

# What have we learnt and should we learn from the Scandinavian Ecomuseums?

## ～A study on museological way to make sustainable community～

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who were a good appraiser of ecomuseology. He mentioned about Bergslagen Ecomuseum "... If this were not called an ecomuseum, what else could it be called?..." And our association of ecomuseum in Japan ( JECOMS; Japan Ecomuseological Society) has once decided to invite key note speakers from Ekomuseum Bergslagen in 1995 at the first annual meeting of the association.\*15 After the period, some researcher introduced about the same Swedish ecomuseum as a typical one.\*16

### 1. Introduction

Ecomuseums around the world take different forms depending on the geographic area, the regional characteristics of the location, the cultural heritage of the local people, and the favorite activities of both the residents and the tourists to the area. Local topography, soil quality, weather, industry, agricultural products, food, culture, and politics, among other things, contribute to the differences. Conversely, ecomuseums in similar areas share similar characteristics.

We Japanese have not known much about Scandinavian ecomuseums by reading some articles\*1,14 or visiting there. For instance, we have learnt that the Ekomuseum Bergslagen must be a good model for participation of local people through the article\*2 written by K. Hudson

I also have evaluated a number of the Scandinavian ecomuseums before\*17, some through firsthand visits and others through traditional informational research sources\*3-9. All seem to share common characteristics, and I will attempt to examine the significance of each of these characteristics in comparison to those of ecomuseums in our country\*10,11.

Although I assume that some of the characteristics and practices of Scandinavian ecomuseums have already been introduced to our society, and the ecomuseums in Japan have, indeed, learnt and incorporated these best practices, I will, nonetheless, try to confirm once again what Japanese ecomuseums should learn from their counterparts in Scandinavia. Now I am making four points out on this paper about the topics that Japanese

should consider to manage domestic ecomuseums. They are (1) system; de-centralization, (2) participation; by local people, (3) management; collaboration by some neighbor municipalities, and (4) theme; touristic development in local context.

## 2. System : Not centralized

Ecomuseums in some countries function within an organizational structure where a single museum has branch museums in a given area, or the museum owns "sites" under itself. Suppose we define this as being centralized. Ecomuseums in Scandinavia, especially those in Sweden, take a different approach from this organizational structure. In other words, they are decentralized. A centralized organization is effective when a single leading organization manages the whole group of organizations in a given country or area. However, when ecomuseums are scattered over too widespread an area, it takes tremendous effort and energy for a single organization to manage all of them effectively. The ecomuseums in Sweden and Denmark allow each site to maintain the upkeep of their own site and independently engage in learning activities. For instance, Bergslagen, Nedre- Ätradalen, Falbygden-Ätradalen, Kristianstad Vattenrike (sv), Grenseland (sv-no), Søhøjlandets (dk) have no main museum as a head quarter. This is, overall, quite an effective style of ecomuseum activity management. The essence of the activities of these ecomuseums is to encourage the autonomy of each site. This is also an essential role of ecomuseums in general.

In Japan, on the other hand, there are few cases where a leading organization that supports the activities of the

whole as a mediator functions effectively. Some of the traditional museums do own branch museums in various areas, which do function independently, but they are still managed through centralized organizations, and are thus more conservative in nature. These cases are found in Yokosuka city museum, Chiba prefectural museum, Suginami city museum and so on. In conservative circumstances, although ecomuseums promote conventional activities regarding nature preservation and history learning, they have difficulty encouraging an orientation toward coming up with new challenges for new eras and opportunities to think about the future of the local area. In the field of ecomuseum in Japan, we have been adopting the centralized model, so-called "core - satellite" model. It is alike the standard of Japanese ecomuseum that the core museum building is strongly standing up and manages all the satellites. Satellite is same or similar as antennae or site. This "core and satellite" primary standard model was dedicated by Dr. J. Arai, who was the leader of Japanese ecomuseum in 90's (Fig.1)<sup>14</sup>. He also mentioned that this model was suspicious because of hierarchy, but it has been popularly spreading out like as "template".

