

## Pleasure in Discovering Historical Facts

Seiichi Tanahashi, Vice President, MUA

I'm increasingly interested in history-related books recently, perhaps due to my advanced age. In particular, I take a great pleasure in reading books which either offer newly discovered historical facts or present new interpretations based on unconventional viewpoints.

Speaking of history, a classmate of mine during university days made a fantastic historical discovery early this year. The news was reported in mass media. People in Japan associate school graduation ceremonies with a traditional song titled "Aogeba Tohtoshi." Japanese students traditionally sing this song on that occasion. It is one of the songs included in a series of collections of elementary school songs called "Shogaku Shoka," which were edited by the Ministry of Education during the Meiji Period. The ministry officials in those days imported Euro-American melodies and provided their own lyrics in Japanese. No one has succeeded in identifying the original melody of this graduation song until the said classmate did.



This friend used to be an active member of the glee club at our alma mater. He has pursued an academic career and has taught the English language at a university. In addition, he spent time in the research of old music textbooks used in Europe and the U. S., in an effort to identify the original melodies of "Shogaku Shoka" songs. His efforts were rewarded early this year by the discovery of a song titled "Song for the Close of School," which was included in a book titled "The Song Echo" published in the U. S. in 1871. He found that the melody of this American song was identical with that of the Japanese graduation song. When I heard a pianist play the original song in a TV news, the tune was perfectly identical.

I have a fond memory of making a small historical discovery. When the company I worked for previously came to mark the centennial of its foundation, the management decided to publish a commemorative history book. I was assigned to be an editorial member. The company was established in 1899 as the first foreign-capital joint venture in Japan, and it had already published a 70-year history book in the past. When I read it, I noticed that there were two Americans among the founders, and that one of them was known only by name and his identity was totally unknown. I was strongly motivated to shed light on this unknown figure by all means.

As a starter, I contacted a friend who was then a reference advisor at the Tokyo American Center and asked for her advice. She was very kind and professional, and suggested that she look into old editions of Who's Who published during the period of this figure's adulthood. Next day she came back to me, saying that a person with the same name was listed in an old volume. I could judge from his listed career that this person is identical with the founding member. (To be continued on Page 12)

## Family Undergoing Transformation

Date : Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Place: The Hall at Azabu Civic Center

This year's MUA International Symposium addressed one of the most critical challenges Japan faces today, and presented a great opportunity for us to think about the concept of "family." The form of the family and society is undergoing a big change. Where is our society heading for, against the backdrop of a continued decrease in population due to low birthrate, an expanding tier of super-aging seniors, and a sharp increase of single-person households, among other factors?

For discussants, we invited the following keynote speaker and guests who presented stimulating expert analysis or cross-cultural viewpoints on diverse issues related to the subject:

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Chizuko Ueno, Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology,  
The University of Tokyo

Speakers: Ms. Yang Yi, Author, the Akutagawa Award recipient in 2008

Dr. Kristina Iwata-Weickgenannt, Senior Research Fellow, German Institute for  
Japanese Studies (DIJ)

Mr. Akinori Niimi (Amit Bakshi), Committee Member, Junior Chamber Int'l. Japan

Moderator: Mr. Hiroshi Matsumoto, Vice President, Minato UNESCO Association

### Keynote speech by Professor Chizuko Ueno:

**"To what extent has family changed?: Family facing falling birthrate and the aging population.**



In her soft and beautiful voice with a smiling tone, Dr. Ueno talked about the formation of the modern family, its transition and future image sometimes inserting black humor. She kicked off her speech, saying "At this international symposium, I would like to give you an academic speech with a longer time span on the theme, considering how to compare societies of the world and that of Japan, each having their own historical background." It was a very comprehensive and convincing speech. The following is a summary of her presentation, based on the resume she kindly prepared

#### **-Prospect of total population of Japan and changes in birthrate as well as total fertility rate**

Total population and total fertility rate (average number of babies delivered by a woman in her life) of Japan are getting increasingly scarce. This trend (low birthrate and falling population) is not peculiar to Japan. India, China and other countries will sooner or later face the same challenge. This is what the modernization is all about.

#### **-What is the modern family?**

The concept of "modern family" is used in two different ways in the field of family sociology. The one is the family in the modern age, and the other is the free, democratic and equal family. There used to be the feudalistic family system in Japan which prevented the modernization of family. Therefore, the intellectuals of Japan after the World War II thought that the modernization of the family was the way to stop the fascism. (ref. "The beginning and the end of modern family" published by Iwanami Shoten in 1994)

#### **-Three characteristics of the modern family**

As the modern family paradigm was introduced to Japan, people started to advocate that there was no modern family ever in the history. A “full-time child” was born before a “full-time mother.” A full-time mother emerged to take care of a full-time child. A child was considered as a good labor power at the age of seven in the pre-modern society. However, a child got caught in the compulsory education as the school system was introduced, and was considered as useless mouth thereafter. It is widely known that the family consisting of a spouse and children emerged quite recently during the Meiji era here in Japan and it was as recent as the 18th century even in Europe. This form of family was developed as the result of relatives started to live together, where such non-relatives as the adopted child, hired servants, nephews and nieces were all drove out of the family.

#### **-Sexual norm of modern family**

The norm that supports this newly emerged family form is a romantic ideology advocated by trinitarians who value “love, sex and marriage” as a package. However, this norm is now broken and the term “nuptial night” which means to have sex with the married partner after the marriage became utterly obsolete. This is what we call the sexual revolution.

This breaks up three ties. Ties between love and sex are broken, and sex is now much more common. Ties between love and marriage are broken, and divorce rate increased. Ties between marriage and sex are broken, and sex now prevails not only after but also before and outside of marriage.

There exist two demographic indicators that measure whether a society experienced the sexual revolution or not. The one is the rise in the divorce rate. Nowadays one out of two spouses divorces in the U.S., and the divorce rate is quite high in Europe as well. The other one is the rise in the birthrate of babies born outside of marriage. These are the indicators that show the separation of sex and marriage. One out of two newborn babies is born outside of marriage in Northern Europe and France, and one out of three is in the U.S. As such, babies born outside of marriage are increasing at an alarming rate, while it is not the case here in Japan.

#### **-Cause of fewer children; factor analysis of fertility decline**

Japan seems to be very stable and conservative society that has not experienced sexual revolution based on two indicators shown above. However, the divorce rate is steadily increasing, though it is not abrupt compared to other countries. Instead, the number of people who do not marry is increasing. It is estimated that one out of three people do not marry for the rest of life by the year 2030. You will never divorce if you have not married. People who do not marry could be said to have divorced even before getting married. They are those who made a choice of staying away from very troublesome procedures of getting married and divorced. This tendency is getting stronger compared to other countries.

