



MINATO TOKYO

Bulletin

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MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

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Why are the cultural assets important?

Yukari Miyashita, MUA Vice President

Early November I traveled to Asuka area, Nara Prefecture, visiting old temples and ruins by bicycle. It was an exhilarating experience, pedaling along the farm roads under the autumn sky. What makes Asuka area attractive is its idyllic setting, peppered with a number of mysterious relics. One example is "Ishi Butai Kofun (a stone stage tomb)." It makes you wonder: Who was buried here? Why the stone chamber was left uncovered? How on earth could they carry this huge stone up here?



What impressed me most was Takamatsuzuka Tomb Wall Painting, which depicted groups of courtly figures in vivid colors. Their elegant clothes, we are told, could be traced all the way back to the Kofun era (B.C.37-668). The murals also contained figures of four directional deities derived from Chinese mythology, attesting that Japan in those days drew strong inspirations from overseas. And yet, they say there are already signs of uniquely Japanese art skills including coloring and executed lines.

We are lucky to have these cultural properties intact today, since they conjure up images of our ancestors being astounded at cultures and technologies imported from the Chinese Continent and the Korean Peninsula. They were first surprised, and then with the kind of respect, tried to imitate the new model. While absorbing what they could, efforts must have been made to modify the imports, step by step, to fit the local circumstances.

Which reminds me of Buddhas of Bamiyan, Afghanistan, which were destroyed in March 2001 by the Taliban on the ground of "religious iconoclasm". With the destruction of two giant Buddha statues, gone were the mural paintings. Did the cultural properties dating back to 1,500 years have no meaning at all to the people who dynamited them?

Japan was not immune from such cultural devastation. In 1868, the Meiji government issued the Ordinance Distinguishing Shinto and Buddhism, thereby prompting "Haibutsu Kishaku (Trash Buddhism and slander the Buddha)" movement across Japan. One of the temples heavily affected was Kofukuji, Nara. Legend has it that its noted Five-story Pagoda was sold out at ¥25 (currently about ¥100,000). Aiming at acquiring the Pagoda's golden fixings, the buyer never thought about the use of wood materials. Then he realized the huge demolition cost, and decided to burn down the whole structure. But this plan faced severe opposition from neighborhood residents who justifiably feared the spread of fire. This is how the famed Kofukuji Pagoda was spared devastation.

Such an act of folly is totally unacceptable today. But I keep wondering: why cultural properties are regarded important? What makes them so attractive? I would like to discuss it with my fellow MUA members.

UNESCO Youth Forum in Minato 2016

The 6th Exchange with Foreign Students

- Connecting Our New World -

Date: Saturday, October 1st, 2016 13:00 ~ 16:00

Venue: Minato City Gender Equality Center, Libra Hall
("Minato Park Shibaura" 1F)

This annual event was co-sponsored by the Minato City, Tokyo. Our partners included Inter-Cultural Community Life Association (ICCLA), Utsunomiya UNESCO Association, Utsunomiya University, Sakushin Gakuin University, Utsunomiya Kyowa University, and Meiji Gakuin University (Faculty of Psychology).

With the wide-spread internet and SNS, various information became instantaneously available from all over the world, and people can communicate across the border very easily. On the contrary, however, it has become more and more important for the people to meet and talk face to face and, thereby, relate directly each other. While we have many excellent students from the world studying in Japan, it is not easy for us to have an opportunity to exchange with them here in Tokyo.

MUA's Youth Activities Committee has led various activities since the establishment of MUA back in 1981. However, the activities of the Committee got in a dormant state after March of 2002, and has been left that way though some of us hoped the activities be restored.

We at last requested in 2010 Ms. Y. Nagato, President of ICCLA and Standing Director of MUA, who has long been taking care of foreign students in the City of Utsunomiya, to cooperate with us in holding the 1st UNESCO Youth Forum in Minato by way of inviting foreign students in Utsunomiya to Tokyo. This form of collaboration between Tokyo and Utsunomiya has been maintained since then.

15 students from 8 nations studying at Utsunomiya University, Sakushin Gakuin University and Utsunomiya Kyowa University participated this time. They are all excellent students who were recommended by their own universities and are very good at speaking in Japanese. We hereby express our heartfelt appreciation for their coming all the way from Utsunomiya taking one full day in spite of their busy schedule.



