

「農山村の暮らしを振り返るーコミュニティにおける利用・保全・管理」

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生物多様性は、地域固有の自然環境に内在する有機的なつながりだけで維持されているのではない。それは、それぞれの土地に根ざしたさまざまな生物資源を、多様な形で持続的に利用する技（わざ）や食文化によって支えられてきた。しかし、植民地化や中央集権化、そして新自由主義経済のグローバル化は、地域の自然を利用しながら保全するために暮らしの場を自ら管理する力を人々から奪いとってきた。また、農業生産の近代化に伴うモノカルチャー化は、環境破壊や食の多様性の喪失に加えて自然観や生活観の変化をもたらし、農山村が持っていた暮らし方の豊かさを貧しくさせていった。

この世界的な潮流はジンバブウェでも同じである。同国では約 90 年間の植民地期に国土の半分が白人入植者に占有され、近代農業が広く導入された。1980 年の独立後も占有された土地の返還は遅滞し、中央集権化政策も加わって人々が地域の自然を自ら管理する力の剥奪が継続する間に、生物資源と暮らし方の多様性はあっという間に失われた。さらに 1990 年代後半、新自由主義に立つ英国のブレア政権は個人の財産権と投資保全の原則を主張し、農山村の暮らしの場を人々に回復する土地改革に反対した。しかし、これが白人農場占拠という人々の直接行動を誘発し、2000 年以降の強権的な土地改革の一因となったことは記憶に新しい。

こうした歴史のなかで生物多様性とそれに伴う豊かな文化を壊されてきたジンバブウェだが、同国中部には 1970 年代の独立戦争時から自然と人間の関係のあり方に立ち返って農山村の暮らしを振り返り、生物資源の持続的な利用・保全・管理の回復に取り組んできた人々がいる。マシング州北部のいくつかの村では、「人は自然を守ることでその恵みを受け、自然のなかに住まう精霊のお告げを受けて生きる」という在来の世界観を基盤に、地域の人々に支えられたジンバブウェ伝統的環境保護者協会（AZTREC）が中心となって、固有の自然環境とそれを活用する在来の知識体系を取り戻すことに努めてきた。

その結果、自然を敬う伝統儀礼と規範が再興されたこれらの村では、在来樹種を主とする計 400ha の山林や 200ha 近い湿地帯が回復し、雑穀主体の在来農法、薬草を使った伝統医療、在来果実や昆虫を含む伝統食、どぶろくや野草茶などの食品加工、といったさまざまな技と文化が再評価されてきた。一方、2000 年からの土地改革で生まれた新村では、入植者がそれぞれの母村から持ち込んだ在来の知識や技の相互作用によって、作物の自家採種の工夫など新たなコミュニティの知恵が生まれてきている。これに対して都市部でも近年、雑穀や在来果実、野草茶といった農山村の生物資源の価値が注目されつつある。

この地域固有の自然は、旱魃時に豊かに実る在来果実のチャカタなど、その生物多様性ゆえに気候変動に強い。また、それを活用する技は人々の暮らし方のなかに埋め込まれていた。そのため、これらの取り組みはおのずと持続的な住民主体の農村開発となっていった。こうした経験の交流のため、AZTREC のメンバーはアジア・アフリカの各地を訪問し、1999 年には埼玉県小川町や秩父、千葉県成田市などを訪ねている。また、現在は DADA という日本の NGO を介して山梨県の小菅村にほど近い上野原市西原と雑穀を通して交流している。このようなローカルゆえにグローバルな「地域固有の生物多様性を利用・保全・管理する知恵」のまなびあいは、食・農・暮らしの現実に立った農村開発協力の一つの方向であろう。

Revisiting rural livelihood
—utilization, conservation and management of bio resources in local communities—

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Biodiversity is maintained not only by the organic linkages which exist inherently in the natural environment specific to a locality, but it has been maintained also by human elements, namely, techniques and food culture which have enabled the utilization of various bio resources indigenous to each locality in a sustainable manner and in diverse forms. However, socio-economic changes, including colonization, centralization and the globalization advanced by neoliberalism, have deprived people of the capacity to manage their own sphere of livelihood by making use of local bio resources while conserving them in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the transition to monoculture due to modernization of agricultural production has entailed, in addition to the degradation of natural environment and the loss of diversity in dietary habit, importantly the change of view of nature and that of concept of life, thus impoverishing the fertile ways of life that the rural livelihood used to allow people to enjoy.