The high morals are considered to be maintained in Japan as the number of babies born outside of marriage is not increasing. However, the pregnancy rate of outside of marriage is increasing where the feticide is widespread, most of which are swept under the rug. This ends up with the fewer children. If the pregnancy outside of marriage ends up with births, it should contribute to the rise in birthrate.

There are three distinctive tendencies in the cause for the decrease of birthrate. The first is the increase of people who do not marry. The second is the decrease in the number of babies born from the married couples. The third is the number of babies born outside of marriage does not increase at all. In the past, many spouses gave birth to at least two babies, but it now declined to one.

#### **-Decrease in the marriage rate**

Marriage rate is apparently decreasing. Legal marriage is decreasing all over the world. The situation peculiar to Japan is that even the rate of living together, virtual marriage, does not increase. If you think about it, the rise in the marriage rate is thanks to the modernization that allowed any men to have wife and children. It was back in the 1960s when almost all men and women could marry at their will. However, there were many men who could not or did not marry woman.

### **-Decrease in the birthrate within marriage**

People had as many as five children once got married until 1950s. It abruptly decreased down to two children during the decade of 1960s. Japan could be considered as a leading country of population control, as it only took 10 years for the birthrate to decrease down to half which took place by spontaneity of people without any specific policy inducement. There increases the cases where people marry because they had a baby.

### **-Intervention by the government over the population decline**

Then, what about the birthrate of outside marriage? It is closely related with sexual behavior of outside of marriage. Unexpected pregnancy occurs as the result of such behavior. It is the real situation in Japan, however, that most of the cases are kept in the background. Population decline is the compilation of the behavior by each man and woman which eventually ends up as a huge social phenomenon. The reason that this happens is not made clear while many researchers announce their findings. It is widely known that the intervention by the government over the population increase or the decrease does not work effectively. We are not very sure why the birthrate drops. It is considered that there are complex elements and they emerge very quick or very slow. Therefore, there is no use for the government to intervene in this area.

### **-No way to stop population decline**

If we have to design our society based on the premise that there is no way to stop population decline, all we need to do is to switch our mind over to that direction. We have to admit that the era of modern family is coming to an end. Population of Japan at the end of Edo era was 30 million. It increased all the way up to 120 million during the century after that. It increased four times almost at the same rate as cockroaches. Some people think that it should decline down to approximately 70 million which they consider as an appropriate size of population of Japan. Population decline is said to be natural phenomenon while it is said to be social phenomenon as well. Countries in Europe bring in immigrants to make up the decline.

### **-Behavior associated with birth**

Japan will transform from a large population country to a small. India and China should sooner or later follow the same path. When it comes to thinking about how it affects the form of family, most people get married for the purpose of getting babies from the viewpoint of behavior associated with birth. If it is only sexual relations that are expected, men and women are not highly motivated to marry.

Then, the first baby is given birth even if a woman gets pregnant before marriage. However, it is not very easy when it comes down to the second one. Most of the current countermeasures to the falling birthrate tend to attach weight to have a second baby. Among many barriers such as the size of the house, the academic background, etc., the biggest barrier for a woman to have a second baby is the uncooperative attitude her husband showed at the time of her first delivery of a baby. At the same time, we have to think about why the waiting list for nursery schools gets longer while the birthrate is declining sharply. The number of women who cannot get back to work after delivery is increasing because of economic downturn.

### **-Spousal behavior**

Now, let's think about marriage itself. In Japan, women do not give birth unless they marry. The reason for this is that there exists unjust discriminatory treatment for children born outside of marriage here in Japan. Desire for marriage has not diminished as far as statistics go. Meanwhile, marriage rate has declined drastically. Marriage conditions for men who want to marry and those for women do not match. The major reason for this is that the views of marriage of men and women have not changed a lot for years. If you take a look at a median point in the difference of ages between spouses, you will notice that the biggest cluster consists of spouses of same age. It may be the case that women who keep their expectations for men very realistic get married rather early. On the other hand, those who expect very high dependability from men tend to think there aren't any good men around them and put off their marriage. We call this a "nashikuzushi hikon."

On the part of men, they do not marry because they think they are not good enough yet to feed their family. Thus, if they want to get married much earlier, all they need to do is to get rid of their old-fashioned or conservative view on marriage. Statistics show that many young men and women think that marriage is not very advantageous for them. For men, they will have less money they can spend freely. For women, they will have less free time. Such way of thought comes from the very conservative view of marriage where men are supposed to earn money and women to be responsible for raising children.

#### **-Behavior in child-raising**

In the behavior in child-raising, the cause of this significant decrease of children is due to the sharp rise of costs spent for each child. They say that gritty mothers in old days raised as many as 4 to 5 children, filled with self-confidence, but I would like you to understand that the costs then were much less than now since they just let children grow without paying much attention. Children have, hence, become expensive durables and it is now a status-symbol to have children.

#### **-Interrelationship among generations**

As for the question who should take on the duty of raising children, we are in a situation that does not allow for recruiting the power of grandmothers in Japan where two-generation families are the majority in the society. On the other hand, in Asian region, they can depend on the power of grandmothers since mutual aid interrelationships among generations prevail. However, I think it will disappear rapidly in the near future.

In Japan, the maternal grandmother power has become strong and it has led to stronger mutual aid interrelationships among generations on the side of wives' kin. And that of husbands has become less firm. This trend will accelerate the change in the relationships of families. We will notice that every generation will get concerned with the diversification of the families.

#### **-Diversification of families and separation of generations**

Costs for maintaining the family have increased. But, I don't think that the "family" will vanish. Why? Because, as said from old days that "One-man family can't make living but two-man family can.", the aggregating power of the family will not disappear.

The time when the family was dependent on a single income source was very short in the modern age. In future, it is likely that, in addition to the families dependent on double-income sources, families dependent on the multiple-income sources will emerge; families that family members help each other shoulder to shoulder, aggregating small money. I call this "family finance supported by multiple family members".

Among those families, the one increasing rapidly is the single-person household.

One out of three households is the single-person household. In fact, the single-person households are split into two characters; one who owns "capital for his/her own use" and chose to become the single-person household and the other who did not want but was obliged to be a single-person household.

#### **-Family – Overloaded ark**

(written by Arthur. A. Fineman, translation supervisory and commentary by Chizuko Ueno, published by Gakuyosho)

I titled the book in Japanese, that was written by Fineman. The title implies that the heavy burden called child-raising and nursing care have overloaded families. It is the family of modern age who has sailed out into the sea with this burden. They say that the family in old days had the power for the nurse caring and child-raising. But, is it true? We should better think that the overloaded family was destined to be stranded soon or later. It is said that the family in old days had the power for the nurse caring and child-raising, but such period was short because children of 7 years or older were possible working power when we consider the level of child-caring then.

The reason that the child-raising has become so hard as now is due to the falling birth rate prompted by the notion “Bear less babies and grow with more care”. Also, it was just recent that elderly people have come to live this long. So, the cost burden for the nursing care have become much heavier than before. Before the modern age, the period and level of nursing care were much shorter and lower, and the cost burden was lighter as well.