Participants from Tokyo side were students of Meiji Gakuin University, citizens of Minato City, MUA members and so forth.

The Forum this year really became the place where the wave of exchange expanded beyond countries, regions, organizations and generations with plenty of smiles and voices.

Part 1 Introduction of Home Countries by Foreign Students:
Six countries in an alphabetical order: 5 minutes per each person

In spite of 5 short minutes available for presentation, all the presenters made it very nicely, using power point, to make their countries well understood. All of them well represented in their speech the characteristics of their countries as well as their own characters.



We will show below only the themes and stories attracted the writers interest due to the limitation of space.

- (1) China by Ms. Xu Liming (Sakushin Gakuin University)
Wedding ceremony represents cultures of the country in a condensed manner. He introduced the wedding ceremony of Han Chinese that represents 92% of 56 existing tribes.
- (2) Indonesia by Ms. Arika Trisniyawati (Sakushin Gakuin University)
Indonesia consists of 13,466 islands. Languages, letters, tribes, costumes, housing, dances, music and festivals vary depending on islands. Cultures of any regions have their own histories and characteristics.
- (3) Mongol by Ms. Shirendev Oyun Erdene and by Ms. Munkhtumur Mungunzaya (Utsunomiya University)
Nomadic people migrate from one place to others to feed good grasses for cows, horses, sheep, etc., and created yurts circular domed tent of skins or felt stretched over a collapsible lattice framework. Yurts can be built up and down in two to three hours by 5 to 6 people. Entrance is always placed toward the South.
- (4) Nepal by Mr. Lama Yubraj (Sakushin Gakuin University)
“Tihar”, one of many festivals, is the sort of combination of Buddhism and Hinduism, and lasts 5 days. The first day is the day of crows, the second dogs, the third Laksmi, the fourth cows and the fifth brothers and sisters.
- (5) Thailand by Ms. Jerdnapapun Chitchanok (Graduate School of Utsunomiya University)
Greetings in the form of joining one’s hands clasped is widely known. Many of decorums are spelled out by national laws. Pouring water festival held in the hottest time of the year as well as sending off the spirits of the dead on lanterns floated on the waters of a river are quite famous in Japan.
- (6) Vietnam by Ms. Ta Thi Mai (Sakushin Gakuin University)
Vietnam is the multiethnic country with the population of 92,500,000. 60% of the population is under the age of 25 years. People value peace and liberty. The country is blessed with natural resources and is making a remarkable progress.

Part 2 Group Discussions in three groups:

Participants were grouped in three and seated in chairs in circle. 15 foreign students were divided into three groups and moved from a circle to another.

Each group had discussions under the leadership of facilitator. The themes given were; ① How did I change after coming to Japan, ② Differences between home countries and Japan, and ③ Dreams for the future.



Part 3 Group Work by all participants:

Ms. Bayarsaikhan Munkhod and Ms. Shirendev Oyun Erdene of Mongol took the responsibility of planning and led this part as facilitators.

First, both of them showed the ethnic dance of their home country. Then, all participants were seated in one big circle, and enjoyed such games as musical chairs, charades, rock-paper-scissors and so forth. These were all very simple games but all participants relived their childhood and cheerful atmosphere prevailed. Many of them said that they never laughed so much recently, and that they really enjoyed the games.



Closing 4:00pm

We could share very enjoyable hours thanks to great cooperation by the participants. We felt in our bones that they spent very memorable and meaningful afternoon.



We wish, from the bottom of our heart, all the foreign students to spend joyful and fruitful time in Japan and live fulfilling life.

(Written by M. Takai, Counselor and Director, and translated by Y. Suda, PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

After this event, we did receive written description of impression from foreign students of Utsunomiya University, Sakushin Gakuin University, Utsunomiya Kyowa University, and Japanese participants of Meiji Gakuin University and the Director, Tokyo Bureau of VOV the Voice of Vietnam, as shown below. In response, Ms. Nagato of ICCLA and Ms. Takai of MUA stated, "Thank you very much for the cooperation and contribution by all people. We are very glad that we received all these letters filled with sensibility and intelligence."

