



MINATO

みなとユネスコ 会報

Bulletin

MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

ISSUED BY/MINATO UNESCO ASSN. 16-3,SHIMBASHI 3-CHOME MINATO-KU TOKYO 105-0004/HIROSHI NAGANO PRES.
発行所/港ユネスコ協会 〒105-0004 東京都港区新橋3-16-3 Tel: 03-3434-2300 Fax: 03-3434-2233 発行人/ 田部葵一郎
Mail:m-info@minatounesco.jp https://minato-unesco.jp

No.175: June 1, 2024

Sister city exchanges started again after the pandemic calmed down

TANAHASHI Seiichi, Auditor, the Minato UNESCO Association



Last year, Hino, a western Tokyo suburb where I live, observed the 60th anniversary of its sister city relationship with Redlands, California, located to the east of Los Angeles. The core of the relationship has been the mutual two-week home-stay accommodation of high school students. This program has been maintained since 1986 by the Hino-Redlands Sister Cities Association and the counterpart organization in Redlands. However, the program has been suspended since 2019 due to the unprecedented negative impact from the pandemic.

Fortunately, the pandemic calmed down toward the end of 2022. The sister cities associations in both cities agreed to resume the student exchange program in 2023. Thus, Hino accepted 10 students from Redlands in the spring of 2023, and Redlands accepted as many Hino students a few months later in summer. Enthusiasm in both cities enabled exceptional two-way exchanges within a single calendar year.

In addition, Redlands Mayor Tejeda's delegation visited Hino in November 2023, to join the ceremony held on the Day of Culture to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Hino's city incorporation. Although the delegation's stay was short, they paid a protocol visit to Hino Mayor Otsubo, followed by visits to historical and cultural facilities & landmarks, a fire station, and a most advanced garbage incineration system. In addition, the delegation visited central Tokyo districts as well as the foot of Mt. Fuji, thereby gaining a quick overview of Japan today.

I trust that most of our readers are familiar with sister city exchanges. It originated in 1956 from the PTPI (People to People Initiative) program advocated by Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 14th President of the U. S. The program's mission statement includes the following phrases: "to create direct connection between individuals across national boundaries, transcending political and ideological differences," and "by promoting cultural exchange, mutual understanding, and goodwill." I feel that the expressed objectives, which aspire world peace based on grassroots citizen interactions, has much in common with the UNESCO spirit.

The PTPI started initially as a part of the U. S. city federation program. In 1967, it became independent as a non-profit organization, and was renamed the Sister Cities International and headquartered in Washington, D. C.

Let me explain briefly how the high school student exchanges between Hino and Redlands are implemented. Redlands students visit Hino in late March, capitalizing on their spring break. As a part of their preparations to visit Hino, the students as a group regularly engage in fundraising efforts such as car washing or garage sale. The local citizens cooperate with the student activities, thereby enabling them to work out proceeds to help with their travel expenses. We highly respect their self-help spirit nurtured in American culture.

(To be continued on P. 18)

Japanese Language Still Used in Palau ~ Language as Reminder of Japanese Reign and as Cultural Resource

IMAMURA Keisuke, Associate Professor at
Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology

Time & Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 (18:30~20:30)
Venue: Study Space C, Minato City LIBRA Hall
Sponsor: Minato UNESCO Association (MUA)
Co-sponsor: Minato City Board of Education
Supported by: Embassy of the Republic of Palau in Japan



First, Mr. NAGANO Hiroshi, adviser of MUA (left), introduced Mr. IMAMURA, today's speaker, to the floor. This was followed by a greeting by Christian Etpison Nicolescu (Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Palau in Japan), a brief introduction of Palau by SHIBAMURA Takeshi, and a presentation by Professor IMAMURA.

Mr. Shibamura (Representative of Japan Office, Palau Visitors Authority)

Palau is located 3,000km in the southern direction from Japan, with no time difference. Before the onset of the novel coronavirus, Japanese travelers could hop on the Japan Air Line charter flight and land in Palau in four and half hours. Today, however, there is no direct flight and tourists have to travel via Guam or Taipei. Palau is a small island country, made up of 586 islets, and only 9 of them are inhabited by people of about 20,000. Official languages are English and Palauan, and its currency is US dollar. Its area is as large as Yakushima Island and there are 16 administrative districts. Palau is a pro-Japanese country.

In recent years, Palau is known for its high consciousness about environmental issues. Peleliu Island and Angaur Island were the battle fields where Japan and the US fought during the World War II. In 2012, "Rock Islands and Southern Lagoon" was registered as UNESCO World Heritage Mixed Sites. Featuring Milky Way, Jellyfish Lake and others, which are exclusive to Palau, the country is attracting many foreign tourists from Japan and others.

IMAMURA Keisuke (Associate Professor at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology)

① Japanese occupation of Palau

As Empire of Japan expanded its territory, the South Sea Islands came under the Japanese rule. During the period 1914 through 1945, nearly total area of Micronesia came under the Japanese rule.

Palau was the center of the Japanese command, for the Territorial Government of South Seas was located in Palau.

In Koror Island, the Japanese residents came to occupy 80% of the population at one time. This could be the reason for the rapidly spreading Japanese lifestyle.

Students were forced to memorize Japanese words at the exclusively-Palauan public schools. Thus, the Japanese language use got around very quickly.

Mandatory Rule

With the start of the World War 1, Japan took away Micronesia from Germany.

In 1920, League of Nations officially granted the whole Micronesia including Palau to be governed by Japan. Later, Japan withdrew from League of Nations.



Population of Japan in South Seas

Saipan, Palau, Yap, Truk Islands, and Marshall: Degree of development depended on each island. In Micronesia, the largest number of Japanese immigrants flocked to Saipan where the sugar industry developed remarkably. The second largest group was residents of Palau, and even today we can see the lingering influence of Japan here.