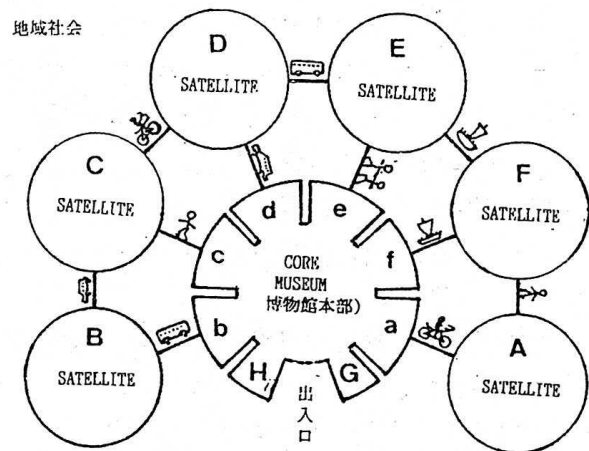
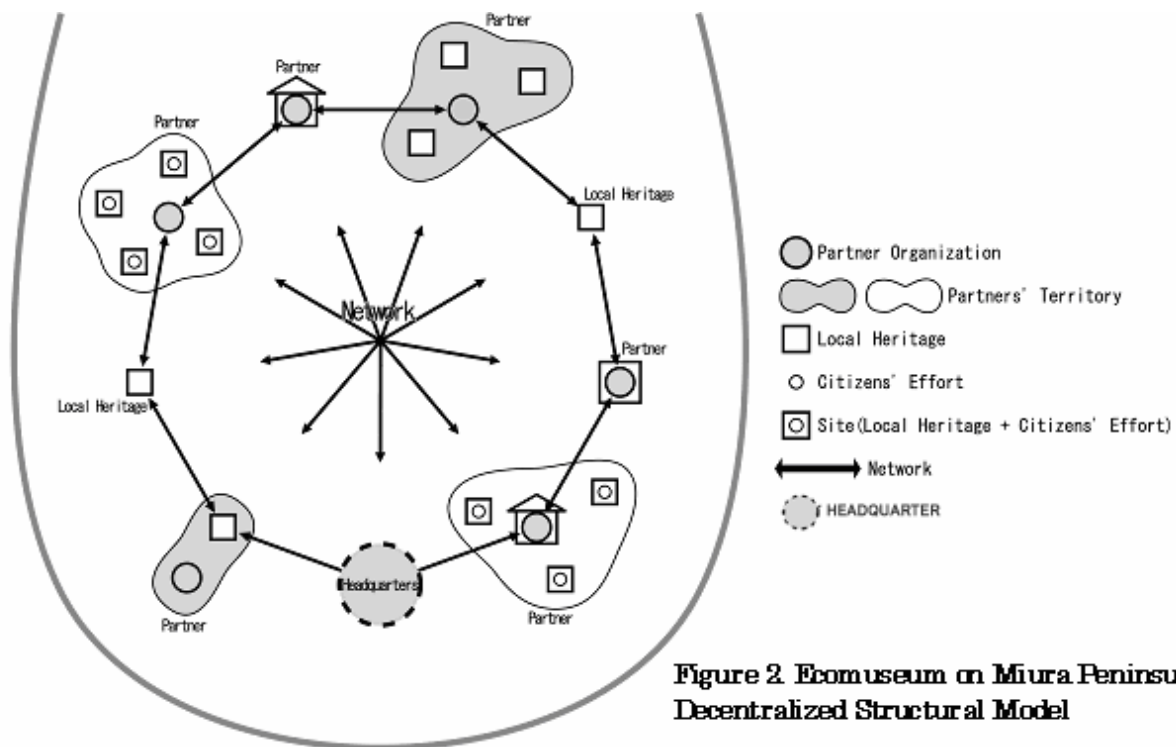


Figure 1. "Core and Satellite" system (Arai 1989)

Unlike these conservative organizations, more and more ecomuseum have organized networks of local activity groups to support them in being vigorously involved in their own activities. For example Miura Peninsula ecomuseum, it is a typical decentralized model based on the network among associations in local community (Fig 2) <sup>\*12</sup>. It is also similar to the “necklace model” by P. Davis which is the form of ecomuseum connecting gems in the territory<sup>\*13</sup>. In addition, we know other ecomuseums with no core museum in Japan, such as

Kawasaki industrial heritage museum, Kawane district ecomuseum, Hirano-cho ecomuseum, and so on. It is not clear whether these ecomuseums in Japan have devised this method on their own through their own activities or whether they learned it from examples from abroad, including the ecomuseums in Sweden. Nonetheless, it seems that they are at the very least influenced by the practical examples of the Scandinavian ecomuseums.



