Second group discussion  
1 March 2020, 11-12:00, Matsudai   
Participant: Abe, Yoshida, Yokohama, Keto

Yamazaki: it will be nice how the visitors and the artists would see the landscape here, they would also see some beautiful things here. He feels that he chose to live here, so he is able to see the landscape and enjoy those beautiful moments all the time. He feels more superior than visitors.

Abe: Me too.

Q: what are the things that they found beautiful? What is the thing that captured them?

Keto: when the first day of snow comes in winter, he feels the beauty before thinking of the labour and toughness in winter. He just feels that, when it snows, winter is coming. But before thinking the toughness, he feels about the beauty. He sees the positive aspects of nature before the negative part.

Q: What about during winter, when he feels very tough?

Keto: on the day of heavy snow, there is snow on tree branches, when the sunlight reflected from the snow, it is so beautiful. we captured some beautiful things during winter days to feel positive.

A: There is a moment that nature and the view kind of overwhelm me, but you won’t be able to tell what captured you at the moment. I asked them about it, but it seems that all the things, the atmosphere… it is just a moment in everyday life that captured us.

Q: So it is not like there is this one thing that capture them?

Abe: if you live here, you can see nature every day, even when the weather is bad. If you are a visitor, you do not want to have a rainy day. For us who live in, it is just another natural day, we can find some good things from them. We can see the littler changes in our daily life. It is like a fixed-point observation.

Q: To them, what is landscape? The artificial rice terrace or the wild forest?

A: It is a hard question, its not difficult to translate but the question itself is difficult to understand.

Q: Do they make a distinction of artificial rice terraces or natural/wild forests?

A: We called it satoyama, there is no translation. It means the middle part of wild nature and where people live. The landscape here or the future of here is the satoyama, that’s why in the mountain there are rice terraces here, we call it satoyama view.

Y: If it is just wild nature, you cannot live in there. I am not interested in wild nature. The life in city is really convenient, you have different things there. It is the different aspects of looking at city and satoyama life. There are some good things in those rice terraces, if you think they are worthy, for people who live in city and villages surrounded by satoyama, people can both live in there, it is just a matter of preferences. In wild nature, you cannot live in there. People here visit wild nature sometimes, but you cannot live there because it is wild. It is the same feeling for city people who come to countryside to visit the nature.

Q: Earlier they mentioned being captured by some beautiful moments in life, is that because the nature/landscape they see involve human participations? It involves villagers, community, and they also live in this environment…

A: I think it depends; it is different for everyone. What do you want to ask?

Q: I just want to know if they find the nature here beautiful because they are part of it? Like the example of going to the wild nature, countryside people go there and they still find it beautiful, but they cannot live there, so that kind of moments where they think as beautiful won’t last. But for people here, they can observe the changes in different seasons, is that because they live a life here/ they share a life with nature?

Keto: in the mountains here, if you go to the deep part, if there is a path there, it means there was life there many decades ago, they went into the mountain or forests to get wood/food. He could feel the traces of humans, he also feels the beauty at the piece of land that elders just weed by hands/machine without using chemicals, it looks so beautiful. he feels the beauty of their work. When he goes to the mountain where the rice terraces of his family located, it is only him knows the view, he thinks that he can only have it by himself.

Abe: everything I can see, we have a choice, I like mountain so I choose this area. There are people who love ocean or beaches. for the scenery, these are everything I can see. Sometimes I can see the abandoned houses, that’s something I don’t like here. I would like to keep this place beautiful. as population decreases, maybe some of the rice terraces will be abandoned. I think I should keep the rice terraces if nobody wants to cultivate the land. As a person who picks this place to live, I just want to enjoy the scenes and the moments. At the same time when I go to the beach, I would still find it beautiful. we can go everywhere.

Q: You mean you don’t like to see the abandoned houses?

Abe: When it is almost about to break, but it is part of the sceneries. There is a border between wild nature and satoyama. I think the border changes all the time. In my village, there are 40 houses, but if all my neighbors are gone, I cannot keep my life there.

Q: does anyone has anything to add?

Keto: (showing a picture) 40-50 years ago, maybe it is in use to carry luggage in the mountains. There are things that are not in use anymore, but he likes those reminds of the life decades ago. He likes those things.

Yoshida: he does not think of living in wild nature, he wants to live in somewhere that feels the life of people. Maybe each of us has this feeling, it depends on whether we want to live in the city or the countryside. This area fits the kind of life he wants to live, there is enough nature here. From more than 10,000 years ago, there were already people living here, it means it is a good place to live.