Education at elementary school

Both Palauan and Japanese children attended the same school at first. Gradually they parted ways, however: Children of Micronesia were enrolled in Ko-elementary school, while Japanese children attended elementary school. The major subject was Japanese language.

Enrollment ratio (1930): Saipan (82.32%), Palau (93.61%), Truk (31.21%), and Ponape (91.61)

② Japanese impact still seen in Palau

Enrollment ratio was particularly high at Ko-elementary school in Palau, where acquiring basics of Japanese language was a must. Operational skills were improved further under the “Exercise System”, which made children visit Japanese families to help out with chores. As a result, Japanese impacts are found in many things such as children’s play, sports, names, food culture, language and music. Baseball is almost regarded as national sports, and Japanese baseball words are still being used.

The generation who has experienced Japanese rule

Regardless of Japanese or non-Japanese, this generation of people often copied names of Japanese acquaintances. For example, Sato-san (I spoke with him and found out he can communicate perfectly, although he insisted: “I have never spoken Japanese after the war.”)

Kingzio-san (Okinawan Palauan. After the war, he has been working at a duty-free shop and dealt with Japanese customers. He speaks fluent Japanese.)

Japanese names found in the telephone book in Palau

Total number of names: 3,576 (in 2010)

Japanese names (Family or/and given): 703 or 19.65%

About 20% of residents have Japanese names (family or/and given)

Why there are so many Japanese family names in Palau?

① The use of surname became widespread under the Japanese rule. Residents who had no family names but were urged to register names for school and family register, adopted the acquaintances’ names. They didn’t change these names even after the end of war, possibly because of pro-Japanese atmosphere.

② Tendency to accept external influence

While Palau people adopted Japanese names under the Japanese rule, they switched to English names under the U.S. rule. Japanese names are decreasing, but still remain in a small number.

③ Relative’s name is adopted by habit

Children are sometimes named after their grandmother. This is why Japanese names are found in 10% of the population.

Impact of Japanese food culture in Palau

The super market sells ARARE, BENTO and RAMEN. Originating from the pre-war days and still popular today is TAMA (fried bread). Home-made KARINTONG is no longer found in Japan, but survives in Palau.

Use of Katakana

Residents learned Katakana under the Japanese rule.

They write in Katakana when writing letters and journals.

When election voting, voters can choose from Alphabet or Katakana. This is out of consideration for the elderly citizens, and is another example of Japanese influence over Palauan language.

Influence of Palauan language found in Japanese culture

In the 1950s in Saipan, a young man from Palau taught “Lemon Bayashi”, “Oyado no Tameni” and “Palau 5 Chome” to a person from Ogasawara. These songs were conveyed to Ogasawara and are registered by Tokyo Metropolitan government as intangible cultural property.

Japanese language found in Angaur State (Island)

For about a decade from 1945, 300 Japanese workers were brought to the Angaur Island for phosphate rock mining. This is why the Japanese language was used, although in limited regions, among the generation born after the end of the World War II.

Official languages as provided by the Angaur Constitution

In Angaur State, Japanese language is stipulated as official language by the Constitution. This is the only place in the world where Japanese language is given such an honorable position.

Official language of Angaur is Palauan, English and Japanese.

In Angaur, speaking Japanese was quite normal in those days and thus the Constitutional decision was made without hesitation. Today, although not many people speak Japanese, the Constitution remains intact.

Japanese loan words in Palauan

Before the War, more than 1,000 Japanese words and expressions came into Palauan. They found their way in a variety of areas including fauna and flora, nature, places, name of places, household items, food, eating habit, school, exercise and sport, playing, entertainment, medical care, hygiene, clothes, beauty care and commerce. We can see the Japanese language had a major influence.

The number of Japanese loan words in Micronesia (Top ten languages)

Palauan (1,201 words), Chuukese (538), Ponape (412) ... Chamorro (196), Marshall (188)

The largest number of Japanese loan words are found in Palauan language.

Examples of Japanese loan words

Custom (Siukang): funeral customs

Inspection (Kensa): In those days, hygiene was a new concept in Palau, thus the door was open for the Japanese words.

Election (Senkyo): The word found its way when the election system was newly introduced. Also Candidate (Kohoshia) and Telephone (Dengua)

■ Making use of language as cultural resource

Cultural resource is defined as precious materials as a whole which could be key to understanding society and culture of a certain period (The Society for Cultural Resource Studies 2002). Since Japanese loan words in Palauan could be cultural resource, I put together “A Dictionary of Japanese Loan Words in Palauan”.

Only preserving cultural resource is not good enough; Boosting the use of such resource is advisable.

“A Dictionary of Japanese Loan Words in Palauan”

Worked jointly with Palau Language Commission,

Recorded over 1,000 Japanese loan words,

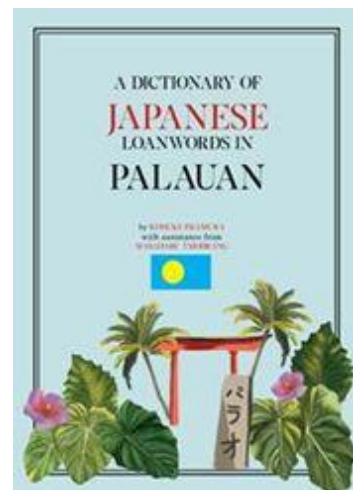
Included examples of how to use the dictionary in school education, and

Printed 500 copies and donated them to Palauan schools through the ministry of education.

How to use the Dictionary in education

Students can learn the Japanese influence seen today in Palau through the loan words.

The dictionary will not only visualize Japanese influence in Palau. It will promote the use of dictionary and deepen knowledge of Palauan language, thereby allowing pupils to rediscover relationship between Palau and Japan.