**Figure 2 Ecomuseum on Miura Peninsula: Decentralized Structural Model**

### 3. Participation : Based on voluntary activity groups of local people

Another thing that the ecomuseum in Japan should learn from their counterparts in Scandinavia is that activities at each site are based on the voluntary lifelong learning activities of local residents. Almost everywhere

in Scandinavia, many local associations exist, which promote activities focused on learning about local culture, history and nature, and preserving them all. This can most likely be attributed to the fact that the activity once advocated by Artur Hazelius in Sweden, famous as the founder of Skansen, an activity of trying to examine their own local community to acknowledge that they are a part of it and to confirm their identity, has been promoted for more than a hundred years. It

seems one of traditional ideas in Sweden and Nordic country. The andragogical philosophy for local lay-people, farmer or worker has a commonality with Folkehoejskole by Nikolaj F.S. Grundtvig in Denmark, Kuluturen i Lund by George Karlin, and local activities by Karl-Erik Forsslund in Dalarna, Sweden. There are Scandinavian traditional ideas and implementations. Furthermore, local residents consider this activity an important part of their life and they do not become tired of it, since they are traditionally and equally involved in local activities. Naturally, their activities continue, and this applies to each ecomuseum site, thereby making the whole area a sustainable community. Ekomuseum Nedre-Ätradalen, Ekomuseum Falbygden- Ätradalen, Ekomuseum Bergslagen, and Søhøjlandets Økomuseum are sustainable ecomuseums of good examples.

The local activities in Japan are obviously fragile in this respect. Japanese males of the age group that is generally working in society seldom participate in local community activities. They invest most of their energy in their corporate life; and their local communities are merely bedrooms where they sleep after their day's work. This also applies to Japanese females, who now have more opportunities to work in society than they did in the past. In other words, there is a peculiarity on the local level in Japanese communities that essentially energetic people are not responsible for various local voluntary learning activities. This problem can damage the potential sustainability of a local community. Therefore, it is necessary to reenergize local communities through the activities of ecomuseums. In the case of Scandinavia, where voluntary local activities are common, ecomuseums can be created simply by connecting these activities.

In the case of Japan, however, each site often has to start

with the establishment of voluntary local activities and this takes tremendous energy and effort. Luckily, sometimes these voluntary activities already exist, although the number of people engaged and the level of the activities vary. Consequently, it is worth looking for these activities. The ecomuseums in the Miura Peninsula, Hirano-cho, Kita-harima and also Asahi-machi have already started looking for activities with which to build a network, and it has already produced positive results. Many of them have the active programs run by the old retired people in spite of the young or middle-aged.



**Figure 3. Volunteers assemble at the meeting of Kita-harima ecomuseum (photo by A.Yanagida)**

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#### **4. Management : More than one of the municipalities cooperating with each other to cover a broad range of areas**

Many of the ecomuseums in Scandinavia, including Sweden, cover a broad range of areas. In terms of administration, more than one municipality covers the range. The management bodies of the ecomuseums

have to secure their budgets by receiving subsidies from each municipality and they seem to have considerable difficulty doing so. Actually, they receive subsidies from the municipality, county council, state, and the EU. Ekomuseum Gränsland is the border ecomuseum between Norway and Sweden, which means two countries are concerning with running the project and EU helps, too. Ecomuseums in Sweden except Kristianstad and Väst-jyllands ekomuseum in Denmark have multi municipal areas. That is, the various local authorities of a local area cooperate with each other to support the area. This is the method that is needed for a cooperative local management to be able to continue to effectively manage the local environment and many of the Scandinavian ecomuseums practice it.

Another related issue is also problematic in being introduced into Japan. Many of the Japanese municipalities adopt policies that can be completed within each administrative district, and they have almost never attempted anything in cooperation with adjacent municipalities. Therefore, most of the Japanese ecomuseums function within a single municipality in order to maintain its relationship with local administrative organizations and to gain the subsidy for its support. For instance, Asahi-machi, Tomiura-town, Tamagawa and most of all the Japanese ecomuseum are managed by single town or city, except a few cases such as Miura peninsula, Asan Live Museum and Kawane district. It is curious that Tamagawa river ecomuseum is managed by Kawasaki city singly, because the opposite bank belongs to the other municipality, nonetheless every river has both sides.

