



MINATO TOKYO

Bulletin

みなと
ユネスコ

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・FAX 03(3434)2233 発行人 / 永野博
Mail: info@minatounesco.jp http://minato-unesco.jp

No. 145: December 1, 2016

My Trip to the North Pole

Shunsuke Morimura, MUA Director

On July 15, 2014, I set out on an eleven-day oceanic journey, on an ice-breaking ship named the “50 Years of Victoria.” We started from Murmansk, a Russian arctic zone port, which is located at 68 degrees 58 minutes of north latitude and 33 degrees 05 minutes of east longitude, about 2,000 kilometers to the north of Moscow. Our destination was the North Pole.

From Day 3, the ship started to make ice-breaking sound on its way to the North Pole. The movement was so powerful and comparable to none. I heard later that some passengers joined the cruise, simply to experience the powerful scene.

Throughout the cruise, sumptuous food was offered. Menu changed each day and we could choose meat or fish. Buffet was available and so are Oden and Soba noodle. I overate myself and gained weight. Each day there was a lecture, covering a variety of attractive topics. For example, a woman talked about her adventure to reach the North Pole on ski. Others talked about white bears, whales, and the Franz Joseph islands which our ship passed. At one time we separately got on board zodiac boats and landed on two islands.

Finally we reached the North Pole at 90 degrees of north latitude. We disembarked from the ship and took meal at the point. Then there was a call for volunteers who wanted to soak themselves in the icy Arctic sea. About ten Westerners and two Japanese women, who were in their forties and the youngest among the Japanese passengers, raised their hands. I did not want to feel like a loser. Also, I had confidence about my cardiac function as I had been a marathon runners for years. Thus, I volunteered, wore swimming trunks, and jumped into the sea. Before long, I started to feel convulsion knees down and immediately got out of the water. Strange to say, I did not feel coldness for a while in my naked status. Vodka along with a commendation certificate were presented to the daredevil volunteers. Fellow passengers applauded us with standing ovation. It was a rewarding experience.

White bears in the snowy scenery was a sight to see although we could not spot any at locations close to the North Pole. In addition we could see seals, walruses and humpback whales.

Many of fellow passengers were fond of making overseas trips much more enthusiastically than myself. Indeed I almost felt like categorizing them as the maniac. They've been to different places all around the world. Among the total of 50 passengers, I was the fifth youngest. I was totally overwhelmed by the trip experiences told by senior passengers. For example, there was a passenger who had visited a total of 170 countries. There was also a passenger who plans to visit all of the 193 countries which are UN members. I found that 80% of the fellow passengers had visited the South Pole. For several passengers this was a second visit to the North Pole.

(To be continued on P. 5)



Reception for MUA New Members

Date: June 1, 2016 18:30 - 20:30

Place: Minato City Life-Long Learning Center

We at MUA held a reception for new comers, to provide a comprehensive orientation on our activities and promote friendship between new and old members. This time we were pleased to welcome three members.

- **Address of Welcome by Mr. Hiroshi Nagano, President:**

Grass-roots UNESCO activities first began in Japan among other countries after the WWII. Thus, the activities have built remarkable achievements during its long history. It is quite important to think about the peace in the changing world environment. Members of MUA perform a variety of activities. I would appreciate it very much if new members find out an activity that fits you most and contribute to the invigoration of the organization.

- **Address of Welcome by Mr. Kensuke Kikuchi, Vice President:**

We expect new members to speak out whatever you found out to be better done. Let's enjoy the activities of MUA together.



Next, each representative from the eight MUA committees gave a brief presentation on the outline of their respective activities:

- **Membership Committee:**

We are in charge of organizing “Reception for MUA New Members”, “MUA Salon”, “New Year Party” and “Embassy Excursion”. Last time we visited Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

- **PR, Bulletin and Internet Committee:**

We publish Japanese and English quarterly bulletins to share, internally and externally, information on MUA's activities as well as to record them. We also maintain MUA's website where we upload bulletins and provide flyers on coming events.

- **International Science & Culture Committee:**

This committee holds the following three major programs.

- Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop:

We hold the workshop three times a year. Last year's themes were “70 years after the end of WWII – How to work out a historical reconciliation”, “Japanese Spirit of Beauty =Photographing Shikinen Sengu of Ise-Jingu Shrine=” and “The Culture of Ordinary Citizens during the Edo Period”.

- **Diplomats Lecture:**
This program is held once a year, inviting exclusively foreign ambassadors and embassy staffs in Tokyo. Invited Japanese speakers give lectures in English on various diplomatic issues Japan faces recently. We had the pleasure of having the former Japanese Ambassador to the U. S. Ichiro Fujisaki as the speaker for the last lecture.
- **Symposium:**
This program is held once a year. Last time we took up “Flood Disaster and Water Shortage in the Age of Climate Change”.

