



Conservation of Memory Heritage through the artwork “Sea Present” painted by Shigeru AOKI

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The scope of cultural heritage is beginning to extend to the modern era and holistically covers buildings and lifestyle. Using memory has become to be applied as one of the methods for conservation while it is usually used in short duration or just for one heritage. It is hardly ever extended to urban planning. In this paper, I proposed the memory project in Mera village and considered the collaboration among five sectors through three memories. The memory project became virtuous circle to produce community initiatives and new memories at the same time. And, I determined memory heritages through the changes of the relationship between the memories and the spaces. There was a possibility for memory urbanism too. Finally, I revealed the interaction and mediation among five sectors for the conservation of the museum of “Sea Present”. It said that the importance of realistic and balanced viewpoints with authenticity.

Keywords: Conservation, Memory Heritage, “Sea Present”, Shigeru AOKI, Community Initiatives

1. Background and purpose of the Paper

The scope of cultural heritage is beginning to extend to the modern era and holistically covers buildings and lifestyle. At same time, the evaluation and the conservation methods are becoming increasingly difficult. Usually, as conservation method, community initiative was used well. Cultural building and community have been a kind of package for it. On the other hand, using memory has become to be applied for conservation nowadays. Especially, to designate separated buildings as cultural heritage, memory is important to interpret plural histories and regard them as one layered area. For example, remnants of evacuation capital Busan have added to the tentative list for UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2018 even some heritages are separated and intangible.

In the field of urban design, Dolores Hayden is a pioneer of memory project¹. She conducted creation of urban landscape through minority memory. Haruhiko GOTO conducted memory project through community initiatives². Aya KUBOTA determined the mechanism of memory concerned with heritage³. I will call memory heritage which a space is conserved with a memory (fig. 1).

On the other hand, the memory projects were usually used in short duration or just for one heritage. It was hardly ever extended to urban planning almost. In this paper, I focus on mechanism of memory project for the conservation of memory heritage. And, I also determine the potential of this method as memory urbanism.

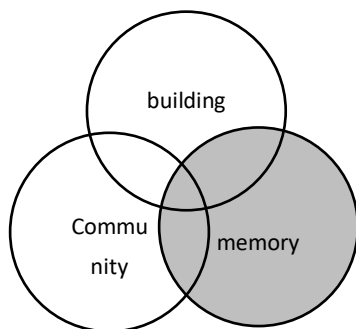


Figure 1: A scope of memory history which started from coloured zone

This paper focuses on the conservation project of the historic building through artist Shigeru AOKI and his artwork “Sea Present” in Mera village in Japan, which has been in progress since 2005 (fig. 2). It explores the process of the memory project for conservation of heritage and revitalization. The thesis is based on interview and reports of three organizations: NPO Museum, NPO Sea Present and NPO Awa.



Even Mera was big fish village, they could not fish anymore, because the temperature of the sea water became too warm. The population of the village has decreased to 1000 people, which is one-third the number during the Meiji era. The aging percentage is 47% in 2010s. When a kindergarten was closed down owing to a fewer number of children, two residents went to the NPO Awa Cultural Heritage Forum (NPO Awa) to seek counsel. One of the residents was a member of NPO Awa. At the time, NPO Awa had been involved in the campaigns for the conservation of War Heritage and Castle Heritage since the 1980s. With the support NPO Awa, the community revitalization of Mera began.

The exhibition of AOKI commenced in 2014 in the Bridgestone Museum of the Ishibashi financial group. The organizers of the project felt the potential of the “Sea Present” and the moment of it. In 2015, exactly 100 years after the birth of the “Sea Present”, a forum was held to celebrate and discuss the method of using monuments for revitalization of the village. At the forum, the owner of the house proposed the use of his house for the village. As a result, the scope of the project expanded to the house, too.


	Completion	1961 (Meiji36)
	Background	The monument was built by the mayor of Tateyama City along with artists and residents, 50 years after Shigeru AOKI died. This was done to boost tourism and revitalize the village.

