore the sales lost because of the incident, and it is hard to expect much to build a memorial facility and preserve it by means of its visitors. With many visitors at a time visiting the memorial facilities, there will eventually be a day to commemorate the particular cycle of events. At this time, even if many visitors eat at nearby restaurants or convenience stores every day, it is hard to realize common sense to preserve the profits compared to what Kyoto Animation employees usually used for lunch and other purposes during work.

Considering both the position of local small-business owners and the position of residents who fear infringement of residential rights, the fastest way to recover expected sales is as follows. Regardless of whether the subject is Kyoto Animation or any other operator, the site of the incident has to be redeveloped on a scale comparable to the past first studio, where the workers work and eat

36) Shinsei Bank (2020) Survey Report about salaries men's Spending money in 2019 [Sarari-man no Okodzukai Chousa Syousai Repo-to]. https://www.shinseibank.com/corporate/news/pdf/pdf2019/190621okozukai_j.pdf

37) Sankei Shimbun (2020, July 27) A café where KyoAni's female workers loved : The owner worries their safe [KyoAni Syain ga Kayotta Kaffé, Anpi Kidzukau Jyosei Tensyu]. *Sankei.com* <https://www.sankei.com/west/news/190727/wst1907270012-n1.html>

at nearby restaurants or convenience stores as they used to. However, even if the workplace is located there, some time will be needed until the number of employees is expanded enough to restore local sales to the previous year's level. The length of business growth is also a problem. Still, the possibility of job seekers relatively avoiding working at the new workplace, located at the place of an "accidental item", cannot be ignored.

IV. Conclusion

The conflict between the company that tried to build the memorial and the residents who opposed it and wanted to suggest other ways to use it resulted in a lengthy confrontation that could not be resolved until late July 2020. The memorial service held on the first anniversary of the incident was replaced in the form of a video screening on the official YouTube channel of Kyoto Animation, not the site, and the company's announcement that it will not accept the tribute and will refuse to visit the site itself³⁸⁾ suggests that the company has failed to dispel residents' antipathy in the end.

What does it mean to build a memorial here? As we saw in "Summer of Prayer, Voice of a Holy Land", the site of the first studio is a place that is related to animation, in the sense that a place of production, at least for animation fans, is a familiar 'Holy Land'. The monument is a space for the company and its fans to remember the terrible things that happened at the holy site. And in the model above of five-way cooperation, Kyoto Animation will be the content producers and fans will be travelers.

However, it is unlikely that the site of the incident will remain as a memorial space or a 'Holy Land', as the company and fans want. Local residents living in Momoyama-Cho Inaba have already suffered considerable privacy breaches from media coverage equivalent to 'information influencers'. The perception of fans who came from outside for condolence purposes would not be good. Initially, the perpetrator of the arson attack was also an outsider from Saitama Prefecture, and his presence itself may not be welcomed by the residents, in that it can remind them of the memories of the accident.

38) Kyoto Animation(2020, July 3) *Regarding the decline of the memorial visit on July 18* <http://www.kyotoanimation.co.jp/information/?id=4609>

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Also, it is not clear at the moment who will take on the role of a 'tourism producer', who plans how to conduct the memorial service for the victims. It would be a little push to set up a monument without a clear answer to this, without remembering the site of the incident and gaining sympathy from everyone around it. It is doubtful whether it will maintain its actual value as a 'Holy Land'. Unless the residents address the anxiety and distrust they have become aware of, the scene of the Kyoto Animation first Studio arson murder will be hard to be reborn as a 'Holy Land', and the memory will have to be blurred over time.

Lee (2019) proved that the company, fans, and local residents worked together to lead the success of the 'Pilgrimage Business' in Numazu, Shizuoka Prefecture (静岡県沼津市)³⁹). However, these examples alone could not determine to what extent the local people were responsible for the success of the business. Unlike Numazu's case, residents in the area showed explicit opposition to the construction of the memorial facilities. As a result, the "Producing Holy Land" by fans and management has virtually failed, proving that the cooperation of local residents is essential for the success of the content tourism, especially the five-way cooperation model for the birth of the Holy Land.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues (including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancy) have been completely observed by authors.

Conflict of Interests

The author has no conflict of interests to declare.

39) Op. cit. 7.

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