#### **-Care insurance is “revolution of family”.**

My interest centers on the care insurance. The care insurance is obviously a revolution of the family when observed on the basis of such discussions on the modern family. Because, the care insurance represents the formation of national consensus that “the nursing care is not only the responsibility of family but also the responsibility of the society. It was a great change in the society of Japan. The first step was taken toward the socialization of the nursing care. In other words, the nursing care has come to be not “personal issues”. We call this “departure from the personalization”. The opposite to this is “personalization”.

If we look back on the past, the nursing care was handled within the family in the modern family. That is, as the personalization of the nursing care progresses, a dedicated person=full-time housewife is assigned to the task in the family. It is totally untrue that the family once had the power for child-raising and nursing care. The fact is, it has now come to the surface barely that the family was destined to collapse soon or later.

#### **-Aging population and change of families**

Now, families are changing rapidly. Among the conjugal households, the aging households are increasing and it has become customary that they do not live with households of their children while both wife and husband are alive. We call it intermediary coexistence to live with the household of their children after the spouse passed away. We call it selective coexistence to choose to live with one other than their eldest son. When we divide the households of wife and husband, and single-households into the state of life, we find the brutally honest truth.

If we divide the aging households into “the rich” and “the poor”, people of the rich state tend to select “selective separation”. People of the poor state show also high separation rate but we find the separation of the poor people is “granny dumping separation” that their children cannot afford to the nursing care of their parents, being occupied with their own living. I presume that only the middle class people are living reluctantly with their parents.

Furthermore, among the very aged population, those who lost their children early are increasing. In the case of the people of age of 80s and 90s, every possible form of coexistence has been increasing, including coexistence with the household of the second son after losing the eldest son and coexistence with the household of the grandchildren when they lost children. Three generation coexistence is now a myth.

#### **-Does the family have no legal responsibility?**

As for the question whether the family ought to assume the legal responsibility, it is written that they ought to support. But, there is no writing about the responsibility of nursing care. So, no one can force the nursing care on the family that provides no care whatsoever.

#### **-Does the family have no power to care?**

Then, did the family in old days have the power for the nursing care? It has become common understanding among the experts that such story is a “myth”. In those days, there were not so many elderly people as now.

It was possible to diversify the risks as they had many children and the period needed for the care was short as the longevity was short. Bedsore was common when the elderly was bedridden. However, today, if the bedsore is found, they will argue that the quality of care is bad. People have become aware that the increase of the burden of the nursing care on the family this much is a new phenomenon in the history.

### **-Appearance of the elderly who requires nursing care**

There was no concept of the elderly who requires nursing care before the care insurance system was established. We are now in the age no one has ever experienced in the history that such a large number of elderly people have appeared and the period of the nursing care has become longer.

### **-Sentiment to avoid outsourcing nursing care**

So, it was not possible from the first to depend only on the family for the nursing care. But, there was a strong sentiment of resistance to leave the nursing care to people other than the family member during the early time of the care insurance system.

As time passes, however, that sentiment has changed to the awareness of one's rights in no time. In that sense, I think that a drastic change in the consciousness that the family may utilize the nursing care by a third-party at their expenses, was induced in a short time after the age when the nursing care by family was mandatory

### **-Reality of family nursing care**

The nursing care by family is changing rapidly these days. It is the spouse who first assumes the duty. It is now common that regardless whether it's husband or wife, the spouse cares the counterpart who came down with sickness first as long as they are alive. As a result, the percentage of the men cared by the family is now 28% nearing to 30%.

In case of daughters, married ones go to parent's house to care their parents. At the same time, the nursing care by sons is increasing as well. This is because the percentage of unmarried male has increased and cases that they live with their parents have increased. Some of those sons are parasite singles living off parents (pension) and such households are becoming the nests of abuse to the elderly..

### **-Is the quality of the nursing care by family high?**

As for the question whether the nursing care by family is ideal or not, it should be noted that the family is not expert of the nursing care and its caring quality is not necessarily high. We can't say that the quality in the past was high, either. This is the first experience in the history but the experiences are being accumulated.

Today, the entire world where aging progresses is paying attention to the movement of the care insurance system of Japan. In particular, Asian countries such as Korea, Taiwan, China that are experiencing the accelerated demographic aging faster than Japan, and eventually India as well, are watching Japan with a frenzy of anticipation.

They say that Germany is a role model of the care insurance, but the care insurance of Japan is more different than might first be surmised from that of Germany. In that sense too, it is being called into question how the nursing care be socialized as a unique case of the world.

### **-And to where?**

At the same time, a big problem is that the progress of socialization of the child-raising is far from easy. Child allowance system has been created, but it will take a long time for the number of children on waiting list to decrease. That's because places to keep children are not increasing. For about 40 years since 1970 when sex revolution started, until today, the situation of isolated child-raising has not been improved even a bit. Young mothers are suffered heavily from the burden of the child-raising. In fact, the single parent household is increasing since infants are not the restraining power for divorce, any more.

Single parent households under child-raising are experiencing the most difficult situation, but the society would not even try to offer helping hands. Under such circumstances, there is no way babies are born. Therefore, it is natural that the birth rate continues to fall.

In conclusion, there is no choice but to plan the design of the society based on the premise that trend of continuous low birth rate will no longer reverse. It is necessary to convert, in principle, the

design of the system to the “design of the system according to the specification for the individual person” regardless of whether he or she has a family.

The premise for that thought is the fact that we cannot expect any more growth in the entire society of Japan. Whether we call it stagnation or maturity is a figure of speech. We must develop a vision toward matured society. I think, in this regard, that the time has come that we shift totally from the growth model that led the society of Japan during the period from the high-growth era to 1980's. It is my recognition that such symptom is appearing in the “change of the family” as the reality not reversible any longer.

I can remark, in that situation, the diversification of families = one who can have or does not have family, one who chooses not to have family, one who cannot have family against its will and lives alone, will be induced by the disparity in various resources and economic power. The disparity of economic power cannot be prevented in the society of market economy, but it is possible and also necessary to re-allocate the risks induced.

It is essential to design a vision toward the social solidarity without admitting the disparity. Believing so, I wrote the book “Solidarity among Generations”. (Written by Chizuko Ueno and Kiyomi Tsujimoto, Iwanami Shinso 1193)

I also wrote a book “Life of Lone Person in Old Age” to provide the wisdom to live in the society that is transformed according to the “specification for individual person”.

As asked “What men should do?”, I wrote a book “The Philosophy for Lone Man”

Let me finish my talk here for a moment. Thank you for your attention.