However, a local cultural and geographical area can be different from that of administration. It is expected that if the Scandinavian management style of ecomuseums is introduced and practiced in Japan, it will create a new

concept of areas in Japan, which is not restricted by the conventional idea of administrative districts. There are already a few examples of this being attempted in Japan so far, but those that have tried it now face difficulties in terms of maintaining their facilities and reaching an agreement on the proportion of the subsidy assumption.



**Figure 4. Tamagawa river ecomuseum, Core center and the dam. The core center built on the bank (left) in Kawasaki city but the municipality on the right bank is not taking part in the management of this ecomuseum.**

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## **5. Theme : Each ecomuseum presents a potential tourist oriented attraction, which is open to visitors and presents a distinctive local theme representative of the culture of the area**

Many of the ecomuseums in Scandinavia consider the viewpoint of tourists, who visit sites throughout an area, and these considerations are closely related to ecotourism, cultural tourism and tourism administration. This means that the ecomuseums in an area can greet visitors with a clear and distinctive theme.

Every ecomuseum in Scandinavia has the simple theme, such as iron making heritage (Bergslagen), wetland's environment (Kristianstad), ancient agricultural land (Falbygden- Ätradalen), lake district (Søhøjlandets), renewal energy (Samsø), copper mine and old town (Rørosmuseet) , etc. A characteristic of Scandinavian ecomuseums is the strong relationship between ecomuseum and tourism, Davis mentioned. He said in his book introducing the worldwide ecomuseums, *"...This model is also closely geared to regional tourism with its resulting economic benefits for local communities. All the Scandinavian countries appear to have adopted this pragmatic approach, ...(p.220)".*<sup>13</sup>

In terms of the relations between ecomuseums and tourism, Japan is different from Scandinavia in that tourism is far too developed in Japan. I think in our country, mass tourism is a norm and people visit tourist spots intensively for a short time. When facilities are developed specifically for visitors, the tourism industry tries to develop them more to attract visitors commercially, thereby making it impossible for the visitors to be as immersed in the local culture as was initially intended. If the number of themes of a local area is limited, it may still be effective in attracting a good number of tourists, but that would only leave what is popular among tourists, neglecting inconspicuous yet important historical heritage resources and the natural environment that Japanese tourists usually do not set foot into. It is true that presenting a theme for each area can serve as a way for the local residents to feel proud of who they are and of the fact that they are part of the community. However, it has also been pointed out that too much emphasis on this issue will lead to a disregard of other potential assets and/or problems.

For example, in case of the Mt. Ashio copper mine, although emphasis is on the tour of the mine's tunnel, they hide the "negative legacy" of the vegetative environment having been polluted and damaged by the mining pollution gas. There are three ecomuseum movements. The tourism authority of town wants touristic/economical development more and more as using the word "ecomuseum". Second organization built the visitor center of environmental education, which does not show the severe damage of the pollution, regrettably. The third group is voluntary association consist of local people that makes interpretation of landscape and history as it really is. The former two sectors literally cover the damage in the area by technologically reproducing the original environment, so that tourists do not see the actual environmental damage in that same area. There are pros and cons about this approach, and debates have been continuing about the future direction of this particular project.

Rørosmuseet in Norway is also the famous mining town of copper, which has a particular exhibition in the museum about environmental issues. The organization of conservation in this area also intends to show them local inhabitants together their local cultural and natural history. The history to learn includes both the "negative legacy" and the environmental recuperative power from the damaged situation. Tourists can visit and appreciate the beautiful town and cultural elements in the world heritage town, and local people can study their polluted history as one of their identity. The ecomuseum is a good learning environment for empowerment of the local identity for the local people. We Japanese ecomuseums must know and do it for local people living the place, not for the visitors from outside.

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## 6. Conclusion

Overall, Scandinavian ecomuseums reflect both the ways of thinking and the life styles of the people living in each local community, presenting valuable perspectives on how to realize decentralized society, voluntary community activities, cooperation among leadership organizations, clarification and respect of local identity and a community that can maintain these elements. The idea of mutual learning in local community and conservation of heritages is a museological way of good practices for realizing a sustainable community.