Utsunomiya University:

Mr. Chamara Sasanka Salgado (Sri Lanka) Finished Graduate School, Engineering

I have participated in the Forum four straight times since 2013. I have been in charge of preparing flyers for the past three years. During the course of interactions with people concerned, I was able to study various practical things which I could not study at the university but is necessary as a member of society. I was also able to appeal at the interview for employment that I experienced social activities in addition to my regular academic studies. I could broaden my perspective through introducing my home country as well as listening to others' explanation on their home countries, which was a precious experience I could not have at the university campus. Those experiences obtained here help me in the work as a new employee quite a lot. I strongly recommend that many students participate in this event. I would like to come back here and support this event next year again.



Ms. Bayarsaikhan Munkhood (Mongolia) Graduate School of Engineering

This is my second participation. I am happy to see as many as 14 foreign students from China, Nepal, Korea, etc. this year. While talking to other students on what I learned here in Japan, I could deepen my understanding on other countries which narrowed the world pretty much. I took responsibility of planning and facilitating Part 3. I could spend the unforgettable time in playing enjoyable games I planned with all the participants. On behalf of the foreign students, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to those people concerned in providing this splendid opportunity with us.

Ms. Shirendev Oyun Erdene (Mongolia) Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering

I am very glad that I participated in this event this year again and meet all the participants. Though I saw fewer Japanese than last year, I could spend time with adult Japanese participants in very warm atmosphere. I was able to accumulate more knowledge on China, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal and Vietnam, and I had precious experience in exchanging with students from those countries. It was stimulating that each one of them had his/her own vision and putting an utmost effort toward realizing the vision. As I wanted to hear the vision of Japanese students, I wish to communicate with them next year again. The Forum this year became the memorable one thanks to the great effort and good will of all the people concerned. I would like to grow by emulating esteemed attitudes of Japanese people while I study here in Japan.

Ms. Munkhtumur Mungunzaya (Mongolia) Utsunomiya University, exchange student
I came to Faculty of Agriculture of Utsunomiya University in October last year as an exchange student from Mongol National Agricultural College, both of which are twinned-universities, and returned home on October 6th this year. I was very excited that I could come to Tokyo on Shinkan-sen to join the Forum just before my departure from Japan. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all people concerned. I would like to do my very best in my study for the senior year at my university and come back to the Graduate School of Utsunomiya University.

Ms. Jerdnapapun Chitchanok (Thailand) Graduate School, International Studies
This was my first participation. It was very enjoyable event in which students from various countries introduced their countries, watched traditional Mongolian dance, and, at the end, played games all together. It was also very informative that I acquired new knowledge through the discussions with Japanese students. I would like to join this Forum again.

Ms. Dao Yen Linh (Vietnam) Graduate School, International Studies
Thank you very much that I was accepted as one of participants in this event. I was given an opportunity to introduce my home country for the first time. I was a little bit nervous but did enjoy this opportunity. I was very moved that many people were very interested in information on other countries, including Vietnam. I exchange a lot with other foreign students and leaned a lot about the culture of other countries. It was very informative to me. Thank you very much.

Sakushin Gakuin University:

Ms. Xu Liming (China) Graduate School of Management
I participated in the Forum for the first time. Through the presentations given by other forging students on their home countries, I felt that there exist such interesting cultures in the world and I was able to broaden my perspective. I spent a very meaningful day exchanging with very kind Japanese people as well as foreign students and playing many enjoyable games with all the people. I thank everyone for my participating in this wonderful event.

Mr. Lama Yubraj (Nepal) Faculty of Business Management
I was very glad that I joined the Forum this time. I exchanged with various people from many countries and learned a lot about their countries. I was also able to present my home country. I believe that this type of event is very meaningful and important. I experienced a presentation before many people not only enjoyed the exchange with many people, which shall be very useful for my future. I wish many more students from Europe or the U.S.A could participate in this event.

Ms. Arika Trisniyawati (Indonesia) Faculty of Business Management
I participated in the Forum for the first time. I found it very interesting in watching presentations on other countries. I was surprised by the differences in various things between my home country and others. I spent a very enjoyable day joining in the exchange with Japanese staffs and in games. It was a memorable experience. Thank you very much.