Dr. Ueno's keynote speech was followed by presentations by our three discussants – Ms. Yang Yi, Dr. Kristina Iwata-Weickgenannt, and Mr. Akinori Niimi (Amit Bakshi). The following are summaries of their statements:

### **Ms. Yang Yi**

I spent half of my life in China and another half in Japan; that is 22 years in each country. Having arrived in Japan, I came to think more seriously about our lives on this planet. We are living the same age but we don't spend the given hours in the same manner. Looking back to my life I ask myself where and how I spent the hours given to me.

In a word, the life in China prior to my coming to Japan at the age of 22 was that of a primitive age. However, when I think of my family, I should say it had been run fairly well, although the surrounding society had not.



I remember clearly the day in late October 2010 when the article titled “Oishii Chugoku” came off the press. I noticed my family photo and I felt like crying because thanks to the enlargement of a small picture for publication I could now see every facial expression of those in the photo. Even living a miserable life, they looked so happy.

From my own experience, what characterizes the life in old days was inconvenience. No matter what you do, you could not avoid inconvenience. Though I have no statistical backing, the marriage rate was, I think, about 90%. Women of 24 and above had to be prepared for a question. “Are you still single?” They were miserable and shameful beings and were not recognized as grown-ups. Not only from worried grandmas, proposals for marriage came from all directions. “Haven't you found any nice boys yet? Politically, it was a tough period, but humanly, it was a warm society so to speak with people who are ready to extend helping hands.



As for divorce, the political system required that you get special permission from the Communist Party. That way, the divorce rate could be kept at a low level. So, divorce was not easy. I only saw few divorcees around me. My memory tells however, that the divorce rate suddenly went up soon not so long afterward.

As we lived in the northeastern part of China, we needed a lot of coal and firewood, not just for cooking but for heating as well, and to carry them from one place to another we needed the power of men. For those who live in Japan it may not be easy to imagine what it was like. It was like living on a deserted island. You had to do everything by yourself, alone. It was not just uncomfortable. It was inconvenient. Looking around, you find plenty of work that requires physical labor. For example, you buy some pork, but it's not all meat. It comes with bones. In winter, it gets frozen and women find it hard to chop. You may say, "What about men? They are strong enough to do all that work." The answer is "not quite".

In those days we were to wear the people's uniform. Ready-made uniforms were available but they were too expensive, almost as expensive as one-month salary. Some household had one such wear for the entire family. In fact in my family, all the clothes, from underwear to sweater were handmade by mother until I finished high school. She even made winter and summer boots by lapping fabrics over one another. When it comes to sewing, most men were not good at it. In such social conditions, each one of us must share roles in order to live. Uncomfortable life is not desirable, but whether we like it or not, we had to live with it and a cooperative society was a natural answer.

Professor Ueno was analyzing the problems of love and sex in the married life. It must have been as she says. In China those days, people did not have time to think about such matters. They were too busy earning bread and butter. People's major concern was how to live everyday. Their desire was at best: it would be nice if someone would make me a dress or shoes; or somebody would prepare me something to eat. It could hardly be called a family life in today's sense. I came to Japan when the quality of life started to improve a little as to enable people to afford a couple of dresses a year. I was about 22 years old.

My honest impression when I stood at the airport was, "What a splendid country! Everything was convenient and safe." Vending machines were at all railroad stations and at many street corners. And nobody steals them. I was most impressed. Why? There was money in the machines. How risky it was to leave it there. When you are thirsty, you don't use tap water but pay money for it. Young people of Japan buy cold drinks in summer and hot drinks in winter as a matter of course. Men don't have to hesitatingly say to their wife "Tea, please." If I may exaggerate, you don't even have to get married. Incidentally, what I got wrapped up here in Japan is "OSHIRUKO!"

In China those days, just by walking with a man side by side, rumors would spread soon and you got branded as immoral. So, I made it a rule to keep distance from men. In spite of that, there weren't many marriageable girls around me who were determined to remain single. But unlike in China, rumors did not spread in Japan even walking with a man. I envy the environment in which you can meet a man without having to worry about what other people would say. May be I myself should... I'm available at present you know.

I am going to do some thinking. How being convenient and being inconvenient are related? When I came to Japan I thought Japan is a free society but at the same time is a society of qualification. One middle school teacher told me that it is not enough just to finish middle school education. They will not be accepted by society. Not only that, they won't be able even to get a part-time job. They invest a lot of money, but for the amount they invest, the academic level has not proportionally gone up as they had anticipated. The level of elementary school children when Japan's economy was growing is said to be higher than today's middle school students. And the middle school students of those days are suspected to have been as smart as today's college students. In a progressed society, even if you spend a lot of money for education, they would not

always try to see your real ability, but tend to take a look at your academic records for formality's sake.

If you want to work in the field of health care, you need a certificate, or you want to work as a nurse or even as a baby sitter, you have to be qualified. But a next door aunt could be an experienced but retired midwife. What we should keep in mind is to find such hidden competency.

### **Dr. Kristina Iwata-Weickgenannt**

I was born and raised in Berlin, West Germany. I am going to talk not as a scholar but as a person who has lived in Germany for a long time. I would like to talk what concept German people had about family and how it has changed over the years. I understand I am expected to talk more on the difference between Japan and Germany. Certainly there is some difference, but I must say there is more similarity than difference. It is particularly so in former West Germany.



As in Japan, German people also have a similar family concept. Men are income earners, and they are expected to take care of their wife and children. This concept still remains. Another similarity is the fact that as in Japan, the 3-year-old myth is still strongly rooted. Consequently it is hard to put your small children in a day-care and mothers cannot work even if they want to. Most schools are open only in the morning. We must say that they count on the help of housewives so that their school system continues to work. But it is becoming difficult for the system to continue.

More and more families are finding it difficult to manage with fathers' earnings alone. Increasing number of women want to work fulltime. Affected by a low birthrate, the attitude of the government is beginning to change to see women as a labor force. The fact that more local governments are extending finishing time and also talking about increasing nursing facilities indicate such tendencies. But the fact still remains that there is a lot of room for improvement. If we just look at the situation of less than 3-year-old children waiting to be accepted, Japan is better than Germany. The number of facilities may not be enough for the entire nation, but the quality is good, and the parents who are fortunate enough to utilize them, including myself are very appreciative.

As I said earlier, former West Germany is very much like Japan, but in East Germany, things are quite different. It is very common for both parents to work. Perhaps the situation might be similar to that in China. It is also common in East Germany to leave less-than-one-year-old babies at day-care centers. 20 years have passed since the East and the West were reunited, but that sort of difference still exists between them and as a result the problem of waiting on the list is not as serious as in West Germany.

In Germany, as in Japan, a family generally consists of parents and children but there have been some changes taking place. As the number of working women increased, fathers are now strongly expected to participate in childcare. About three years ago, laws were changed to encourage fathers to make use of child-care leaves and as a result, the rate of using the leave increased to more than 20% of the fathers. The major reason for this increase can be attributed to the fact that 70% of their current pay is guaranteed. In most cases, mothers take longer leaves, but the opposite could be the case.

