

We went to Takahata as a field trip from 28th to 30th of June. I attended from the second day because I had classes on Friday. Our group visited Ms. Sato and we did farming in the field with her. Though there were many farm products such as welsh onion, potato and cucumber, the field was rough so we pulled weeds and cleaned the field.



“Fureai koubou” and responsibility of government

Mr. & Mrs. Sato’s house is playing a role as a place for local people to communicate, named “Fureai Koubou”. Anyone can enter in there, people make ornaments and brooches by old clothes gathered from local peoples, and are having a chat over tea. Originally, Ms. Sato started the activities as something like a day care facility for elderly people, and after that, she accepted not only elderly people but also young people who became social withdrawal and cannot fit into society. By accepting them, she let them help farm working and provided them with the opportunity to communicate with people. The reason why she started this activity is that the government did not make welfare facility for the elderly people and did not take measures. Though this is not having a direct connection with environmental problems, it can be said that they are in common in that government should be responsible for some problems. For example, the reason why organic farming is not yet spread widely is that organic farming takes many costs and effort. So, I think government should provide financial support and agricultural materials with farmers. Therefore, government should be responsible for many problems of rural area.



(↑ The signboard of “Fureai Koubou” and the ornaments made by old clothes)



(↑ Old clothes gathered from local people)



(↑ The brooches made from old clothes)

Symbiosis with nature

Mr. Hara told us about “Soumokutou”. There are about 160 in all Japan, and there are 8 in Takahata. In the past, using natural resources was necessary for humans to live, and Soumokutou had been built with thanks the blessing of nature. Moreover, people started to build them with a feeling of awe for nature and predecessors, when fire and disputes broke out. This historic building shows that the Japanese had cherished nature and lived with nature. However, the existence of “Soumokutou” is not known widely yet. It is necessary to pass the emotion of the earliest people to nature down to posterity in order to think and solve the environment problem.



Conclusion

In the first place, it was the first time that I went to Tohoku region. Therefore, it was a valuable experience to farm surrounded by great nature and listen to local peoples directly. Moreover, I can think deeply about environmental problems such as plastic garbage though this class. I am glad to learn the problems from the point of view of Japan and other countries



(↑ Group members with Ms. Sato)