■ Activities of the Embassy

Palauan Embassies and Consulates General across the world are conducting meticulous operations, as part of their diplomatic activities, to introduce Japanese culture, with an aim to deepen understanding of Japan and nurture pro-Japanese sentiment. They make good use of the study on Japanese loan words in Palauan.

Effort to let more people know about Japan

Animation and other subculture are bridging the two countries together, but historical connection seems more effective in strengthening the bond. This is why the Embassy of Palau tries to share the history of the two countries by sponsoring an essay contest using Japanese loan words and others.

Effort to let more Japanese people know about Palau

Produced a video of 25th Anniversary of Palau-Japan Diplomatic Ties (which referred to Japanese loan words in Palau): This video was distributed by YouTube, with 380,000 views (as of May, 2023). The Embassy will actively make use of Facebook and Twitter.

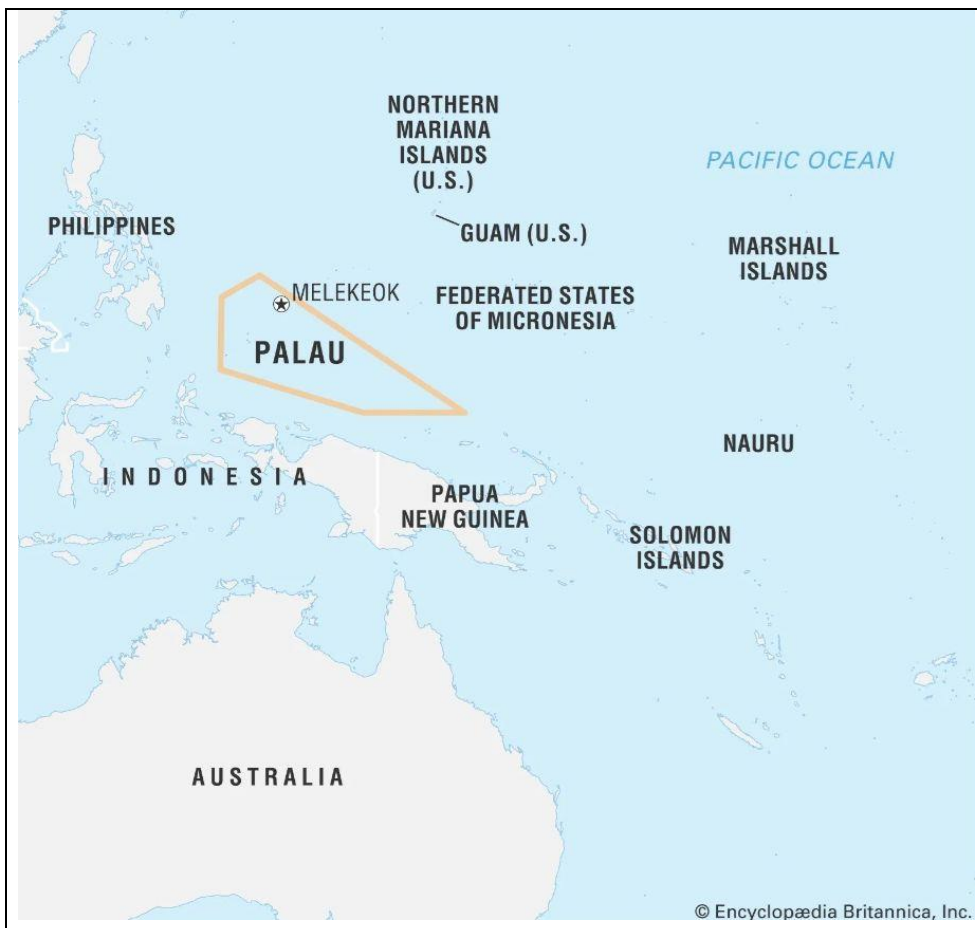


Minister-Counsellor Etpison

In the last Question and Answer session, a Japanese person who has visited Palau before made friendly remarks from the floor, thus wrapping up the gathering in a relaxed atmosphere.

(Written by SATO Ritsuko, International Science and Culture Committee, Translated by MIYASHITA Yukari, the PR & Bulletin Committee)

Location of Palau in the South Pacific



The Third 2023 Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop
"Feel the Wind of Italian Opera"
~ Lecture Concert by Active Opera Singer and Pianist ~

Lecturer: Mr. WATANABE Dai, Tenor Opera Singer
Ms. KUBOTA Midori, Pianist

Date and Time: Sunday, October 29th, 2023, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Venue: Minato City LIBRA Hall

[Part 1 - Trends and Vocal Techniques in Italian Opera]

• Introduction to Opera

Opera is a musical play that uses singing to portray the dialogue of a theatrical performance, and the late 16th century, a movement began in Florence, Italy to revive Greek drama. It was performed in a Greek theater with a mortar-shaped roofless design, carefully calculated to optimize sound acoustics. Musical instruments and playing styles have changed over the years.



Ms.Kubota

• Making of Opera

An original work serves as a basis for an opera. It is a comprehensive art that uses the wisdom of all theater to put a work of fiction to music. It involves a writer of the script, and a composer who creates the music. For example, in the case of "Aida," Mariette, an archaeologist, created the original story. Camille du Locle wrote the original script (in French). Verdi gave instructions to the scriptwriter, Antonio Ghislanzoni, to create a rhyming script in Italian, and Verdi composed the music.

• Opera Performers

Performers in an opera include conductors, orchestras, singers, and dancers, as well as directors, assistant directors, and prompters. On stage, there are responsible individuals for lighting, costumes, and art designers, as well as sets and props departments, producers, stage managers, staff, makeup artists, and hairstylists. All of these contribute to the creation of an opera.