As for misogamy or hating marriage, the number of those who fall on this category may be increasing. but having children outside of marriage is nothing uncommon these days.

As one example, let us take up child bearing outside of marriage. The figures are for the year 2005. In Germany as a whole, the new-born babies outside of marriage is almost 30%. I don't have the most recent figures, but I am certain they should be much higher than these figures at present.

Also the figures are different depending on locations. In the northern part of former East Germany, the percentage was approximately 62. In the southern part of West Germany about 20. So as you see, there is a big locational difference within the country. Conceivable reasons could be that their legal status is the same. This comes from the principle that children should not be discriminated because of the way of life their parents choose. In other words the family is not the smallest unit of society but private individual is.

In Germany, same-sex marriage was officially recognized about 10 years ago. Legally, their status is the same. One big difference is that they cannot adopt children.

I advise you to visit the site of Power Point and see a sign which reads, "In Berlin, a family doesn't have to look like a family." You will Also see a poster carrying this logo and a picture of a female couple holding a baby. The picture of this couple and the logo are highlighted on the ad section of Germany's major daily, Berlin Morgen Post. The posters can also be seen at railroad stations. I wonder if Asahi Shimbun would put this eye-catching ad. About the future of this family, I have no comment.

### **Mr. Akinori Niimi (Amit Bakshi)**

I wonder if any of you know the film called "The Straight Story." I liked the movie very much. It is based on a true story introduced by the New York Times. The movie features a 73-year old man who sets out on a long journey on a slow tractor to see his brother who became ill. In the film his daughter who lives with the old man asks, "What is family? He hands her a branch of a tree and tells her to break it. He showed the broken branch and said to her, This is when you are alone. Then he gave her three branches and told her to break them in one breath. She couldn't. So, the old man said, "That is what family is." I remember I was moved so much.



Today's theme is "The Family," so I would like to talk about my father who is from India. My birth place is Japan, the City of Handa in Aichi Prefecture. Because of the three expressions I uttered when I was eleven years old, I ended up studying abroad all alone. Shikataganai ("It can't be helped"), Shoganai (literally means "There's no ginger" but is often used in place of the first expression,

"can't help") and Kankeinai (meaning "I don't care / I don't give a hang"). My father heard those three expressions by chance and got very angry. He said, "There are many ways to solve problems. For the second expression, he said, "Shoga (ginger) is in the Fridge, and the last one, "If you are a member of the family, you are already related." I was slapped in my face real hard.

Upon arrival in New Zealand where I was to study, I felt strong cultural and language gaps between Japan and New Zealand and I became homesick on the day I arrived. "Even now, I can't take care of myself. You have got to take me back to Japan." Crying and Kneeling down on the floor, I begged my parents. But they went straight back to Japan. Mother was crying but she did not look back. I thought they discarded me.

I learned later, however, that my father had suggested taking me back to Japan because it would be too much for me to bear. But my mother who is Japanese thought if she offered her helping hand, I would never be able to grow as a real man. That is why, she mercilessly pushed me away.

After a while, I asked my father to send me to his home country, India, partly because I personally felt the level of education in New Zealand was not high enough for me. I was admitted to an international school there, where I could enjoy plenty of freedom with little responsibility. I really lived it up there. I had my ears pierced, hair dyed, I also drank alcoholic beverages and got involved in fights. Being unable to take any longer, Father took me to my grandfather for a lecture on my behavior. To our surprise, however, the old grandpa puzzled us saying that he had a pierce

when he was young. When young, right-side brain is heavier, so a pierce on the left ear helps them in equilibrium.

I had been prepared to be given a tough lecture but what happened was quite contrary. Instead of scolding me, he took out the old piece out of his safe and told me to use it because he himself used it when he was a young boy. Father had asked Grandpa to give me a hard time so that I would correct myself, but he was out of his reckoning. I can't forget what Grandpa told my old man. It's alright for children to give trouble to parents. They cannot keep giving it the rest of his or her life.

Lastly, I would like to say that old people are treasures to their countries and we, young people of twenties and thirties must think how best those treasures can be handed down to the next generations.

*(Written by S. Sano, Chairperson, the Science & Culture Committee, and translated jointly by Y. Suda, Chairman, and T. Suzuki, a member, of the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee, and A. Shimizu, an associate of the committee)*

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(Continued from Page 1): **Pleasure in discovering historical facts**

Based on the provided career record, I initially contacted Tokyo University's archives office and could obtain more details of his profile. I was advised to contact Kanto Gakuin, a private university in Yokohama, as this figure was more closely involved in the foundation of that institute. Very fortunately, the institute generously provided a copy of their internal magazine which included a special article on this figure. In addition, I found from another source that he had been an active member of the Asiatic Society of Japan. I visited the society's library and could see books he wrote about Japan. The whole process of collecting pieces of historical facts was a great fun, perhaps similar to the pleasure Mr. Mizuno, a fellow MUA member and great angler, takes when he tugs in a big catch.

This historical figure is an educator named Earnest Wilson Clement who was born in Iowa in 1860. Since his first visit to Japan in 1887, he had stayed in Japan a total of 37 years, intervened with a temporary home return. While in Japan, Clement interacted with people like Inazo Nitobe, who was among the Japanese students taught by Dr. William Clark at the legendary Sapporo agricultural school. In 1895 he founded Tokyo Chugakuin which later developed into Kanto Gakuin. He worked as principal and professor. On the occasion of his final departure from Japan in 1927, the Japanese government presented Clement with an Emperor's recognition for his years of contribution in the field of English education.

It seems there are people who enjoy historical research in their everyday life. For example, some friends, at similar ages of mine, produce their own personal history books, often utilizing historical resources available at public libraries. Others make biographies of their parents or ancestors. An American friend of mine has been hooked on genealogy. She told me that the most popular hobbies in the U. S. are gardening and genealogy. It's amazing to know that she has traced down her family tree and identified her ancestors, one after another, utilizing the Internet. In addition, she got in touch with her relatives and acquaintances in Europe to exchange related information. All in all, she could trace her ancestry as far back as into the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

According to her, there have been an increasing number of hobbyists in the U. S. who use genealogy-focused websites such as Ancestry.com or FamilyHistory.com. It seems only natural to think of the fact that the U. S. has been a country of immigrants.

*(Written & translated by S. Tanahashi, Vice President, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

## We are Minato-UNESCans! A Street Fund-raising Activity by the UNESCO Committee of Mita Senior High School

Mita Senior High School has a long history as a “UNESCO School,” and has engaged in a variety of activities each year. Major programs include a UNESCO bazaar held during the school’s cultural festival and collection of spoiled postcards, exchangeable for money, to support the World Terakoya Movement. Thanks to the cooperation from the students, parents and teachers, we have achieved fruitful results every year.