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## 日本語抄録

北欧のエコミュージアムから日本が学ぶべきこと

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### 1. はじめに

世界各国のエコミュージアムは、それが立地する地域の特性によって非常に様々な形態と活動をもち、類似した地域のエコミュージアム同士には、共通する特徴が見られるものでもある。

北欧諸国のエコミュージアムにも、やはりある共通した特徴があるように思われる。そのいくつかの特徴に関して、日本のいくつかのエコミュージアムの実情と比較し、それぞれの意義について考察する。実際に、日本のエコミュージアムでは、日本に紹介された北欧のいくつかのエコミュージアムからすでに学んだこともいくつかあると思われるが、ここでは改めて北欧のエコミュージアムの特徴を4点挙げ、これらから日本が学ぶべき事を再確認してみたい。

### 2. システム：中央集権的ではないこと

他の国のエコミュージアムの中には、ひとつの博物館が地域の中に分館を持つ、あるいは、その博物館組織の傘下にサイトを所有するというような組織構造をとって

いるところがあるが、それを中央集権的であると捉えらると、北欧とくにスウェーデンのエコミュージアムではこの形態をとっていない、すなわち分権的であると言える。ひとつの中心的な組織が、全体を管理するには中央集権的な組織が有効であるが、広域におよぶエコミュージアムの場合、それを隅々までひとつの組織が管理すると、大きな労力が必要となる。スウェーデンやデンマークのエコミュージアムでは、それぞれのサイトの保全と学習活動がそれぞれの場所で自主的におこなわれることによって、全体で効果的な活動をおこなっている。ここでのエコミュージアム組織の本質的な役割は、それぞれのサイトの活動を活性化する触媒の機能を果たすことである。

これに対して、これまで日本では、このようなネットワークの中立的な存在となる組織（中間支援組織）がうまく活動をおこなっている事例は少ない。従来型の既存の博物館では地域に分館をもち、分散して活動を展開しているものもあるが、それは中央集権的な組織で保守的である。このようなものだと、従来の自然や歴史については博物館活動が行われるが、新しい時代における課題や、地域の将来を考える機運が高まりにくい。日本においては批判はありつつも中央集権的なモデル（コアとサテライトの構成）を実現させる事が多い。これらとは異なり、最近のエコミュージアムでは、地域の活動団体のネットワークを組織して、それぞれが生き生きと活動できるように支援をするものが見られるようになってきた。例えば三浦半島（神奈川県）などでは、分権的な組織の運営を進めており、北欧のエコミュージアムの実践例から影響を受け実践に活かしていると言える。

### 3. 参加：地域住民による自主的な活動団体が基本

さらに、それぞれのサイトの活動が、地域の住民による自主的な生涯学習活動に基礎をおいていることである。それぞれの地域の文化、歴史、自然を学習し、それらを保護しようという地域で活動を展開する市民グループが、北欧の地域にはどこでも数多く存在している。それは、かつてA.ハセリウスの進めてきたような活動、つまり自分たちの地域を見つめ地域の住人のひとりであることを

自覚しアイデンティティを確認するための学習活動が、その後も100年以上もの長い間展開されてきたことによるものと思われる。さらに、北欧では、誰もが平等に、日常的に地域の活動に関わる生活を営んでいる社会であるために、その活動も無理が無く、飽きもこない。それぞれのサイトが持続的に活動しているから、地域全体も持続可能なコミュニティとなっている。

この点は、まさに、日本の地域活動の脆弱な点である。日本の地域社会においては、社会で働く年齢層の男性の存在がほとんど見られない。つまり、地域の様々な自主的な学習活動が、活力ある人たちによって担われていない、という特殊な実態がある。このことは地域社会の持続可能性を損なう問題点である。だからこそ、エコミュージアム活動によって、この地域社会の活力を再び起こさなければならないのである。北欧に見られるような、地域の自主的な活動がどこにでもすでに存在している場合は、それらをつなげていくことでエコミュージアムが形成される。

しかし日本の多くのエコミュージアムでは、それぞれのサイトにおいて、地域の自主的な活動を立ち上げることから始めないといけないので、大変な労力が必要となっている。ただし、地域の自主的な活動は、人数の多少や活動のレベルの違いはあるが、探してみれば既に存在していることもある。このような活動をまず発見する調査を行い、それぞれに呼びかけ、ネットワークを作り上げるという活動が、平野町（大阪府）や三浦半島エコミュージアム（神奈川県）では開始しており、成果を上げている。北はりまなど、多くのエコミュージアムではリタイヤした高齢者の参加が多い