This global trend also applies to Zimbabwe where, during the period of 90 years under British colonial rule, a half of the entire national territory was occupied by the white settlers, and modern agricultural practices have been widely introduced. Even after the independence in 1980, the land reform had been delayed, and while the policy of centralization further prolonged the process of deprivation of people's capacity of managing the natural environment around them, the diversity of bio resources and that of the way of life continued to erode. Furthermore in the late 1990s, the Blair administration of Britain which pursued neoliberalism, advocating the principles of private property right and protection of investment, opposed land reform that would restore to people the sphere of livelihood in rural villages. However, it is still freshly remembered that the opposition to reform gave rise to the direct action of people who occupied the estates of white farmers, which has constituted one cause for the imposition of heavy handed land reform since 2000.

Most parts of Zimbabwe have undergone such a scenario of history through which the biodiversity and the rich culture based on it have been damaged. However, there exists an area in the central part of the country where people have been trying, since the era of independence war in the 1970s, to restore the sustainable utilization, conservation and management of bio resources, by reflecting on how the rural life had been led in the light

of traditional relationship between nature and human being. In a number of villages in the northern part of Masvingo province, the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC), a community owned non-governmental organization, is leading a movement to encourage villagers to try to revive the natural environment as well as the indigenous knowledge systems to exploit it. The movement is based on the traditional view of the world that “Man benefits from nature by protecting it and lives by receiving messages from spirits living in the nature.”

As a result of the movement, in the villages where traditional norms and rituals have been revived, 400 ha in total of mountain woodlands mainly with indigenous tree species and nearly 200 ha of wetlands have been rehabilitated, and reevaluation has been made about various traditional techniques and cultures including: agricultural practice with cereals as its main elements; health care making use of medicinal herbs; local foods such as indigenous fruits and insects; processing techniques to make unrefined wine, wild herbal tea, etc. In addition, in the new villages which have emerged from the land reform since 2000, new knowledge systems, such as the method of producing crop seeds by farmers on their own land, are shooting from the interaction among diverse techniques and knowledge which have been brought about separately by settlers arriving from different regions of origin. Meanwhile, recently in urban areas as well, the value of bio resources from rural areas, such as cereals, indigenous fruits and wild herbal teas, is attracting much attention.

The natural environment specific to a locality is resistant to climatic fluctuation, simply because of its biodiversity with the presence of particular species like *chakata*, indigenous fruit which is capable of producing abundantly under drought conditions. Moreover, the techniques to make use of them have been embedded deeply in the way of life of people. Consequently, the initiatives of AZTREC automatically have led to the sustainable rural development that has been realized principally by community dwellers themselves. In order to exchange such experiences, the members of AZTREC have visited many localities in Asia and Africa, including Ogawamachi in Saitama Prefecture and Narita in Chiba Prefecture of Japan which they visited in 1999. Besides, currently AZTREC exchanges seeds and information of cereals with farmers of Saihara in Uenohara City of Yamanashi Prefecture, in neighborhood of Kosuge-mura, through the intermediary of DADA (Dialogue & Action for Development Alternatives in Africa and Japan), a NGO in Japan. Such an interactive process of mutual learning about “the wisdom to utilize, conserve and manage local biodiversity”, which represents essentially global attributes because of its local characteristics, would be an alternative way of cooperation for rural development based on the reality of food, agriculture and livelihood.