An enormous earthquake and tsunami hit the northeastern Pacific coast of Japan on March 11, 2011. Although our UNESCO activities have traditionally focused on the support of developing countries overseas, it was different this time. We couldn’t help doing something for our own country after seeing the devastation. Therefore we decided to launch a fund-raising activity on the street for the first time.

We made collection boxes and banners and then lined up on the street, calling out for donation, in front of Mita Kokusai Building during after-school hours on April 21 and 22. We could raise a total of 52,886 yen during the two days and donated the proceeds to a fund started by National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan. The mission of the fund is to help children affected by the latest disaster.

I was a little bit concerned about the prospect of success in our fundraising. This is because I have had no experience in fund-raising although I have made donations in the past. Despite all those uncertainty, we were very fortunate and encouraged to see people who stopped their cars close by momentarily for donation, or people who were walking on the other side of the street, saw us, and took time to cross the street to make donation into our boxes! Several foreigners also donated for our mission. We felt truly thankful for their philanthropic spirit while we also felt proud and rewarded about our UNESCO committee’s activities.



I believe that everyone has a desire to be helpful for needy people at large, not just for the victims of the disaster this time. I’m really happy to be a member of our UNESCO Committee which can put into action the shared desire to help others. The fund-raising experience renewed my aspiration to strengthen our Committee so that it will involve more people and expand the scope of its activities.

*(Written by Ayaka Kitahara, President of the UNESCO Committee of Mita High School, and translated by H. Yoshihara of the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop 2010  
“My Mother Country - Bulgaria”

Date: Friday, March 4, 2011

Place: Minato City Lifelong Learning Center

We had the pleasure of having Ms. Katerina Markova, a member of MUA, as the speaker for this workshop. First, let us introduce her profile.

Ms. K. Markova was born in Sliven, the 7<sup>th</sup> largest town in Bulgaria, and graduated from the National Sophia University (faculty of Japanese Language). She came to Japan in 2000. After studying at Hokkaido University and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, she earned a master's degree at Aoyama Gakuin University. She is currently enrolled at ICU, in the doctoral course, specializing in comparative culture, working on a thesis titled “Reconciliation and Religion.” She has worked hard to promote mutual exchanges between Bulgaria and Japan, by giving lectures on Bulgaria over 200 times so far throughout Japan. She has a cheerful and energetic personality with excellent command of the Japanese language.



The following is a summary of her presentation.

“My Mother Country - Bulgaria”

The lecture started with Ms. Markova's powerful greeting with “Dobur Den!” which means “Good Day” in Bulgarian. She requested all of us in the room to say “Dobur Den!” together. Bulgaria reminds us of Yogurt, Sumo-wrestler Koto-oh-shu and roses. How much do you know about Bulgaria?

The introduction to Bulgaria started in the form of questions and answers.

1. The country is located at almost the same latitude as Japan's Tohoku area.
2. The size of the country is equal to that of Hokkaido.
3. It has a population of 7.5 million, almost equal to Hokkaido.
4. Bulgaria is a multi-ethnic country, with 85% of its population from Bulgarian ancestry and 9% from Turkish.
5. It is a member state of EURO but people still use the currency of “lev.”
6. It has maintained friendly relations with neighboring countries.
7. Bulgaria and Japan restored friendly relations 52 years ago.

The Q&A session was followed by a 10-minute lesson of the Bulgarian language. The characters used in Bulgaria are Cyrillic alphabet. Today 34 Slavic countries and Mongolia also use Cyrillic. We learned several typical expressions in Bulgarian for daily greetings as follows:

“Dobur Den” = Good day. The point is to smile and shake hands when greeting. This is important in a multi-ethnic country.

“Blagodarya!” = Thank you.

“Dovi jdane!” = Good-bye.

“Dobur Den! Az sum ....” = Good day, I am .....

“Priyatno mi e” = How do you do.

As we all followed her aloud in Bulgarian, the air in the room got softened gradually with our smiles.

Then the topic changed to the colors of the Bulgarian national flag - white, green and red from top.

1. The “White” symbolizes peace.

The latest topic involving Bulgaria and its peace goes back to the political reform (“soft revolution”) in 1989. The Communist Party was forced to abandon its dictatorship and a democratic reform was realized without bloodshed. Bulgaria joined NATO in 2004 and EU in 2007, respectively.

Ms. Markova showed us a slide of a red star pinnacle which used to be seen on the roof top of the Bulgarian national parliament building during the Communist Party regime. It gave way to the three-color national flag after the political reform. She also referred to private hardships that her family experienced under the Communist regime. Her grandfather was murdered by the party and all

of her father's family members were treated as traitors. Major problems Bulgaria faces today include low GDP per capita, low economic growth and high unemployment rate.

## **2. The "Green" symbolizes nature.**

The climate, animals and plants in Bulgaria are similar to those in Japan because the two countries are located at almost the same latitude. In terms of the number of natural hot springs per land area, Bulgaria ranks No.3 in the world. People generally spend 3~4 weeks at hot springs for health recovery.

The country has four seasons and more than 2 million tourists visit Bulgaria annually from abroad, with a peak in the summer season. The Rose Festival also attracts foreigners, especially Japanese tourists (about 10,000 a year). Bulgaria has no rainy season and humidity is generally low throughout the year. This is why the country produces good wine. One of the most popular sightseeing spots is Sreburna Reserve, a lake near the Donau. It is a world natural heritage.

## **3. The "Red" symbolizes courage and history.**

Bulgaria was originally founded by the former Bulgarian (Mongolian) and the Slavs. It has a history of about 1350 years. Before the former Bulgarian migrated to today's Bulgaria, the Thracian culture had been flourishing there. So the Bulgarian people today partly inherit Thracian blood.

Ms. Markova showed us additional color slides, introducing the amphitheater, Madara Horseman, Rila monastery, Boyana church, Bulgarian orthodox Christian church, and unique frescos in a church, among others, on top of several world heritage sites. Bulgaria boasts of its No.1 position in the Balkans in terms of the number of the UNESCO world heritages. The lecture moved on to the next theme.

## **"Rediscovery of Bulgarian tradition".**

### **1. Food culture**

Is yogurt good for our health? A Russian once made a field survey in Bulgaria to prove its correlation with longevity. From time to time people see a honeymoon baby from a man at the age of 80. Fungi of yogurt remains alive even after being gulped into the bowels. Bulgarians love sour liquid yogurt without putting any sugar. Ms. Markova made Bulgarian yogurt on the spot and served us to try the taste.

The staple food in Bulgaria is bread. Fish and shellfish such as carp, trout, mussel, etc. are usually served spicy with herb. She generously let us taste a rice cookie topped with "Chubritsa," which is used in many dishes in Bulgaria. She told us that Chubritsa is available in Japan, too. In the selection of Bulgarian wine, Ms. Markova recommended Rakiya (distilled liquor made from grapes) in addition to usual Bulgarian white and red wines.