Figure 3: NPO Museum, and NPO Awa. *The Monument of "Sea Present": The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of "Sea Present"*. [Tateyama: 2016]


	Completion	1860(Edo) and 1889 (Meiji22) after Kanto Earthquake
	Roof style	Hip roof, pantile roofing
	Floor area	92.7m ²
	Background	The house owners have been fishermen since Edo era. They were important leaders of the village. After the Kanto Earthquake, the house was rebuilt in 1889. In 1904, AOKI created the “Sea Present” during his one-month stay in the house. The plan of the early building included a dirt floor, which was the usual style in the village.
Open as museum		The museum was opened in 2016 and it opens on weekends.

Figure 4: NPO Museum, and NPO Awa. *The Museum of "Sea Present": The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of "Sea Present"*. [Tateyama: 2016]

2-3. Background and activity of 2 organizations and Tateyama City

The organizers held many studies and events in order to persuade the residents of the village. In 2008, the NPO Conservation organization for the museum of "Sea Present" and the monument (NPO Museum) was established. This was constituted with the help of residents, artists, art critics, curators, and the Ishibashi financial group. The organization covers (1) the conservation of the museum and the monument, (2) PR activities, (3) community initiatives, and (4) the setting up of a conservation fund. NPO Awa, which assumes office, assigned a name to the house, giving it the title Tateyama Heritage in 2009.



Since the 2000s, two artists, who valued the “Sea Present” and Mera village so much that they often visited the house, proposed to sell it to them. The organizers of NPO museum were concerned about this as community initiatives would suffer if the house was sold to the artists. Therefore, they persuaded the artists to wait and divide roles among themselves, as a result of which, the artists established the organization: NPO Organization for “Sea Present” of Shigeru AOKI (NPO Sea Present) in 2010, the next year of the establishment of the community group, NPO Museum. They mainly collected funds for repairing the house and raised these funds through donations from another artist organization.

After 3.11 earthquake in 2011, it was difficult to collect funds. In order to raise funds, a homage exhibit of AOKI was held 13 times since 2012. NPO Museum and NPO awa also helped with the exhibit when it was opened in Tateyama.

Furthermore, the city exempted the museum from tax under the “Furusato local tax payment” system. The four organizations and Tateyama City made arrangements with the owner to discuss the conflicts among them. The five sectors include the local organization, the artist organization, the intermediary organization, the government and the owner.

Eventually, in 2012, the museum was repaired and opened.

	NPO Conservation organization for the museum of “Sea Present” and the monument (NPO Museum)	NPO Awa Cultural Heritage Forum (NPO Awa)	NPO Organization for "Sea Present" of Shigeru AOKI (NPO Sea Present)
Establishment	September, 2008	January, 2004	January, 2010
Members	It comprises representatives of the community, NPO Awa, and artists.	It comprises researchers and citizen activists.	It comprises artists and critics.
Action	Management of the museum and monument; Community initiatives; Generating funds; and Researching local culture	Conservation campaign; Community initiatives; and Tourist guilds	Collecting funds for museum repairs
			

Figure 5: NPO Museum. *A brief of the organization.* [2018]

Figure 6: NPO Awa. *A brief of the organization.* [2018]

Figure 7: NPO Sea present. *A brief of the organization.* [2018]

3. Community initiatives with the memory

3-1. In the community

The residents did not believe in NPO Awa, who were from the next town, the owner of the house was not interested in the village revitalization at the time. Furthermore, the artists who valued "Sea Present" attempted to buy the house. Therefore, it was very important to consider the community and persuade them above all things.

In the 2005 forum, the organizers filled the panel with more residents than professionals (Chart 1). The pamphlet displayed the words “Sea Present, the pride of the village” and “local heritage to be passed to the children”. It is said that the organizers tried to cultivate the pride of the village and interest in the local heritage. Just after the forum, the owner of the house had a change of heart and decided to use his house for the village even without discussing it with his family.



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In 2013, a forum on AOKI was held with professionals and residents. They discussed the origin and the characters' activity in the artwork. The residents claimed differently from the professionals. For example, the residents claimed that AOKI drew inspiration from the local festival, Merasaki Shrine, because of the artwork angle, whereas the researchers pointed that he was inspired by Awa shrine festival. The residents could suggest it because they knew full well about their village.