Ms. Ta Thi Mai (Vietnam) Faculty of Human and Cultural Sciences
I joined this event for the first time and enjoyed it. It was a good experience as well. I was able to present my home country to many foreign students and, also, was able to watch the presentations on many other countries. I also touched on various cultures in the world. I laughed quite a lot in the games. I really appreciate it very much that I was able to join in this very meaningful event.

Utsunomiya Kyowa University:

Mr. Shin Howon (Republic of Korea) Faculty of City Life

I participated in the UNESCO Youth Forum in Minato 2016. Three students including me joined the event from our university this time. I was a bit nervous as it was my first experience in joining such event. I was glad that I was received very warmly though I did not prepare much. I met many people from various countries.

Mr. Kang Minseok (Republic of Korea) Faculty of City Life

Though I had to leave home very early in the morning and very tired, I was able to make many friends and found that people have their own outlook on the world. I first thought that it would be a simple exchange meeting, but as I played games and exchanged with various people, I eventually felt that I was not a foreigner but one of many people of a kind.

Mr. Hu Jintong (China) Faculty of City Life

I enjoyed the exchange with many people with various backgrounds. Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Mongolian. They were all splendid and kind in heart. Thank you for this opportunity.

Director, Tokyo Bureau, VOV Radio The Voice of Vietnam:

Mr. Bui Manh Hung (Invited Trainee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan in 2011)

Though it was my first participation in the event, I still have a very strong impression in my mind. Foreign students presented the beauty of cultures inherited in the tradition of their own countries as well as what they experienced during their stays in Japan. People can deepen their understanding on others and make friends through international exchange activities. They also understand the different cultures which become the asset of people. The success of the 6th Forum largely depend on the contribution by the people concerned through planning and preparation done in the long period of time. This surely be the asset of foreign students participated.

Meiji Gakuin University:

Ms. Megumi Shibuya Professor, Faculty of Psychology

I spent a day filled with findings and smiles thanks to the vigorous participation by many foreign students. I believe that this type of experience sharing should be the basis for mutual understandings. I saw some of the graduates participated in the event that shows the precious and meaningful efforts extended by Minato UNESCO Association for many years. I thank you for letting me participate in this meaningful event.

Mr. Yusuke Nakanishi Faculty of Psychology

I really enjoyed the exchange with various foreign students. I was moved by their eagerness to study in Japan, a foreign country for all of them. As I was the only Japanese participants, I could talk to them within the limited range of my own experience. I hope that many more Japanese students participate in this event in the future.

(Written by each student and Mr. Bui, and translated by Y. Suda, PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee):

The 20th MUA Salon
**In Retrospect of Elementary School Days
up to My Participation in MUA Activities**

Date: November 8, 2016

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

The speaker of this salon was Mr. Mamoru Tomogane, MUA Director. He talked enthusiastically about the days when he spent his childhood in the remote corner of Tamba in Kyoto Prefecture. He followed it up with detailed accounts of his later years up to the present. During his talk, he showed us old photos, letters which he exchanged with respectable teachers, along with other archival materials. The core message of his fervent two-hour presentation was the “Blessedness of Human Linkage.”

Mr. Tomogane described with hearty appreciation how he succeeded in entering the Osaka University of Foreign Languages (today’s Foreign Language Faculty of Osaka University), during the post-war period when the entrance to universities was very difficult. He ascribed the success to various support he received from his respectable teachers.

After graduation, he joined NEC Corporation. He introduced a memorable episode he experienced during his business trip to the Arabic market. The important lesson he obtained from the experience was that people can nurture friendship and mutual trust if they interact with sincerity, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity or religion. Mr. Tomogane also introduced his hobbies, including painting, appreciation of Buddha images, and photography. He told us how much pleasure he had taken from these hobbies for long years.

After his retirement from NEC, he joined MUA and started to help with its secretariat. Thanks to the recommendation from Dr. Miwa, who was MUA president at that time, he later assumed the position of Secretary General and served for six years in that capacity. During the tenure, he vigorously and extensively reached out to his family, relatives, teachers, class-mates and company colleagues. He persistently solicited their membership into MUA as a way of expanding MUA’s financial resources. His lifetime policy to treasure human linkage paid off in such efforts. It enabled him to win a large number of supporters and corporate members. He showed us financial reports in those days and elaborated on his successful efforts.