• Baroque Era

During the era without tenor singers, castrated singers who produced high-pitched and highly skilled vocal technique called castrato were active. It also utilized music like dialogue called recitatives, advancing the story before the solo performance.

♪ From Handel's "Rinaldo," "Please Make Me Cry," 1711

• Mozart's Era

The era popularized the ensemble opera, and comedies called opera buffa emerged from opera seria created for kings which costed a fortune. It was said that opera buffa was for the general public. Furthermore, the genius scriptwriter, Da Ponte, appeared, creating fascinating human dramas.

♪ From Mozart's "Così fan tutte," "Breeze of Love," 1790

• Bel Canto Era of Superhuman Vocal Techniques

An era when tenors could escape from castrato and vocal technology continued to develop to produce high-pitched sounds. This era's techniques include the cavatina-cabaletta style, in which multiple songs are merged into a single scene (in two to three parts), and the agility-based arpeggio phrasing.

♪ From "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini, "Smiling Sky," 1816

♪ From "The Puritans" by Bellini, "Oh, lovely maiden," 1835

• Melodious Wizard, Puccini

Puccini composed numerous hit operas. During the time of his compositions, there were changes in orchestration that involved many instruments played by great numbers. The methods of vocal music using different frequencies from those commonly used by orchestras also changed, allowing small voices to be heard at a distance.

♪ Puccini's "Tosca," "The Stars are Shining," 1900

[Part 2 - Let's Read and Sing Opera Lyrics]

♪ Verdi's "Nabucco," "Go, My Thoughts, on Golden Wings"

- Opera is written in poetry

As it was mentioned at the beginning, the opera is created from poetry. The rhythm and words of the opera are turned into "rhyme" in an effective way. "Nabucco" is a story from the Old Testament, and it is said to be Italy's second national anthem, a highly emotional song for the Italians, which is played at soccer matches and competitions.

- How to Read Opera Lyrics

This poem consists of ten syllables per line, with the last part becoming a "rhyme." Similar to reading a sutra, try reading it one syllable at a time. I recited the poem together with the participants at the venue.

Va, pen-sie-ro , sul-l'ali do-ra-te;
va, ti po-sa sui cli-vi, sui col-li,
o-ve^o-lez-za-no te-pi-de^e mol-li
l'au-re dol-ci del suo-lo na-tal!

Go, my thoughts, on wings of gold
Resting upon hills and mountains
Where warm and gentle breezes
Blow on native land's sweet scents!

- Chorus

With the accompanying piano, everyone in the audience sang the poem.

Q&A Session After the Lecture:

Q: Are there any operas in Japanese or English?

A: In Japanese, there are works such as "Yu-Zuru" by DAN Ikuma. In English, there are compositions such as "Candide" by Leonard Bernstein.

Q: What is your recommended opera for first-time viewers?

A: "La Traviata" by Verdi is recommended.

Q: Do all vocalists aspire to become opera singers?

A: Not only opera singers but also musical singers and religious music soloists.

Q: What is your favorite opera?

A: There are various but "La Traviata" and "The Marriage of Figaro" are among them.

Q: Do opera singers use microphones?

A: In principle, they do not use them. However, in large theaters, microphones may be used for dialogue parts.

Q: What is the difference between opera and operetta?

A: In Italy, there is no operetta and all operas are made up of singing. On the other hand, operettas have lines and offer plenty of waltzes and dances, making it easy to enjoy in a relaxing manner. One of the most representative works of operetta is "Die Fledermaus" composed by Johann Strauss II.

(Written by UMENE K., Chairperson of the International Science and Culture Committee, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)



Mr. Watanabe



International Winter Party

Date and Time: Sunday, December 3, 2023 (5:30pm to 8:30pm)
Venue: Akasaka Civic Center Multipurpose Room



The "International Winter Party" was held as the event for the year 2023 by the Youth Activities Committee. This event was created as an opportunity for people of all generations to gather and enjoy themselves, not just young people but also older ones, and to learn about UNESCO activities. It was the first event organized by the youth activity committee and was the embodiment of the passionate feelings of Standing Director Ms. Furuichi to provide an opportunity for people to learn about UNESCO activities by gathering and enjoying themselves.

At first, there was some anxiety about the event being the first of its kind and what to do if it turned out to be a failure, but Mr. KODAMA Susumu, who had been appointed as the chairperson of the Youth Activity Committee since this year and has had a long-standing relationship with Ms. Furuichi both personally and professionally in his position as a general manager of a major listed company, had a strong belief that if they collaborated and planned the event together, they could surely make it a success.

From the planning stages to the day of the event:

Based on the initial budget, we held online meetings regularly, at least once a month or more. Although some people might think that having monthly and regular meetings is a burden, creating an event that could please all participants through teamwork had a great sense of accomplishment. Teamwork is essential in making the planning a success. Taking into consideration various opinions towards the same objective might cause some difficulty, however, the sense of fulfillment is rewarding.

The main contents of the event that was finally put together for the day of the event were as follows:

- 5:00 pm - Reception begins (while jazz music (CD) is playing)
- 5:30 pm - Opening speech by Mr. Tanabe, the President of MUA
- 5:40 pm - Part One starts: Christmas Song Performance by a University Choir
- 5:55 pm - Magic Show by University of Tokyo Magic Lovers' Association
- 6:25 pm - Quiz (including questions related to UNESCO)
- 6:55 pm - Part Two starts: Christmas Jazz Concert
(Bass: Mr. KAWAKAMI Osamu, Piano: Ms. NISHIDA Nozomi, Singer: Ms. ISHIII Kumiko)
- 7:55 pm - THE Dance Night
- 8:25 pm - Briefing on activities and membership of MUA
- Closing speech by Mr. Tanabe, the President of MUA

On the day of the "International Winter Party," we had many people who applied, and the event was crowded with people who enjoyed the fruits of our hard work while producing the plan. However, we regret that we had to refuse many people who wanted to participate due to the surge in applications.

