

## Report on Field Trip

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The two places that impressed me the most during this field trip were the Tomioka Silk Mill and the museum about Mr. Shozo Tanaka. These two places also fit well with the two main themes of the field trip, "modernization" and "environmental issues." At the same time, I think these two themes are also related.

The first location, Tomioka Silk Mill, is Japan's first mechanical silk mill, which has been in operation for about 115 years since its establishment in the late 19th century. It not only witnessed the initial development of Japan's modern industry, but also recorded the development of Japan's silk industry over the past 100 years. To some extent, the Tomioka Silk Mill reflects Japan's modernization process and the influence of Western learning on Japan at that time from many perspectives. First, from an architectural perspective, the silk mill not only has traditional large brick buildings with wooden frames, but also has colonial-style houses where the French overseers at the time lived. Two different architectural styles were reflected in the construction of the same factory, which not only demonstrated the exquisite ingenuity of traditional construction methods, but also demonstrated the spread and uniqueness of Western architecture at that time. Secondly, the factory also opened a night school and recruited female employees. Compared with the vast majority of factories in the past that were mainly staffed by men, this silk factory provided an excellent opportunity for Japanese women to enter the workplace at that time. Women working here can also learn reading, writing, abacus and sewing skills in night school outside of work. At that time, women who mastered the skills could also choose to return to their hometowns to promote the development of the silk industry in their hometowns. This move not only improved the status of women, but also promoted the development of the silk industry in more regions, and greatly promoted the process of modernization in terms of ideology and technology. Therefore, I believe that the construction of factories is an extremely important factor in the development of modernization. The technological progress brought about by factory construction is beyond doubt, but more importantly, it has promoted the

modernization of the people's thinking and factory system construction at that time. It can be said that such a factory is a small microcosm of the development and changes in Japanese society during the Meiji Restoration.



The museum we visited the next day considered the problems that industrial development might bring from an environmental perspective. In addition, it also included the government's balance between environment and development and the promulgation and implementation of relevant policies. The development of the copper factory in the Ashio area and the "Ashio Mine Poisoning Incident" both occurred in the late 19th century, a period when Japan's industrial modernization was rapidly developing. During this period of rapid development, how to build a modern factory and what constitutes environmental pollution were almost entirely new issues for the ruling class and the masses at the time. The profits brought by the copper factory are a huge temptation for most people, and Ichibei Furukawa is undoubtedly one of them. It is not just the economic temptation; the "social benefits" brought by the copper plant are still the focus of political attention. In the eyes of the ruling class at the time, if the copper plant stopped production, the national economy would suffer great damage and many people would face the risk of unemployment. As for the environmental problems caused by the copper plant, they were not worth mentioning because they did not directly affect them. It was not until the flood that the pollution caused by the mining poison was about to spread to the Tokyo area that the ruling class began to pay attention to the pollution problem in the Ashio area. The Watarase Swimming Pool was

established and the indigenous people were merged into Yanaka Village. But this does not mean that the pollution has disappeared. The pollution still exists and has caused harm to the residents of Guzhong Village. Until the residents of Guzhong Village moved away, this area became a wasteland. Although it no longer poses a threat to the health and safety of the people, the original cropland has become a wasteland today. Everything in the past has never disappeared, but warns us in the present through desolation. To this day, how to maintain a balance between environment and development remains an important issue that governments around the world need to deal with and deserves further consideration.



If modernization is an important process in human development, and human development in the past few decades has surpassed the development of the past few hundred years, then it has also intensified the contradiction between humans and nature. Human beings have evolved from acting according to circumstances out of reverence for nature in the past, to attempting to transform nature in the later period, and then to respecting nature today. In the process of continuous development, humans are also constantly thinking about the relationship between themselves and nature. In the face

of nature, human power is insignificant. Although this tiny power may be able to transform nature to a certain extent, this kind of "transformation" often requires humans to endure huge disasters afterwards. Only by maintaining respect for nature during rapid development and keeping the "green mountains" while earning "gold and silver mountains," can we achieve long-term sustainable development.