Group discussion 3

1 March 2020, 14-15:00

Participant: Yanaga, Morita, Suki, Ikumo, Yoshihira, Abe, Miwa

Part I:

Yanaga: when he catches the moment, it is like happens in daily life, but it is more like … it is in daily life but it is extraordinary in nature. When he climbed up just over there, it looks so beautiful and the sky today is beautiful, he feels like it is an art, he wants to connect with art more. It happens in daily life but the moment is extraordinary.

Yanaga: sometimes when he is driving and it is raining, he can see the rainbow sometimes, it is just extraordinary. It is not just beautiful view, when I am at the farm, it is deep in the mountains, I can see the rain clouds coming, even those things are impressive. It is not only the ordinary beauty, but things that happen in daily life.

Q: when he was working on the farm, how often does he feel captured?

Yanaga: Quite often he feels in this way, especially when he is on the farm, it happens every day even though he is very busy.

Yanaga: he kind of feels the connection with nature when he sees nature, crops and weeds. I always got impressed.

Q: what kind of connection is he referring to?

Yanaga: a way in everyday life, he senses the nature, he feels the connection to nature. Maybe everyone has that sense, like when we see sunrise and sunset, everyone has the same sense.

Miwa: for the artist, they want to express that feeling in their art.

Q: Does farmers want to express such feeling? What are their expressions?

Yanaga: farming itself is the expression of the connection with and respect to nature. We don’t say that our product is an art, but we feel in this way. Farming itself is the expression of the connection.

Part II:

Yoshihira: in summer, when there are many weeds in rice terraces, everybody clears that up, if he is not doing it, it makes him think that he needs to do it. When he actually did it and finished … in this village, people usually use weeding machines and the weeds are just left them there around the rice terraces, and they will dry in one day, so you can see from the rice terrace that it is weeded, it makes him feel good. Everyone knows who owns the rice terrace, so everyone knows who is lazy, and it is like an accomplishment when people know it.

Morita: when I am working on the rice fields, when I get the moment to rest, when I see at that moment is something really beautiful and impressive. It is like turning on and off the switches inside him. When I get into the work, I just work. When I finish it and look at the landscape around me, the sunlight/the tree next to the rice terrace, everything is beautiful. beautiful things are everywhere, but only when you are able to catch them.

Q: when he is working, he is just focused on work. Right after work… like what Isamu san said, when he can see the view, he captured the moment. Do other people have anything to add?

N: I am involved in some volunteer work to conserve the village and the mountains/ satoyama area with local villagers. After doing that kind of works, she likes to see the view about the work, that’s the moment she feels beautiful. during those days, villagers told her stories of plants, nature, trees, it makes the view more interesting, generate more feelings to her.

Suki: he is one of the locals here, he knows more details of life here, what is going on here. For someone who moves there, they might not really know what something really means, e.g. voluntary work in the village. These would be something that people do without knowing a lot of it, maybe they have to imagine it. But for locals, they know the actual reasons of why they need to do it. He likes to look up the history or what life was like in ancient times. I like to research about those things, maybe what is worthy here and the view here is different right now. But our feelings of beauty, what we see and what is beautiful thing and the feeling is something that does not change. After he has done the weeding, he thinks it is beautiful and he feels relieved. People try to reason that it is beautiful to make themselves feel good. We do not really know if it is good or not, but by reasoning that it is beautiful, we convince ourselves the reason to do it. In this regard, beauty is functional. There are some stone statues in the forest, it happens when there are natural disasters. Right now because of the coronavirus, maybe we should put some stone statues in nature, that’s why people do. When time passes by, when we see them, we see the beauty in them. at the time when people did it, it is just a culture of worshipping, it is not an art/for beauty. When we see them now, they are mysterious but kind of matching with nature, it is artificial but also constitutes part of the view. The meanings of the stone statues changes, and the beauty changes.

Q: He said the feeling of what is beautiful is the same, even thought the view here has been changing?

A: it is kind of like a kind of reasoning, it is good because it is beautiful. it is really important to feel that as beautiful after they have done weeding. That’s why they have the feelings of achievement and relieve after they have done the weeding, even though they don’t know if it is really good for the farm.

Suki: Back to the stone statue, when there is a moth on it and it looks like part of the nature, then we think of it as beautiful things. He makes example of the huge earthquake, people would like to have something beautiful to comfort our heart, like songs, flowers, etc. to purify our heart to make balance. There is another example of the bon festival, there is a bon dance, it is something that he did not like it when he was small, it is a dance for someone who died, it is to compensate sad or negative things. Then he can see the beauty in it, it is connected to Morita kun’s talk, he captured the moment because he wants to feel it himself.

Yoshihira: there is a kind of flowers in local area, it is like a vine. When we see it, it looks so beautiful, but for the elders, it is a sign that we are not taking good care of the forest or mountains, they do not take it as a beauty, they take it as a result that you did not take good care of the mountain. Different people have different definitions of what beauty is.

Ikumo: We tend to think that humans and nature as separated, they are actually connected, everything has their own role, like soil, water, humans. When I feel that humans are part of the nature, we are taking role, not just by living, it is the moment that she thinks humans are in the landscape, we are in it, we are part of it.