### 4. 運営：複数の自治体の協力で広い領域をカバー

スウェーデンをはじめとして北欧のエコミュージアムは、多くが非常に広範囲の領域をもっている。行政の領域で見ると、複数の自治体がカバーすることになるが、このとき、エコミュージアムの運営主体では、それぞれの市町村から補助金を受けるよう、予算を確保しないとならない。この時に、市町村、県や州、国、さらにEUという相手に対して、広く補助を得ている。ある領域に



関わる複数の様々な地方自治体が、協力し合ってその地域を支援していることになる。このような協調的な地域運営の方法が、地域環境の持続的な管理として必要とされている。

この点についても、日本では実現が非常に難しい。日本の自治体の多くは、それぞれの行政区域内で完結する政策を立てており、隣接する自治体と協調して何かを実行するという経験がほとんどない。このため、日本のエコミュージアムのほとんどが、行政組織と関わりを持ち補助金を得るために、ひとつの自治体の範囲内で展開している。(山形県朝日町他の例)しかし本来、地域の文化や地理的な領域というものは、行政区域とは異なる領域をもつこともありうる。エコミュージアムを実践することは、これまでの行政区域にとらわれず、新たな領域の概念を創り出すことができるものとして、期待がもたれる。日本でもわずかな実践例があるが、設備や補助金負担の比率などの合意を得るのが非常に難しいのが実情である。

##### 5. テーマ性：地域の明確なテーマを持ち外からの来訪者に開かれた観光的視点をもつこと

北欧のエコミュージアムでは、地域に点在するサイトを訪問する立場（観光客の立場）から、配慮がなされているものが多い。エコツーリズムやカルチュラルツーリズム、観光行政などとの関係が深い。このことは、あるエコミュージアムの地域が、わかりやすく明確なテーマを持って、来訪者に紹介できることを意味する。北欧のエコミュージアムはすべて、わかりやすいテーマを持っている（鉄の歴史、湿地環境、古代の農業、湖水地方、銅山文化等々）。北欧のエコミュージアムのひとつの特徴として、デイビスは観光との結びつきが強いという点を指摘している。

日本におけるエコミュージアムと観光との関係で、北欧と異なると考えられる点は、日本では、とかく観光産業が発達しており、マスツーリズムによる短時間集中的な観光が常態化しているため、あまり観光化が進むと商業的に成立するための整備が進むことになり、むしろ地域文化には浅く触れることしかできなくなるというジレンマを抱えている。テーマを限ることが、集客性を高め

る上では有効であるが、一方で多くの来訪者に人気のあるものしか残らなくなり、目立たないけれども重要な歴史遺産や人の入り込まない自然環境などが軽視されることにもなる。テーマ性を持つことが地域住民のアイデンティティや自らの誇りの確認につながる反面、それにこだわることによる他の側面の切り捨て、という問題も指摘できる。足尾銅山（栃木県）では、観光行政、環境行政、住民の自主的活動の間で、今現在もその統一をめぐって議論されている。

ノルウェーのロロスミュージアムもまた銅山の街だが環境問題に特徴的な展示をおこない、保全機関は住民と一緒に、地域文化と自然の歴史の両面を見せようとしている。学ぶべき歴史とは、汚染という「負の遺産」とそこから回復していく力の両方である。旅行者は世界遺産のこの街の美しさを鑑賞し同時に住民は彼らのアイデンティティのひとつとしての汚染された歴史を学ぶ。エコミュージアムは地域の住民のアイデンティティを強化することに貢献する優れた学習環境であるということを知り、日本のエコミュージアムも外部からの来訪者だけではなく地域住民のためにこのような実践をしていくべきだろう。

##### 6. おわりに

総じて、北欧のエコミュージアムは、その地域社会や生活における人々の考え方が反映されており、分権社会、自主的な地域活動、複数の主体の協力、地域のアイデンティティの明確化とその尊重、これらの要素を維持するひとつのまとまりのある地域社会、これらのことを実現する方法のいくつかを提示しているものと考えられる。地域コミュニティによって相互に学習し遺産を保全するという理念は、持続可能なコミュニティをつくりあげるための優れた博物館学的実践であると言えよう。