• **Foreign Language Study Committee :**

We at this committee plan to increase the number students as well as classes toward the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Paralympic.

• **World Cooking Workshop Committee :**

We hold the workshop three times a year at Libra Cooking Room in Minato Park Shibaura near JR Tamachi Station and introduce food culture and home dishes around the world.

• **Minato Citizens Festival Committee :**

We participate in the festival every year which is held at the vast site around Zojoji Temple and Shiba Park close to Tokyo Tower. We take advantage of this festival for presenting MUA activities to the visitors. At our exhibition site, we also hold a mini-bazar to raise fund for the support of those in disaster-stricken areas.

• **Youth Committee :**

We hold the “UNESCO Youth Forum in Minato” once a year providing an opportunity for exchanging with foreign students studying in Japan with a great cooperation of foreign students from Utsunomiya City, students of UNESCO club of Keio University, Tamagawa University, International Christian University and Meiji Gakuin University.

• **Hands-on Japanese Cultural Workshop Committee:**

We provide workshops on Yukata dressing, tea ceremony and calligraphy. Just by participating in these workshops, people can learn Japanese culture as well. Last year, we held an Okinawan folktale and regional dance for the first time.

Then, the reception was held in MUA’s secretariat office. New members introduced themselves while enjoying snacks and candies. We hope that all new members actively join various activities of MUA.



(Written by T. Kobayashi, Standing Director overseeing the Membership Committee, and translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The World Cooking Workshop

Home Dishes of Azerbaijan

Date: June 5, 2016

Place: Minato Gender Equality Center LIBRA

For this workshop, we had the pleasure of having Ms. Sura Mirzavev. She is the wife of Rovshan Mirzavev, the first secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Tokyo. Before she came to Japan, accompanying her diplomat husband, she was a physician. At her new residence in Tokyo, she runs an Azerbaijan cooking class, capitalizing on her cooking skill. The couple has two sons who attend elementary school.

Profile of Azerbaijan

Mr. Mirzavev introduced his home country in fluent Japanese. Geographically the republic is surrounded by Russia to the north, Iran to the south, Georgia to the northwest, and Armenia and Turkey to the west. It faces the Caspian Sea to the east. As it has been located at the crossroad of the Silk Road, diverse cultures co-existed and merged since long time ago. Azerbaijan, which means “a country of fire,” has a holy place of Zoroastrianism in its land.

Azerbaijan used to be a part of the Soviet Union but became an independent republic in 1991. It has a population of about 9.4 million on its territory which is almost the size of Hokkaido. Majority of people are Muslims. Since its independence, Azerbaijan has been attaining remarkable economic growth, based on abundant petroleum and natural gas it produces.

Characteristics of Azerbaijan Cooking

Due to its geographical location, Azerbaijan has received much influence from Iranian and Turkish cooking. Raisins, dried apricots and pomegranate are often used. Popular spices include saffron, thyme and cumin. Mutton is a very popular meat.

Menu of the Day

① King's Pilaf

People serve this dish on special occasions. Fry onion and put dry fruits (apricot, raisin and plum this time), shapely cut mutton and boiled rice, and mix them. Put them into a cake-shaped container where tortilla is carpeted. Put saffron for coloring. Place tortilla as a lid on top and put the whole into the oven. Once it was sufficiently baked, take it out of the oven, and turn the container upside down. Now pilaf wrapped in tortilla is ready. Tortilla is like a thinly cut and toasted bread. It was made from wheat flour and baked by Sura-san on the previous day.



② Garlic-seasoned eggplant and tomato

Fry eggplant and tomato, separately, with olive oil. Place the fried tomato on the eggplant. Dredge onion and season it with salt and pepper. Boil it slightly in a pan.



③ Bacrava

Prepare pie texture (sour cream and sodium bicarbonate). For contents, provide crushed walnut and whipped egg-white with sugar. Place the contents on the pie bed and wrap it up with another pie texture. Use a kitchen knife to provide diamond-

shaped gap lines on the surface. Bake it in the oven.

④ Pomegranate juice and walnut jam

Sura-san brought these to the class so that the attendees could taste them with cooked dishes.

All the Mirzavev family entertained us during the cooking workshop, including the two sons' demonstration of Azerbaijan traditional costumes. I was concerned about time management as two dishes required oven processing. However, thanks to the presence of two new MUA staff, as well as the assistance of Ms. Takefuji of the Minato City Education Board, we could finish the cooking of the exotic Azerbaijan home dishes on time.



(Written by K. Matsuzaki, the World Cooking Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin and Internet Committee)

(Continued from P.1: My trip to the North Pole)

I learned that travel agencies today offer a variety of tours which specialize in visiting only the countries located in the remotest corners of the world. Even for those tours, the agencies can secure enough numbers of participants. All in all, I renewed my awareness that the number of Japanese, who have become maniac about making overseas trips, has dramatically increased.