Chart 1: NPO Awa, *The member list of the 2015 forum panel: the pamphlet of the forum.* [Tateyama: 2005]

The representative of NPO Awa
The owner of the museum
The representative of Mera village and ex-captain of one ship
The local carpenter of ship
The local relieveo artist
The local essayist of Mera village

At the same time, many studies and events were conducted to enhance the understanding of the problems and potential in the village. The studies not only covered Medical problem, but also covered the local heritage such as AOKI, local food, and local song. For example, the participants made proposals for community revitalization by using local culture and AOKI. They learned their local food and local songs.

On the other hand, the son of the museum became the curator of the museum. He started to study his family history to interpret "Sea Present" (Fig. 8). He delved into his ancestral history. He revealed that his ancestors played a big role for modern fish industry, and he claimed that the fish illustration, presented by the principal of fishing university gave idea to AOKI. With NPO Awa, he also determined village history, that the village head made commune fund for the village and made an elementary school. He claimed the stable situation of the village for AOKI's stay and the birth of his artwork.

Furthermore, NPO Museum started a tour guide on AOKI and local culture in the village. Even the older bashful women of the village started to perform their traditional dance. They created a garden with a fence and the planted trees to reproduce the scenery seen in the artworks. Based on residents' suggestion of reusing the ex-elementary school, the lifelong education centre and the theatre were opened there.

Chart 2: Activities of NPO Museum

Research	- local food - local song - Shigeru AOKI and "Sea Present"
Community initiatives and revitalization	- local healthcare situation and the answer - use of ex-elementary school for community events
Guide	- guide for tourists
Management of the museum	- display and guide of the museum - cleaning and gardening the site



Figure 8: The curator of the museum



Figure 9: The interpretation of the artwork and local festival



3-2. Outside of the community

There was a model of the AOKI museum. The house in which AOKI was born in Kurume was the first museum before the one in Mera opened. Kurume City bought the house and commissioned it to the community. In 2011, the members of the NPO Museum interacted with Kurume group and procured information. They attended events of Kurume and also asked for the funds.

NPO Museum and NPO Sea Present also interacted each other with the supports. They also tried to interact with the Ishibashi fund group consistently.

3-3. Three memories for memory project

There were three memories which have been used for the memory project. I will consider the methods and the effect of community initiatives with the memories.

First memory was AOKI's one. Organizers focused on AOKI memory with his artwork during his visit in Mera village. They tried to determine AOKI's interest and his characters to deepen the memory of his artwork, "Sea Present". They tried to interpret why AOKI came to the village, what he thought about the village, what point of the village gave him ideas for the artwork. Furthermore, the AOKI memory helped residents to have interests in the village memory and gain confidence with the village. It also helped artists to participate and collect funds. That is why putting the memory on a local textbook was proposed.

Second memory became village's one. They tried to pick up local scenery and culture of fish, food and festival to reveal what AOKI saw during his visit. At the same time, they revealed village history at that time. For community initiatives, the organizers paid attention that the representatives of the village became the main members of the project rather than the artists too. They also divided the roles between the residents and the artists. Through the participation of the residents, the interpretation of the memories became various and detailed. The residents picked out local points from the artwork and produced new points. These were possible as they became to have interest in their village memories.

Third memory was family history of the museum. The curator of the museum revealed how his ancestor could support AOKI for one month stay. The curator of the museum drew the family tree, which shows the three generations between the curator and the ancestor when AOKI visited the museum. Through these process, the owner of the museum got pride to study and to display family history such as certification, family tree and traditional doll.

4. Memory heritage

4-1. Relationship between memory and space

According to KUBOTA, there are four types of relationship between memory and space as (1) destroyed type, (2) survived type, (3) succeed type and (4) united type⁵. Survived one means the case which only the space remains. Succeed one means the case which only the memory remains. And united one means the case which both memory and space remains.

Only (2) survived type and (4) united type usually become designated heritage. However, (3) succeed type can provide the factor for conservation of the space. On the other hand, if there is not any memory, the space can be easily destroyed. Memory is an important factor for conservation and community initiatives.