Each and every episode he shared with us demonstrated his conviction that if we interact with others in a sincere and unselfish manner, we will receive helping hands from them. We wrapped up the salon by singing along the “Furusato” song.



(Written by M. Shiose, MUA member, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

Bilingual Children: My Mission to Foster Children Who can Undertake the Future of Our Global Society

Date: October 14, 2016

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

We had the pleasure of having Ms. Opal Dunn, a British specialist for early childhood education, to talk about a very timely and interesting subject.

Let me introduce briefly Ms. Dunn's profile. She stayed in Japan for nine years from 1971, accompanying her diplomat husband. They returned to the U. K. in 1980. While in Japan, she started a library of English books, named "Dan Dan Bunko." In 1979 she founded the International Children's Bunko Association (ICBA) which had a mission to assist those who plan to establish qualified libraries. In 2008, she received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, for her contributions to international education for Japanese children.



As Ms. Dunn spoke in English, we asked Ms. Yoko Aoyagi, who was introduced to MUA from ICBA, to work as her interpreter throughout this lecture. The following is a summary of Ms. Dunn's lecture.

International Marriages

The next year will mark the 40th anniversary of the foundation of "Dan Dan Bunko." During those years, the whole world including the U. K. has changed drastically. Young people started to study or work across national borders, and this has resulted in the increase of international marriages. Such marriages have resulted in the increase of children who are bicultural and bilingual.

Bilingual or multi-lingual capabilities help people expand the way of thinking and foster the awareness and understanding of different ways of thinking and diversity in culture. The children with multi-culturally developed minds are precious assets to their respective societies.

Many people from different European countries come to the U. K. seeking job opportunities. If you visit any of coffee shops in British cities, you'll notice people speaking in several different languages. However, most of the indigenous British citizens live speaking only English and British schools do not have enough number of bilingual teachers.

In the U. K., there are children who were born from internationally married couples where either of their parents is Japanese. They tend to speak English extensively at schools or elsewhere, resulting in their weakness in Japanese linguistic skills. Ms. Dunn's Bunko's support these children not only with their linguistic skills but also in terms of fostering their identity.

Double

In Japan, children born from international marriages are stereotypically called "half," which gives a somewhat negative impression. Ms. Dunn used to call them "bilingual" children. One day a six-year old child said to her, "I'm a half between Japan and the U. K." Then the child asked with a worried look, pointing to one side of his body, "Is this side of my body Japanese and the other side British?" Ms. Dunn felt deep sympathy with this child. She responded to the child, "You are not half but double. Do you know why? Because you have two languages and two cultures." The child understood her logic and said to his mother, with a proud look, "I'm double."

Since this incident, Ms. Dunn started to use the word "double" to characterize those children.

Parents should be aware of the importance to attentively listen to what their children say. The word “bilingual” belongs to the adults’ vocabulary and children cannot understand what it means. When we talk to children, we must use the words they can understand.

Different Challenges facing “Double” Children

It is difficult to obtain the accurate number of international marriages. We cannot find any statistical data. There are a variety of cases in international marriages. For example, there are cases where English-speaking males, who come to Japan on the JET (The Japan Exchange and Teaching) program offered by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, remain to work as English ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) and eventually marry Japanese females.

In those cases, foreigner fathers speak Japanese and understand local culture. Therefore, relatively speaking, there have not been many family problems, involving language. In recent years, however, there are an increasing number of cases where young Japanese females study abroad, return to Japan for a few years’ job, get married internationally at the age of 28 to 31, and start to live in their husbands’ home countries.

When Japanese females get to know European males and end up in marriages, they consider where to live or which school they should send their children to. However, such couples generally do not discuss the issue of the language to be spoken at home. Only after they became parents, they realize the difficulty to communicate with their children in Japanese.

In some cases where both parents come from non-English-speaking countries, the couples often end up speaking broken English at home. Sometimes, Japanese mothers become too tired and lack motivation to speak in Japanese about topics of Japan. Today, thanks to the advancement in technology, it is possible for overseas-based “double” children to use Skype. They can thereby learn Japanese language or Japan’s culture through interaction with their grandparents who live away in Japan. I recommend that such children utilize school vacations to visit their grandparents in Japan and expose themselves to Japanese culture.