In the North Pole-bound journey, there were a total of 25 Chinese participants who were all relatively young. Among them were a few families with children where parents were still not in their fifties. It means that, to those Chinese, the financial burden to pay 10 million yen per family is nothing. Indeed, the attitude of the Chinese passengers, who competed lavishly in the bidding during the on-board auction, made Japanese passengers feel jealous. I heard that, in the next North Pole-bound cruise, about 80 Chinese are expected to participate. It was a good lesson for me to join the cruise and learn from direct interactions with the big spender-attitude and wealth of the successful Chinese people.

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

The First 2016 Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop
**What I saw, felt and learned from other culture:
Episodes from my life in Austria**

Date: July 13, 2016 18:30 - 20:30

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

We had the pleasure of having Mr. Akihiro Nakajima, a conductor. Born in 1981 in Paris. Graduated from School of Science and Engineering of Waseda University and School of Engineering of The University of Tokyo, and studied conductorship at Universität Mozarteum Salzburg in Austria from 2007 to 2010. Won the 2nd prize, where no 1st prize was awarded, at the Kurt Redel Conducting Competition held in Japan in 2012. Earned a doctoral degree in Architectural Acoustics Engineering at School of Engineering of The University of Tokyo.



Mr. Nakajima took the exam on conductorship at Universität Mozarteum Salzburg as he wished to study in Austria, the home of music, and studied there for 3 years from the summer of 2007. The culture and living practices there were largely different from those of Japan, and he encountered various situations which were beyond his thought based on Japanese standards. He first felt some inconvenience or incompleteness with them, but as he got accustomed to them, he started to feel no strangeness and, in turn, developed a sense of perspective on those of Japan. He presented what he experienced during his stay in Salzburg in a joyful manner.

Entrance Exam

As I saw a rainbow in the sky over Salzburg from the train I took to get to the venue for examination, I believed that I would surely pass the exam. I went through both written and practical examinations. Foreign examinees were allowed to use electronic dictionaries for the written examination without any prior approval. Examinees were called in to the room for the practical examination one by one. Some of them came out of the room in a minute or so. Examiners seemed to be able to judge the ability of examinees in a blink. 30 examinees were narrowed down to 10, and 3 to 4 passed that year. There was not a single successful applicant the next year. The school expense was fortunately very cheap, as the country supported young people in monetary aspects for the future.

Boarding House

I first lived on the good graces of my senior colleague. Though I did not know how to find a boarding house, I happened to see the information on a newspaper. I was able to rent one in Old Town of Salzburg.

Obtaining a Visa

If you want to obtain a visa, you must have the balance in your bank account enough to support your living in the country for a year. When I took a paperwork in the visa office, a female teller told me that I was a stamp short. I was really perturbed what I could do. Eventually, however, I noticed that there was a stamp anyone can use in the post office which originally issued the paperwork. So, I did apply the stamp on the paperwork by myself and submitted it to the teller who readily accepted the same. Thus, I did obtain the visa successfully.

German Language Class

No other language than Germany was used in the class from the beginning. However, as the time went, I felt like I understood. I prepared sushi rolls (avocado roll, tuna and salmon rolls, etc.) with some Japanese colleagues at the university festival. Many people gathered around us and they enjoyed the sushi rolls very much.

Bicycle

As it was a small town, I could get to the university in 5 minutes, international airport in 30 minutes and shopping-mall in 40 minutes by bicycle. Cycle paths were well facilitated everywhere and, therefore, I could ride the bicycle very easily. The bicycles were very expensive, though. They costed as expensive as 500 euros. 200 to 300 euros even for the secondhand bicycles. (The exchange rate at that time was around JPY125 for a euro.) As they were all built very firmly, they were heavy in weight and so got a flat tire frequently. When I loaded them heavily, I had to replace the tires with new ones several times a year. The light went off quite often. If I left it unrepaired, I was fined. The temperature went down to minus 20 degrees Celsius during winter in Salzburg. A key of my bicycle once fractured as it was too cold. Even an oil specialized for keyhole was sold there.

Culture

You cannot play a good music only with a technique. It goes without saying that you cannot play a good music without a technique either. As an example, music played by an orchestra from a small local town of Czech Republic did not sound beautiful at all. But, once they played music composed by such renowned composers as Dvorak or Smetana of their country, they created an amazing harmony. They in fact created the harmony no other orchestra would be able to. This shows how they put an importance on the creation and expression of each sound.

I believe that Japanese performing musicians have quite a high technique. I feel, at the same time, that some of them too much try to squeeze into a pattern and eventually lack spice. Many Japanese musicians notice small things that local musicians do not. In other words, musicians of various countries have their own advantages.

Equality

What is taught on “equality” in Japan seems to me “inequality” in reality. People in Europe regards the equality in the way where people could be given whatever meets each people’s requirements. There exists no people who perfectly resembles other one.