Why are there so many vegetable dishes in Bulgaria? It's because people still keep the tradition of a fast. Under the religious discipline of the Bulgarian Orthodox, people are expected to eat only vegetables for nearly 200 days each year. They do not drink alcohol during the fast just before the Easter. The fast tradition has been put aside by many people since a long time ago, but its merits for health are reconsidered nowadays.

### **2. Strange festivals**

The Bulgarians have a traditional rite on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March each year to welcome the spring. That's when people wear Martenitsa (a good-luck charm for health) in white and red on their body. The first Sunday of the fast is called "Day of Forgiveness" and everyone goes to church on that Sunday. This Sunday falls on the 48th day before the Easter. Everybody forgives others. Ms. Markova regards it as a very good custom.

The 14<sup>th</sup> of February is the day to feed the vine with wine. They pour wine onto the trees in the vineyard. The "Rose harvest" is a festival which lasts the first 3 weeks of June. It originated in the region close to the rose valley, where countless rose gardens are concentrated stretching as far as over 100km long. You can scent the sweet smell of roses anywhere around the region. Ms. Markova appeared in this workshop, clad in traditional Bulgarian clothes for the rose festival (as shown in the photo on Page 14)

(To be continued on Page 17)

# Let's not have a grudge against heaven!

Dr. Kimitada Miwa, Honorable President, MUA

After being overwhelmed with the TV scenes of the merciless natural disaster which hit Tohoku, I could not think of any words to say to the victimized people. Although words fail me, I do have magma inside me which wants to be expressed in words.

Akira Yoshimura, a renowned writer, made the following warning in an article titled “Rekishu wa kurikaesu” or history repeats itself. He wrote it after the Hanshin Awaji Great Earthquake had hit Kansai area in 1995:



Following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, Torahiko Terada and other expert scholars researched the whole scale of the disaster, along with major causes, and compiled their findings into a report. The death toll was 68,660 (corrected to 105,000 in 2006) but they could not find any reliable information concerning the number of refugees. It took four days before the Tokyo Nichi-Nichi Shimbun recovered its function as the first among mass media. Rumors arose about the emergence of revolts by resident Koreans and it resulted in tragic homicide by lynchings. Earthquake victims perished under the collapse of houses as well as in fires which broke out at 136 locations.

We were taught that these fires originated in kitchens because the earthquake hit around noon time when housewives were cooking. People learned a lesson from this experience – When an earthquake hits, distinguish fire first. However, the said disaster report unveiled a fact that there were more serious origins of fire elsewhere. According to Dr. Seiji Nakamura who wrote the chapter of fires in the report, there were cases where chemicals for medication, stored on shelves at schools, testing & research laboratories, manufacturing plants and factories, hospitals and pharmacies, fell on the floor and were chemically mixed, thereby igniting fires. This happened at 44 locations, including 17 school facilities such as the medical faculty of Tokyo University. Those fires spread to furniture, being carried away on wheel carts by refugees, and caused flames on streets.

We should have learned a precious lesson from this experience. The disaster report was initially distributed free of charge. Later the Iwanami Shoten publisher reprinted it for sale. However, to our great regret and disappointment, this valuable report has not been used or taken notice of by disaster prevention specialists. The sheer fact that fires broke out again due to chemicals for medication during the Hanshin-Awaji Great Earthquake 16 years ago demonstrates how forgetful and negligent we had been about the critical lesson. The latest East Japan Great Earthquake was no exception. A fire broke out at Tohoku University because of mixture of chemical substances, apart from the fires caused by the devastating Tsunami.

Right after the Kanto Great Earthquake, Eiichi Shibusawa described the disaster as “Tenchu” or punishment from heaven. People in those days accepted this expression. However, when Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara described the latest disaster as “Tenbatsu,” which means the same thing, it invited controversies. Comments from overseas were generally favorable, often with admiration for the orderly and controlled attitude of the affected people. Foreigners recognized strength for hope rather than despair among the Japanese. What can be the origin of such mentality shared by the Japanese? Decades ago, George Sansom found a clue to such mentality in Japan’s



Shinto prayers.

The Japanese have been exposed to natural disasters inherent to their country. Still they have maintained an attitude of love and thankfulness toward Mother Nature. Why so? He concluded that it's because Japanese ancestors used to live in regions under a much more rigorous natural environment, such as freezing cold Siberia, before they relocated to an island country with a mild and beautiful nature. Perhaps this is why Japanese have nurtured a mental capacity to accept the concept of punishment from heaven and always revived their respect to nature. I sincerely hope that we will put into preventive actions whatever lessons we have learned from the tragic natural disaster.

I saw a televised scene of a graduation ceremony which was held at a junior high school in Kesen-numa, a city which was devastated by the latest disaster. A graduating student gave a farewell speech and concluded, "Nevertheless, let's not have a grudge against heaven." These words touched the chord of my heart and I could not help becoming emotional. I trust that this mentality of our people will never fail to bring about a hopeful tomorrow. (May 25, 2011)

*(Translated by S. Tanahashi, VP, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

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**(Continued from Page 15) : My Mother Country - Bulgaria**

### **3. Roses in daily life**

For what purpose do people use such an enormous amount of roses? Well, they simply want to enjoy the scent. Their admiration for the beauty of roses is secondary. Mr. Markova let us enjoy the smell of "Damask rose" during the presentation. According to her, some people in Bulgaria put rose water on their skin to enjoy the good smell while some even drink it. Other popular products made from roses are rose oil, rose jam, rose juice, and rose liquor.

### **4. Bulgarian folk song**

The wonderful presentation was concluded by a sing-along of a Bulgarian folk song, titled "Katerino Mome" in Bulgarian, under the direction of Ms. Markova. The song went "Katerina, why are you so pretty?"

At the end of her presentation, Ms. Markova expressed her wish to play a continued role to promote even more friendly relations between Bulgaria and Japan while she resides here in Japan. All of the attendees responded with hearty thanks for Katerina-san for her most interesting lecture and elaborate preparations.

*(Written by S. Yamada, the Cross-cultural Awareness Committee, and translated by T. Mizuno, Standing Director, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

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### **Donations:**

Our whole-hearted thanks go to the following donors:

- Participants in the Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop on Bulgaria**, held on March 4, 2011, who contributed a total of ¥2,350 for MUA's co-action activity to help the Mindanao Children's Library,
- 43 MUA members** who contributed a total of ¥420,000 for an education support program, addressing children who have suffered from damages & losses by the East Japan Great Earthquake which hit the Tohoku region. MUA added ¥80,000 to this amount from its own financial reserve and donated ¥500,000 to the said program through National Federation of UNESCO Association in Japan in April 2011.

## Join the MUA English conversation classes and experience a lively and thriving time!

Today it's rare that we don't see foreigners during the course of our daily activities, isn't it? Especially so in Minato City where about 21,000 foreigners live, accounting for over ten percent of the City's total population.