Before the memory project in Mera village, the fish industry with the fish culture declined. These were (1) destroyed type (Chart 2). The closed kindergarten and elementary school were (2) survived type. The monument of "Sea Present" was also thrown away with weeds as (2) type. Even the food culture of fishing village was succeeded as (3) type, it was only succeeded by each family. There was not any cooking school at that time. Only the shrine has been used and conserved with village myths and local festival as (4) united one. On the other hand, the AOKI museum was a usual house at that time. The family has lived there for generations, so it was (4) union type. However, it was not memory heritage because no body tried to revive the house memory.

4-2. After community initiatives through memory

The organizers tried to think village memory and reuse empty buildings during memory project. As a result, not only the house was used for open museum, but also the elementary school was reused for lifelong education centre



and theatre (Chart 3). The community centre became to be used for cooking school of local food. Furthermore, one resort in Mera made memory route around hotel based on AOKI and one famous diver. I would call these cases as plurally united types. In the chart 3, (4) and (5) are memory heritages because they have both memory and space.

I verified that promoting village memory with community initiatives helped to reuse or use heritage with different program. These “memory heritage” were born, when the interpreted memories combined with existing spaces. Furthermore, these memory heritages show the potential as memory urbanism.

Chart 3: Relationship between memory and space

(1) destroyed type	(2) survived type	(3) succeed type	(4) united one
- the fish industry - the fish culture	- kindergarten closed and elementary school	- the food culture of each family.	- the Shrine - the house - the community centre

Chart 4: Relationship After community initiatives through memory

(1) destroyed type	(2) survived type	(3) succeed type	(4) united type	(5) plurally united type
-	- closed kindergarten	-	- the Shrine - the elementary school	- the museum - the community centre

5. Conservation of the museum

5-1. Designation of Tateyama Heritage

After the owner dedicated his house, its conservation campaign began with the monument. Keeping community initiatives in mind, the NPO Museum and the NPO Awa applied for the designation as Tateyama Heritage in order to cooperate with the city. The residents also asked for the designation and the conservation of the house. In 2009, the museum was designated as city heritage. In the city comment concerned with designation, the value of the house is not written about; only the academic aspect and the story of AOKI and the artwork “Sea Present” are mentioned.

5-2. Furusato local tax payment

NPO Museum and NPO Awa asked the city to support the conservation of the museum and treat it as city heritage. As a result, the City exempted the museum under the “Furusato local tax payment” system. Almost all the funds were donated in “Furusato local tax payment”.

However, there were some problems. The repair fee for a new house was not included in the corner of tax exemption. It was also necessary to collect funds for a new house, because the museum was too small for living and exhibit space. As a result, living space was excluded from the museum. In addition, there were no funds to repair the two buildings, the museum and the house. NPO Museum and NPO Sea Present determined to collect funds for the new house too.

5-3. Collecting the funds

NPO Museum and NPO Sea Present have tried to collect funds through a variety of ways. First, they tried to obtain funds through donations from the members of NPOs and citizens. Second, they tried to collect funds from the Kurume organization and the Ishibashi fund group through steady interactions with them. Third, they held events to collect funds. NPO Museum sold roof tiles and all the profits was donated to the conservation. In addition, with the help of a Korean Japanese collector, they made five copper reliefs and put them in front of the museum of



"Sea Present", Kurume museum and three Korean museums. This also helps to collect funds. NPO Awa coordinated between the collector and relief artist.

NPO Sea Present has held a homage exhibit for 13 times. The artists created homages of the AOKI's artworks. The events were hold in galleries in big city. Only the exhibit in Tateyama was hold in small city and the residents also participated in it. One third of the profits was donated as funds. A sketch tour was also launched in Mera with the artists.

Finally, they were able to collect 280,000 dollars for the museum and 150,000 dollars for the house. The NPO Museum collected 76,000 dollars and the NPO Sea Present collected 154,000 dollars. Other artists donated 146,000 dollars. Tateyama City also supported the design fee. Alternatively, the NPO Museum used 200,000 dollars for community initiatives.

However, after the opening the museum, NPO Sea Present was dismantled and some of the members became the members of NPO Museum, which took over the management of the museum. In 2017, the Awa fund was established.