The fully packed event began with the opening speech by Mr. Tanabe, the President of MUA. It started with a performance by a university choir singing Christmas songs, which received applause and cheers for its heartwarming singing and performance, followed by a magic show by the University of Tokyo Magic Lovers' Association that was full of laughter and humor, and a quiz competition held in the form of participation by everyone, including questions related to UNESCO.



Part Two began with the Christmas Jazz Concert performed by professional musicians and singers - the performance of renowned musicians was stunning beyond our expectations. The singer's voice was also amazing.

The finale was "The Dance Night". We were concerned that this part might ruin all the excitement that had built up so far and was an opportunity to bring it all to a close. However, thanks to the cooperation of many, including Mr. NAGANO Hiroshi (President of Tokyo Council of UNESCO Associations, and the former President of MUA), the event was a great success with lively participation, mainly by young people.



A word from Director Ms.Furuichi:

The first International Winter Party was a great success. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who participated and supported us in achieving our long-held aspirations. Through this opportunity, we hope to create more opportunities and plan more International Winter Parties in the future, where people of all generations can meet and interact while having fun, for the sake of the development of MUA. We would like to ask for your continued support and cooperation.

A word from Chairperson Kodama:

I participated in MUA's first-ever event, "International Winter Party." The event was full of music, choral singing, magic, quizzes with prizes, dance parties, and other exciting activities, and we all had a great time. I hope it will become an annual event that will brighten up the end of the year. Tokyo Council of UNESCO Associations is currently implementing the "2000 People Project" and through not only promoting membership but also through enjoyable and fulfilling activities, we would like to increase the number of members who are interested in UNESCO activities. As members of MUA, we would like to continue creating opportunities for people of all ages to learn more about UNESCO activities through events like the International Winter Party. We would like to plan more events that are attractive and full of smiles that will encourage more young people to participate.

(Written by MINEO S, Vice President of MUA/Director of the Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

Donations to the Mindanao Children's Library

Date : November 16, 2023

Staff: Imamura, Isobe, Tagawa, Ishiai & Okumura

What is the Mindanao Children's Library?

The Mindanao Children's Library is a local corporation established in 2002 by MATSUI Tomo, on farmland at the foot of Mount Apo on the outskirts of Kidapawan City, located in the center of Mindanao Island in the Philippines.

The main activities are:

- (1) Storytelling to local children, including indigenous peoples, Muslims, and refugees.
- (2) Provide scholarship to students
- (3) Medical support
- (4) Support for the construction of nursery schools
- (5) Support for the environment of afforestation, etc.

Lead by students who receive the scholarships, young people and children who transcend religious and tribal differences learn and work while living together. These activities are supported by donations from Japan.

Every year, we discuss on the shipping date of the donations at the end of the Minato city Citizens' Festival. This year, we decided to ship them on November 16th. Having the cardboard boxes to be shipped, we packed the items from the bazar and donations from the Minato UNESCO members, in a friendly manner, imagining the smiles of our friends in Mindanao Children's Library.

On December 3rd, we heard the news from TV, that the earthquake of magnitude 7.7 had occurred in Mindanao. We prayed for the package would be arrived in safe. To our delight, we received an email to inform us that they received the package, with a photo of their happy smiles with the donated items in their hand. We are planning to ask what kind of products they need, before we prepare in next year, so we could make them happier.



(Written by OKUMURA K., Standing Director, and translated by KODAMA T, the PR & Internet Committee)

Hands-on Workshop of “IKEBANA,” Japanese Flower Arrangement

Date : November 18, 2023

Venue : Minato City life-long-learning Centre

Ikebana is said to have introduced from the custom of offering flowers to the Buddha. We invited Mr. NAKAMURA Masakazu, a researcher at the Ikenobo Central Training Institute, as a lecturer and held an Ikebana experience class, which was the first Ikebana experience event of the Minato UNESCO Association. On the day of the event, 29 people, including 5 foreigners, participated.

Contents

- Explanation of the history and philosophy of Ikebana
- Ikebana demonstration by the lecturer
- Ikebana experience

First of all, the lecturer, Mr. Nakamura, talked about the history and development of Ikebana, and explained that it is important to look at plants and trees as they are and have a sense of dignity for nature, and that they feel and cherish the beauty, not only of blooming flowers but also of even insect-eaten leaves and dead leaves. In the Ikebana demonstration that followed, he explained how to arrange the flowers.

The work was skillfully created with an explanation of the procedure and points, and all the participants watched intently. Following to it, the participants actually worked on Ikebana using the same flower material. "Even if you can use the same flowers, the work will never be the same," he said. Each participants put their own thoughts into creating a unique work.

As Mr. Nakamura holds Ikebana workshops overseas, the class was easy to understand and interesting not only for Japan but also for foreign participants. We had some comment from participants, such as, "It was very interesting and informative," "I definitely want to do again at home," "The perspective of creating a space was fresh," and "I'm really glad I participated." We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the enthusiastic participants and to Mr. Nakamura, for his guidance and advice on each and every one of the participants' works.



(Written by YOKOI A., the Hands-on Cultural Workshop Committee, and translated by KODAMA T., the PR & Internet Committee)

The 7th MUA Japanese-language Speech Contest

Date & Time: Sunday, December 10, 2023; 13:30 – 16:00
 Venue: Minato City Libra Hall

We had the pleasure of welcoming Minato City Mayor TAKEI Masaaki, and Board of Education Director URATA Mikio as honorable guests in this annual flagship event held by Minato UNESCO Association. There were a total of 13 speech contestants and we recorded a great turnout of interested audience. The event proceeded as follows:

1. Opening speech: (MC) TAGAWA Junko, Standing Director of MUA
2. Welcome Speech: MUA President TANABE Kiichiro (right photo)
3. Congratulatory Speech: Mayor Takei
4. Explanation of proceedings: Tagawa
5. Introduction of judges: Tagawa



Part I Speech Contest

The 13 contestants (their names shown below) spoke about different topics.