People are most valued in Europe. Things are measured by each one’s own judging standards. They are free from being ruled by other’s sense of values. They take pride in their hidden values. These are what I learned and felt during my stay in Salzburg.

Audiences gave many questions about architectural acoustics engineering during the Q&A session. He closed the lecture in a fascinating manner.



(Written by T. Isobe, the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

Dialog with the UNESCO committee students of Tokyo metropolitan Mita senior high school

Date: June 14 & 16, 2016

Place: MUA secretariat office

A total of 30 students from the UNESCO committee of the Tokyo metropolitan Mita senior high school, led by Mr. Naohiro Kawaguchi and Ms. Ai Asai, visited the Minato UNESCO Association's secretariat office in two groups on two different dates in June. This war-related dialog program started by MUA five years ago. As a 76-years old senior citizen who has survived the last war and the post-war years, I told the following experience of my own family. My objective was to share my personal war experience with them and pass to the young students my conviction that wars should not be waged, and that what counts is each citizen's commitment to maintain peace.

"My father received a draft notice in 1943 and was sent to Manchuria, the northeastern region of China. He left behind his grandparents, his wife and three children – my elder sister at age 5, myself at 3 and my brother at 1. In July 1945, the central part of Wakayama City, my home town, was devastated to ashes by firebombs dropped from the fleets of the U. S. B29 bombers. One month later, on August 15, the war ended. In the occupied Japan, a new era of democracy started. I entered a local elementary school in 1946. My childhood was characterized by insufficiency of everything, ranging from food, clothes to school items.

When Japan surrendered in 1945, the military forces of the Soviet Union invaded Manchuria and forced about 600 thousand resident Japanese to relocate to Siberia in detention. Those Japanese suffered from heavy labor, food shortage and severe cold weather. About 60 thousand, including my father, died from the inhumane treatment. In 2006, I made a solo trip to Orenburg, the place of his last days, thanks to the lifting by then of trip restrictions to Russia. Three years later the Japanese government built a memorial monument there.

Statistics show that a total of about 3.1 million Japanese, including soldiers and civilians, perished during the WWII. Once a war is waged, it is very difficult to stop the tide. It often results in not only a vast number of casualties but also years of anguish inflicted on the related families. Whether it's a victory or defeat, wars always leave serious wounds on both sides. Should a nuclear war be waged in the future, it is estimated that no creature would survive on the earth."

At the beginning of the past dialogs with the Mita senior high school students, I've always asked this question – "Have you ever heard any war experiences from your grandparents or any other acquaintances?" It's been customary that only a few students would respond, saying "Yes, I've heard a little bit about it." Since the grandparents of those students must be in the same age group as mine, there should be a considerable number of those who have directly experienced the last war. Perhaps they did not feel like unfolding harsh war memories to their family members.



This time there were four students who have heard about the war from their grandparents. They shared specific war stories with the other students. For example, a student said, “My grandmother came back from Manchuria after the end of the war.” Another student said, “My grandfather went to war and fortunately came back to Japan after the end of the war. However, the Japanese society was not kind and he was exposed to harsh treatment.” I guess that those grandparents, who were asked about the war by their grandchildren for the first time, might have felt pleased to unfold their experiences to the youngsters.”

I trust that if you hear about the harsh war experiences from your immediate families or acquaintances, you’ll have a stronger aspiration for peace. For this reason, I feel that it’s very important for us to hand down war experiences from generation to generation.

Soon after these dialogs with the senior high school students, I received to my great pleasure letters of appreciation from them, for my efforts to hand down and share the war experiences.



(Written by M. Takai, Director/Counselor, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The Hands-on Japanese Culture Workshop Yukata Kitsuke Class

Date: June 25, 2016

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

Our instructor for this event was Ms. Toshiko Watabe, an MUA member, who runs her own “Sakura” kimono workshop. Six MUA members helped this program as assisting staff.

The day’s program comprised the following six segments:

- History of Yukata
- Briefing on how to dress up (Kitsuke) Yukata
- Exercise of Kitsuke
- Self-dress-up and commemorative group photo shooting
- Exercise of folding-up one’s own Yukata
- Free tea talk among participants

All the participants were highly motivated to acquire necessary skills. They repeatedly tried Kitsuke, either putting on or taking off Yukata. Some participants said in an excited attitude, “I sure would like to join a summer fireworks event dressed nicely in Yukata.”

Clad in Yukata, everyone looked very happy and proud. I feel that traditional costumes have some magic power which makes the wearers feel assimilated to the country’s local culture. All of MUA staff were delighted to see the smiling faces of the participants.



(Written by M. Kasahara, Chairperson of the Hands-on Japanese Culture Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

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: info@minatounesco.jp

URL: <http://minato-unesco.jp/>