5-4. Repair and management of the museum

There were many discussions among five sectors: NPO Museum, NPO Sea Present, the owner of the museum, Tateyama city and NPO Awa. Formal discussion was hold by nine times⁶. One of the discussions titled "discussion of four sectors" except NPO Awa. However, NPO Awa also participated in these discussions as it intermediated the four sectors along with the office of NPO Museum. Therefore, they have been retained as one of the sectors. In this session, the discussions mainly focused on the repair and the management of the museum.

The main issue was about retaining an authenticity within limited cost. Because the museum was repaired extensively in 1889, just after Kanto Earthquake, the period of repair and restoration was big issue for them. The professionals and the city, wanted to restore the museum to what it was in 1860, when the museum was built with a characteristic dirt floor⁷. The middle plan of figure 11 shows the trace of the old style. However, there was not enough evidence and money for restoration. Furthermore, the spare was required for exhibits. As a result, it was repaired to the second period which the museum was rebuilt in 1889. It was referred in the middle and bottom plan of figure 11. Even the facade of the museum was considered important, only the facing wall was covered with square tiles and raised plaster because of the budget problem. At the same time, the possibility to restore to the first period later on was considered. For example, the base of the dirt floor was remained.

There were many discussions on the subject of display and management too. The biggest issue was maintaining a balance between museum's use of space for an exhibit and preserving it as it were at the time AOKI visited. Artists of NPO Sea Present wanted to retain the look and feel at the time of AOKI's visit. Hoewever, NPO museum wanted it to function more for exhibits. Eventually, only for the wall for exhibits were cleaned and if it is not necessary to repair or to rebuild, the wall and the post were remained.

The museum had exhibits of AOKI and "Sea Present" memory, family memory such as traditional dolls, and village memory such as sea map for fishing which were found out in the house (Fig. 10). It shows that the museum was not only for "Sea Present" but also for the owners and the residents.



Figure 10: The exhibit of traditional dolls at the museum. [Newspaper of Bonichi: Feb. 23, 2018.]