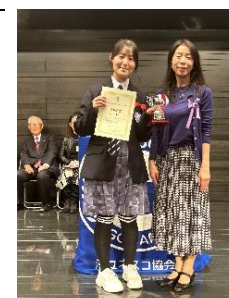
Part II Discussions among speakers and visitors



Under the leadership of Professor KOBAYASHI Akira of Tamagawa University, UNESCO Club students of the same university worked as facilitators of discussions at different groups. The discussion centered on “Difference between Japan and speakers’ mother countries,” “Episodes experienced in Japan,” and “Speakers’ wish for Japan.”

Part III Announcement of the result of judgement and award ceremony

Chief Judge SHIBUYA Megumi, professor at Meiji Gakuin University (right photo), announced the result of their judgement and the winners of different awards, as detailed in the list shown below. The photo (far right) shows Chief Judge Shibuya and the Grand Prix winner Kim.



<u>Awards</u>	<u>Recipients</u>	<u>Mother Country</u>
Grand Prix	Gyuri Kim	ROK
MUA President's	Hla Yamin Oo	Myanmar
Mayor's	Ganbold Oyuntungalag	Mongolia
Bd. of Ed. Director's	Aye Chan Ko	Myanma
Minato City Store Fed. Chair's	Wu Cheuk Hei	Hong Kong/China
Judges's	Linh Thi Tran	Vietnam
Merit	Pourva Pramod Ponkshe	India
Merit	Batsukh Altangerel	Mongolia
Merit	Nguen Thi Thanh	Vietnam
Merit	Tran Thi Bich	Vietnam
Merit	Thuzar Wai	Myanmar
Merit	Robert Edward Shiffer	USA
Merit	Dinler Cayda	Turkey
Audience's	Hla Yarmin Oo	Myanmar

A certificate of merit, along with either a cup or plaque, was presented to each winner. The speaker, who received the most votes from the audience, was awarded Wajima-lacquered chopsticks, in addi-

tion to the merit recognition.

Comments from the MC:

As in the past, we were honored to have Mayor Takei and Mr. Urata, Director of the Board of Education. The 13 speakers from eight different countries were chosen as contestants from among many applicants. I was truly impressed by the speech delivered by Grand Prix winner Gyuri Kim, who is a 9th grader in an international school. I could tell how her hands-on experience motivated her to acquire better understanding of human rights and international issues. It seems that whatever incidents she has witnessed in the life of different countries caused her to face more squarely the issues in front of her. As I was listening to her speech on the stage as MC, I was totally moved by her experience. It is no wonder that the judge panel felt likewise about her speech and gave the highest mark.

I felt personally that the level of Japanese proficiency among the contestants has risen each year, and that they demonstrate accumulated linguistic skills by using extensive vocabulary and complicated grammatical expressions. Taking this opportunity, I'd like to express my hearty thanks to the contestants, judges, audience and all MUA staff who made this event very successful again.



(Written by TAGAWA Junko, Chairperson, the Japanese-language Speech Contest Committee, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

I joined MUA's "Let's see Tokyo's forests, rivers and the sea" event

Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023

Sponsored by the Minato UNESCO Association

Co-sponsored by Minato City Board of Education; Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMST)

This year I participated again as an operating staff in MUA's "Let's see Tokyo's forests, rivers and the sea" event which has been one of the most popular programs MUA offers. This event was coordinated by Professor SASAKI Tsuyoshi of TUMST (Dept. of Ocean Policy & Culture, Faculty of Marine Science), along with TUMST students.

As detailed below, we surveyed the Tokyo Bay on a cruising ship in the morning, and in the afternoon, we enjoyed a long walking, starting from Hanazono Shrine in Shinjuku, through Waseda University and Mejirodai, to Edogawa Bashi. We were blessed with a fine weather, exceptionally warm for an early December weekend, and we could spend a pleasant time throughout the day.

Morning Session:

At 10 am, we got on board a cruising ship, owned by TUMST, and departed from Hinode Pier into the Tokyo Bay. When the ship came close to Tsukiji, TUMST students started their original quiz program which was happily joined by all onboard. Professor Sasaki told us interesting historical episodes about the transportation by sea and land in Tsukiji area. Participants enjoyed taking photos of bay-area scenes from the deck while also becoming aware of the historical changes in the area as symbolized by the latest appearance of "tower mansion" condominiums.



Afternoon Session:

We disembarked from the cruising ship and started a journey on land. First, we moved by train to Hanazono Shrine in Shinjuku. When we walked up to the "Shiki no Mori" area, Professor Sasaki explained that there used to be a river called "Kanda Gawa" in the district decades ago. We enjoyed similar historical discoveries along the way. We continued walking northward along the "Meiji Door" and finally reached the "Toyama Koen" park where we saw a 44.9 meter high "Hakone Yama," which is the highest mountain in Shinjuku City. We took a commemorative group photo at the mountain top.



When we reached the campus of Waseda University, we took a rest. Then we resumed walking toward "Komazuka Bashi" bridge, Sekiguchi-Basho-an, Chinzanso and finally to "Edogawa-bashi" bridge. Today's hands-on experiences in the forests, the rivers, and the sea taught us not only their geo-societal linkage in Tokyo but also how water has played a crucial role in citizens' life over the years.