It is back in September 1983 when MUA started its English conversation classes. The mission was to promote mutual understanding further between the class participants and foreigner residents in Minato City. The classes have undergone ups & downs along the 28-year history but still maintain the original mission spirit. Capitalizing on MUA's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we would like to strengthen and enrich the linguistic activities further.

The accumulated total number of students who have studied in both Basic and Intermediary Classes, including those currently enrolled, add up to 1,900. We have received positive feedback from the students, saying that English conversation skill they acquired in the classes has turned out to be very useful in their work, hobbies, academic activities, as well as in overseas group tours organized by fellow students.

Incidentally, romance has also emerged in one of the classes and developed into a happy marriage. Participants have often organized extracurricular gatherings voluntarily, such as Yakiniku Party, where they intentionally spoke only English as a way of practical training. From time to time they invited Mr. Murdock, their instructor, to booze parties and had a great fun.

Isn't it nice that people, who speak different languages in ordinary life, can communicate their thoughts and opinions to one another, by using English as the common language?

Mr. Murdock has a very cheerful and positive personality along with a good sense of humor. Come and join MUA English conversation classes and learn from an enthusiastic teacher. There isn't any placement test so you can go directly into the class of your choice. In the beginning, there may be a moment when you feel "It's all Greek to me," but don't give up. If you keep saying to yourself "Rome was not built in a day" or "Make haste slowly," it won't be long before your tireless continued efforts will bear fruit and you'll find yourself speaking English better.

### **Expand your English horizon at Minato UNESCO**

	Basic	Intermediary
Date & Time	Total of 14 Wednesday's April 20 – August 17	Total of 14 Tuesday's April 19 – August 9
Place	Azabu Kumin Center(Roppongi)	Gender Equality Center (Tamachi)
Instructor	Mr.Mark Murdock (American national)	
Fee	¥22,000 for MUA members, ¥24,000 for non-MUA members	
Application & Inquiry	MUA Secretariat Office: Tel & Fax (03) 3434-2233 Open 10:30am – 5:30pm (Tuesday through Friday)	

*(Written by M. Tomogane, Standing Director, the Foreign Language Study Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, VP, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

## The 28<sup>th</sup> Diplomats Lecture Future of Japan's International Cooperation

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011

Place: International House of Japan

Our speaker for this annual event was Mr. Shiro Sadoshima, Director General, International Cooperation Bureau, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As usual, diplomats from different foreign embassies located in Tokyo were invited and a total of 57 diplomats, including 12 ambassadors, attended this lecture.



After President Takai of MUA gave a welcome speech, Mr. Matsumoto, MUA Vice President, introduced briefly the diplomatic career of Mr. Sadoshima. He joined MOFA in 1977, assumed different positions at Japanese embassies located in several foreign countries, and was most recently Vice President at Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Mr. Sadoshima started his lecture, saying "During the period of its restoration following the end of WWII, Japan received economic aids from the international community. It was in 1990 when Japan finally completed the repayment of its debt." His lecture centered around the ODA activities which the Japanese government has enthusiastically promoted in the field of international cooperation.

Interesting and beneficial episodes were also introduced throughout the lecture. In conclusion, Mr. Sadoshima emphasized the importance of MOFA's partnership with the private sector in promoting Japan's international economic cooperation in the future.

During the Q&A session, Mr. Sadoshima responded to different questions raised from six ambassadors. It demonstrated the keen interest shared among the audience in Japan's future policy in international cooperation.

*(Written by Y. Miyashita, Standing Director, the Science & Culture Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, Vice President, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

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### "Voices from Our Readers"

Dear Minato UNESCO Association,

I make reference to your Bulletin dated 17 November 2010, which carried a presentation by Mr. Jinichi Matsumoto. My particular focus is on Mr. Matsumoto's analysis of developments in Zimbabwe. It is clearly evident that Mr. Matsumoto's presentation and facts about Zimbabwe were based on "hearsay and speculative" evidence and am very concerned that your members left the meeting with an inaccurate picture of Zimbabwe, particularly the President His Excellency, R.G Mugabe. Your readers of the Bulletin will equally be misled by the assertions made and this in our view is unfair to both your members and Zimbabwe.

Gibson Chamboko, Counselor  
The Embassy of Zimbabwe

**Remarks from the editorial office:** The viewpoints about Zimbabwe and African countries in general, which were included in the referenced article, are those of Mr. J. Matsumoto's as a journalist. Such viewpoints do not reflect in any way the Minato UNESCO Association's viewpoints. The opinions expressed above by Counselor Chamboko are the views on behalf of the Embassy of Zimbabwe in Japan.

# The 2011 MUA General Assembly

Date: Wednesday, April 27, 2011

Place: Minato City Lifelong Learning Center

The 2011 General Assembly of MUA was held on the evening of Wednesday, April 27. There was no attraction following the main business this year, considering the tragic aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami which hit the northeastern Pacific coast of Japan's main island. A total of 48 MUA members and guests attended the meeting, which is close to the numbers recorded in the past years. Among the guests were Mayor Masaaki Takei (photo) and key personnel from the Minato City Education Board, representing Minato City which has continued to support MUA activities in the form of annual subsidy.



Ms. Takai, MUA President, gave an opening address before we went into the presentation of the day's agenda. She talked about her experience during the past one year as MUA's new president succeeding Dr. Miwa, and expressed her wish for success during the coming year when MUA would mark its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the end of her speech, Ms. Takai explained how MUA would like to extend committed co-action support for the reconstruction of communities which were devastated by the earthquake and tsunami.

In his speech as an invited guest, Mayor Takei expressed his appreciation for MUA's past activities, which have focused on international exchanges in Minato City, and also congratulated MUA on its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Mayor Takei characterized Minato City as an "International Community," which accommodates many foreign residents, accounting for about 10 percent of its total population, as well as 79 foreign embassies. He also reported that much support and donations were offered from overseas to help victimized people in the Tohoku region. He added that Minato City would step up its preventive and risk management measures against future disasters.

After Ms. Takai was elected as today's chairperson, the agenda presentation proceeded item by item. All the agenda received unanimous endorsement by the attendees. Finally, Mr. Shimizu, MUA Vice President, gave a closing speech and wrapped up the MUA General Assembly of 2011.

*(Written and translated by T. Mizuno, Standing Director, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)*

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## Coming MUA Events at a Glance

<u>Date &amp; Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Program</u>
10/2 (Sun) whole day	Mt. Fuji area	One-day Bus Tour
10/12 (Wed) 18:30~20:30	Baloon #305	Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop on "India"
11/19 (Sat) Afternoon	Takanawa Civic Center	MUA 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event "World Music & Dances"

Minato UNESCO Association is a citizens' voluntary membership organization that promotes Japanese traditional culture, holds cross-cultural workshops and presents multicultural events and international symposia for world peace. For any questions or comments about our articles, please contact our secretariat office at:

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