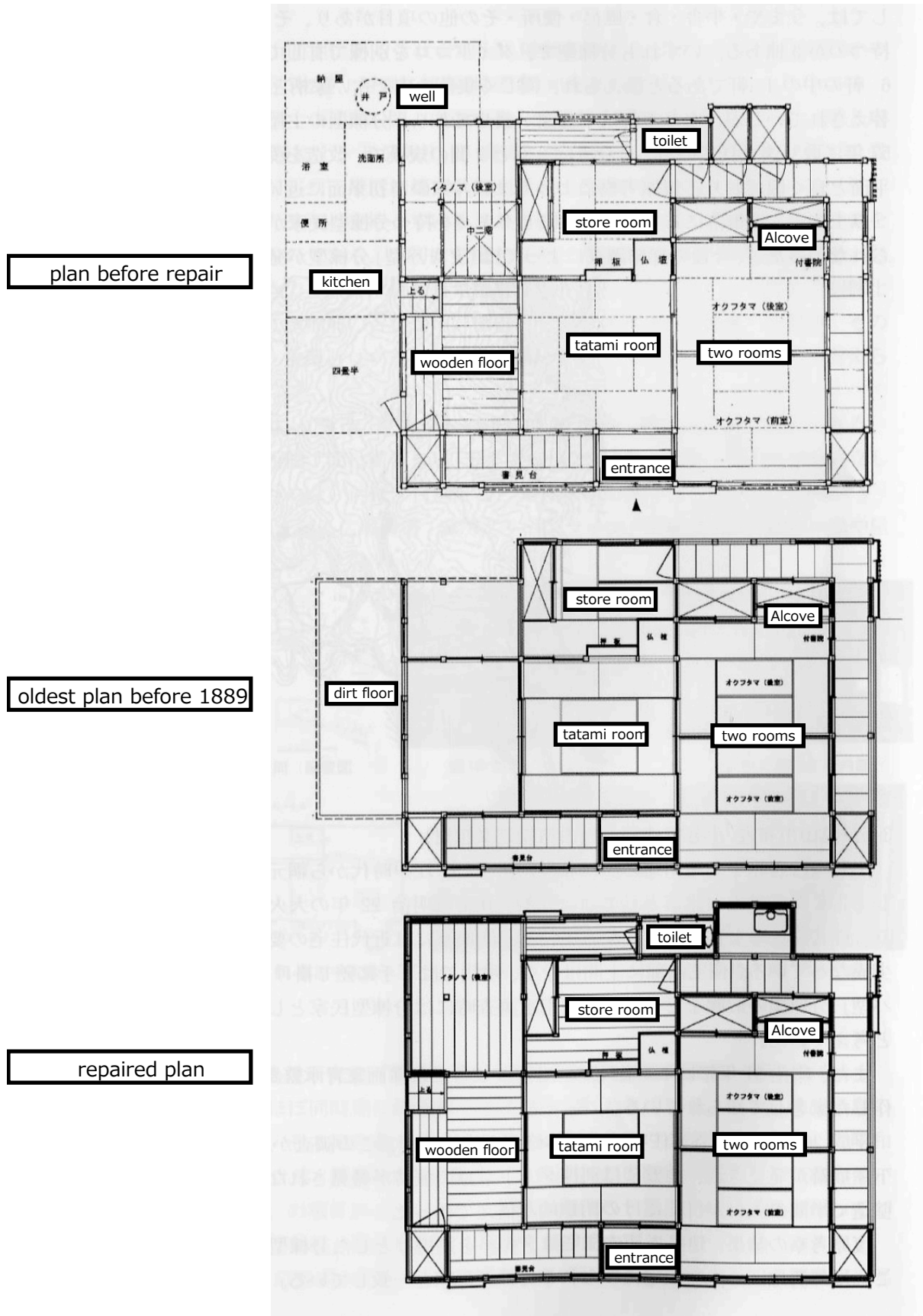


Figure 11: NPO museum and NPO Awa. *The plans of the museum: The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of "Sea Present".* [Tateyama: 2016]



6. Conclusion

I proposed the memory project in Mera village and considered the collaboration among five sectors through three memories. And, I determined memory heritages through the changes of the relationship between the memories and the spaces especially about the museum of "Sea Present".

6-1. Community initiatives with the memory

I considered the methods and the effects of community initiatives with the three memories: AOKI memory, village memory and the family memory of the museum. Memory helped residents to get confidence and interest in another memory. Finally, the memories became various and deep. The memory project became virtuous circle to produce community initiatives and new memories at the same time.

6-2. Memory Heritage

Through the memory project, various memory heritages were produced. Before the project, there were four types of the relationship between memory and space. There were only three cases which the memory and the space were united as memory heritages. After the project, three others were produced as another memory heritages. Sometimes, through the union between new memory, the existing facilities changed to plurally united one. Furthermore, memory routes were conducted with memory heritage. This shows the potential as memory urbanism. To conduct memory urbanism, it is better to consider an area plan during memory project.

6-3. Conservation of the museum

There was hot controversy over the conservation of the museum between five sectors. I considered how five sectors cooperated and mediated each other. Each sector claimed their own opinions. NPO Awa interacted and mediated them through impartial and realistic viewpoints on the problems: collecting the funds, repair and the management of the museum. This role of arbitration gives hint for the conservation of cultural heritage. It says that the importance of realistic and balanced viewpoints with authenticity.

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Image sources

Figure 1: writer

Figure 2: writer

Figure 3: (contents) NPO Museum and NPO Awa, *The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of "Sea Present"* (2016)

: (picture) Writer

Figure 4: (contents) NPO Museum and NPO Awa, *The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of "Sea Present"* (2016)

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Figure 8: Writer

Figure 9: Writer

Figure 10: *The exhibit of traditional dolls at the museum*, Newspaper of Bonichi (Feb. 23, 2018)

Figure 11: NPO museum and NPO Awa. *The plans of the museum: The report for the conservation and the use of the museum of “Sea Present”* (2016)

Chart 1: NPO Awa, *The member list of the 2015 forum panel: the pamphlet of the forum*. (2005)

Chart 2: Writer

Chart 3: Writer

Chart 4: Writer

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