(Written by KODAMA S, Chairperson of the Youth Activities Committee, and translated by TANAHASHI, the PR & Internet Committee)

The 2024 MUA New Year's Gathering

Date: Wednesday, January 2024

Venue: NEC Shiba Club (Mita, Minato City)

A total of 17 MUA members joined the annual event. In retrospect, the Year 2023 marked a new departure, characterized with pent-up energy, from the past years devastated by the pandemic. Fortunately, MUA's membership has grown and we have held a few welcome meetings for newcomers and facilitated their friendship with existing members. We recommended the newcomers to either participate in any of the activities held by different MUA committees or join any committee.

Mr. ISHII Yoshiaki undertook the role of MC during the gathering. At the very beginning of the event, we gave silent prayer to the victims of the 2024 Noto Peninsular Earthquake. After a round of self-introduction from all attendees as we helped ourselves to nice food & drink, a vibrant music & chorus session started, organized by Mr. SHIMIZU Gunji, an MUA Director. He has been known as a talented accordionist in Minato City. All of us enjoyed singing dear old songs with nostalgic melody.

At the end of the gathering, we took a commemorative group photo as usual. The event was wrapped up by a closing speech by Mr. Ishii. I sincerely hope that the gathering marked a successful kickoff of yet another fruitful year for MUA.



(Written by KOBAYASHI T., Vice President, and translated by TANAAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee).

Hands-on Workshop of “Cha-no-yu,” Japanese Tea Ceremony

Lecturer: MATSUMURA Muneyuki

Date : January 27th, 2024

Venue : Minato City Life-long-learning Centre

Contents:

1. Explanation of the history of tea
2. How to walk on tatami mats
3. How to greet on tatami mats
4. How to enjoy matcha tea

Fee : 1,000 yen

Name of macha : Toseinoshiro “sound of white waves” by Seisho-en

Name of sweets : “flower petals” mochi, made by Togu



We had 24 participants who live, work, and/or study in Minato City, including eight foreign nationals. The nationalities were Slovenia, Greece, Belgium, Mexico, etc., and their main place of work was the embassy. One ambassador from one country participated in the event.



All the participants listened attentively to the lecturer's talk, and tried to preparing tea, following the decent manner. It was not so easy but everyone seemed to be enjoyed the new experience of tea ceremony.

(Written by KASAHARA M., Standing Director, and translated by KODAMA T., the PR & Internet Committee)

World Cooking Workshop Chinese Medicinal Food

Date: Sunday, February 4, 2024

Venue: Minato Gender Equality Center Libra

Participants: 18 Minato citizens and 7 staffers

Ms. Yamaguchi, today's instructor, is a resident of Fukuoka, where she hosts a Chinese medicinal cooking class named "Mandarin Kitchen". With several international licenses, she teaches Chinese medicinal food and traditional medical science to many people on a daily basis. In response to passionate request from her admirers, Minato UNESCO Association has decided to hold Ms. Yamaguchi's third cooking workshop.

Since Ms. Yamaguchi wanted to convey the essence of Medicinal Food as well as how to practically cook dishes, we have arranged the program as follows: (1) Explain cooking procedure and actually cook → (2) Lecture on medicinal food → (3) Tasting. Looking back, we could successfully deepen our understanding in this way.

Today's Menu

- ① Soup a la Samgyetang: This soup is similar to medicine, for it revitalizes will power and supports the spleen. Put into a pan and cook together: seasoned chicken wings, chicken breast, Hato oats, glutinous rice, herb, yam, chestnuts, and Chinese date. Add yuzu peel for a finishing touch. Tasting deep and gentle, this soup brought pleasure to my body.
- ② Chinese sticky rice: Containing a variety of ingredients, this dish can be cooked in a rice cooker, and revitalizes will power. Throw into glutinous rice: seasonings, shiitake- and shrimp-soaking liquid water, quail egg, Chinese date, chestnuts simmered in sweet sauce, ginkgo, and Chinese lyceum (kuko). It is said that glutinous rice cheers us up, and the sight of colorful ingredients actually increased our appetite.
- ③ Zenzai, sweet azuki (red bean) soup with black ground sesame seeds: This soup drives away excessive water from our body to help spleen and support kidney. A Warm dessert containing rice-flour dumplings, kuko and walnut.
- ④ Jasmine tea: It helps blood circulation in the body. Rose tea: A rose flower was floating in the tea. The scent of Jasmine tea and the scarlet flower blossoming in Rose tea soothed my heart.

With the arrival of the first day of spring (Risshun), Ms. Yamaguchi bestowed her wisdom on how to prevent disorders that tend to occur in this season. She also talked about "ki" or flow of energy that is one of the essential elements constituting the human body together with "water" and "blood". Actually, we sense the presence of "ki" on a daily basis by casually saying: My "ki" got depressed; or my "ki" feels blue. "Ki" is made up of vitality, food and drink, and breath. Ms. Yamaguchi explained what role "ki" plays, as well as what happens when "ki" is short supply and how to cope with such a situation. I realized how important it is to supplement the missing "ki".

Each and every ingredient of Chinese medicinal dishes has its own meaning and purpose, and aims to be delicious and healthy. This perfectly suits our needs. We appreciated Ms. Yamaguchi's consideration, for she kindly prepared Chinese "Tatsukuri" (dried sardines) for us to take home. I'm looking forward to the day when she comes over from Fukuoka and gives us a lecture again.



(Written by YAMASAWA Emi, the World Cooking Committee, and translated by MIYASHITA Yukari, the PR & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 1) Sister city exchanges started again

After the selection of students who will visit Hino, the Redlands association send us copies of essays submitted from such students which describe their motivation to visit Japan. We can tell that many students are very much interested in visiting amusement facilities or locations related to Japanese anime and manga.

Hino host families make their best efforts to accommodate Redlands students' wishes. Over the weekend during the 2-week homestay, host families take the students to Ghibli Museum , Toei Anime Studio, Anime Festival, etc., on top of their visits to popular sightseeing spots in central Tokyo such as Asakusa, Harajuku and Shibuya.

In Hino, we also take Redlands students to cultural & historical facilities, a renowned Buddhist temple, and local educational institutes including elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, and universities. In particular, Redlands students have a lot of fun in mixing with Japanese students in their extra-curricular club activities such as ESS, tea ceremony, chorus or brass band. Young people can so easily interact, overriding the linguistic barrier.

During the 2-week homestay, Redlands students always make a 3-day short trip to Kyoto and Nara. It offers a most enjoyable experience to ride the Shinkansen (bullet train), see the cherry blossoms in full bloom, and feel the historical & cultural atmosphere of old capitals in Japan.

As for Hino students, they visit Redlands toward the end of July during their summer vacation. The Sister Cities Association in Redlands makes a most appropriate student-host family matching list as well as an elaborate day-to-day group activities plan for their 2-week stay. Incidentally, Dr. Cencirulo, President of the Redlands Association, studied in Tokyo while a university student and speaks impeccable Japanese. His multicultural personality is respected by all in Hino and Redlands. He has been an educator throughout his career and a great mentor for young students.

Once in Redlands, Hino students in a group visit historical, cultural and educational facilities, as well as fire & police stations. Incidentally, their visits include the Burrage Mansion, a historical architecture, where President Eisenhower's favorite lounge chair is exhibited. Over the weekend, Hino students, escorted by their host families, visit popular sightseeing spots of their choice, such as Disneyland, Hollywood, Santa Monica, and the Angeles Stadium. Also, they routinely make a 3-day bus trip to San Diego.

Upon their return from Redlands, Hino students give a short presentation on what they have gained from the 2-week cross-cultural experience. From their presentation, we can tell how much they have discovered, not just about Redlands but also about themselves through the "People to People" hands-on interaction with their host families.

Often their discovery centers on their repentance about insufficient study of English, as well as their lack of basic knowledge about their own mother country. We sincerely hope that the 2-week "grassroots interaction" will nurture mutual respect & trust among students across the Pacific, and that the U. S. and Japanese high school students will develop a long-lasting friendship. We trust that the precious cross-cultural experiences will remain as a life-time asset for each and every student who has participated in the sister cities exchanges.



UNESCO Press Release

New UNESCO report warns social media affects girls' well-being, learning and career choices

(25 April 2024/ Last update: 3 May 2024)

A new UNESCO report warns that, while digital technologies can enhance teaching and learning, they also present risks such as the invasion of users' privacy, distraction from learning and cyberbullying. The report sheds light on how social media amplifies gender stereotypes, with negative effects on girls' well-being, learning and career choices.



Children's social lives are increasingly playing out on social media. But all too often, algorithm-driven platforms amplify exposure to negative gender norms. Ethical considerations must be taken into account in the design of these platforms. Social media should not confine women and girls to roles that limit their educational and career aspirations.

Entitled *Technology on Her Terms*, the report warns that algorithm-driven, image-based content, especially on social media, can expose girls to material ranging from sexual content to videos that glorify unhealthy behaviours or unrealistic body standards. This exposure can have particularly detrimental effects on girls' self-esteem and body image. In turn, this impacts girls' mental health and well-being, which are essential for academic success.

The UNESCO report cites Facebook's own research, which found that 32% of teenage girls said that, when they felt bad about their bodies, Instagram made them feel worse. It also underlines the addictive design of TikTok, characterized by short, engaging videos. This instant-gratification model may affect attention spans and learning habits, making sustained concentration on educational and extracurricular tasks more challenging.

Girls also suffer more cyberbullying than boys. On average, across OECD countries with available data, 12% of 15-year-old girls reported having been cyberbullied, compared to 8% of boys. This situation is compounded by the rise of image-based sexual content, AI-generated deepfakes and 'self-generated' sexual imagery circulating on-line and in classrooms. Female students in several countries interviewed for the report said that they were exposed to pictures or videos they did not want to see.

The results demonstrate the importance of greater investment in education – including media and information literacy – and smarter regulation of digital platforms, in line with *UNESCO's Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms*, launched in November last year. (To be continued on P. 20)

UNESCO Press Release

(Continued from P. 19)

New UNESCO report warns social media affects girls' well-being, learning and career choices



Audrey Azoulay UNESCO Director-General:

“Social media negatively affects well-being and reinforces gender stereotypes”

Negative gender stereotypes dampen girls' STEM aspirations

All these factors create a feedback loop: in which girls are exposed to negative gender norms that are amplified by social media, are steered away from studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects that are considered male-oriented fields, and are deprived of the opportunity to shape the very tools that expose them to these stereotypes.

According to UNESCO data, women make up only 35% of tertiary STEM graduates around the world, a figure that has not changed in the past 10 years. The report shows that persistent biases deter women from pursuing STEM careers – ultimately resulting in a lack of women in the technology workforce.

Women hold less than 25% of science, engineering, information and communication technologies jobs. They constitute only 26% of employees in data and artificial intelligence, 15% in engineering, and 12% in cloud computing across the world's leading economies. Only 17% of patent applications are filed by women globally.

Evidence shows that the digital transformation is being led by men. Although 68% of countries have policies in place to support STEM education, only half of these policies specifically support girls and women. Policy efforts should seek to promote role models, including on social media, to encourage career choices in STEM among young women. Improving girls' access to STEM studies is key to ensuring that women participate on equal terms in the digital transformation of our societies, and supporting the design of truly inclusive technologies.

(Excerpted)

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:

Tel: 03-3434-2300, Tel & Fax: 03-3434-2233,

E-mail: m-info@minatounesco.jp

URL: <https://minato-unesco.jp/en/>