Opening of “Dan Dan Bunko” Libraries

I accompanied my diplomat husband on his assignment to Japan. In 1977 while in Japan, I opened a library named “Dan Dan Bunko” in Higashiyama in Meguro-ku, Tokyo. My initial motivation was to find a way to help returnee children, born and raised in English-speaking countries and fluent English, step up their English skill and cross-cultural understanding. The Bunko libraries offered a place where returnee children could read picture books, learn pleasantly through tongue-twisters, songs or jokes, and make friends with similar children. Once the children step into the library, they join an English-speaking community.

The adults who supported the children at the “Dan Dan Bunko” were either native English speakers or Japanese mothers who had once lived in foreign countries. They generously offered their respective skills and time for the benefit of the children.

Development of the Bunko’s

During the 1980’s, there were a total of 50 Bunko’s in Japan which were operated in English, French or German to accommodate many returnee children. After I returned to the U. K. in 1983, I opened a Japanese-language Bunko there. In those days, there were many children in the U. K. whose parents were both Japanese. The children attended local schools, joined English classes, and started

to lose opportunities to speak Japanese. Today a majority of children, accommodated in Japanese-language Bunko's, are those born from international marriages.

The total number of Bunko's has increased to 64 operated in 16 countries. In the U.K., the Bunko's have expanded into rural regions as well. A total of 594 children are attending 36 of those libraries. The Bunko's have gradually transformed themselves in an effort to keep up flexibly with the needs which reflect the changes in society. However, at all of the Bunko's, parents have adhered to the basic policy to secure an open and embracing atmosphere where adults listen intently to what children have to say or talk to them amicably, paying attention to the level of children's growth.

Bunko's in the U. K. and elsewhere

The first Bunko in the U. K. was opened in 1983. Initially most of the parents who sent their children to the library were Japanese. Today a majority of children come from families where mothers are Japanese but their spouses non-Japanese. Efforts have been made to create a pleasant community atmosphere where children have a feeling of secure belonging to the Bunko's. We request mothers to listen to the words of each and every child and talk to all the children in each gathering. We also recommend non-Japanese fathers to participate even if they cannot speak Japanese. In an effort to motivate such fathers to take interest in Japanese culture, we have distributed booklets produced by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

There are not a few cases where Japanese boys do not feel happy attending local British schools. Their parents are not always aware of this because their sons get satisfying scholastic scores. At the Bunko's, we provide a ten-minute free time for children before closing each gathering. They let off their energy in free plays and develop their friendship with other children. They seem to be very relaxed simply because all children around them are the "double."



Ms. Dunn and Ms. Aoyagi

When those children start to attend the so-called "Hoshuu Jugyo" schools, they start to feel frustration because by then they had been accustomed to British schools where children are not expected to sit still during classes. To help the children make smooth cross-cultural adjustments during the transitional period, we explain to them how to behave decently in the Japanese society or how to speak Japanese in a polite way.

I have known Mr. Tetsuta Watanabe, the eldest son of Mr. Shigeo Watanabe, who is a scholar of children's literature, and who operates a Bunko in Australia. This past summer he attended a convention in New Zealand which was held by the International Board on Books on Young People. He gave a poster presentation to introduce what the "Bunko" is all about. He received a very favorable response from the audience. Bunko's are a successful model of cultural export from Japan.

Growth of Children

It is well known that our basic mindset and attitude are formed during the period of six to seven years of age, that they will last throughout our lifetime, and that it is very difficult to change those traits. Indeed Aristotle, who lived in the 3rd century B.C., as well as Dr. Suzuki, known for the Suzuki method in the 20th century, were aware of this human nature. Maria Montessori said that children's brain absorbs everything like sponge, by use of the five senses. Therefore, she explains, it is adults' responsibility to provide opportunities and guiding assistance to children so that they will acquire words at their own pace and learn things in their own way. On the other hand, we should be aware that children absorb information without knowing good or bad. I am greatly concerned about the

possible future influence on children from the unpleasant words used in today's tablet games.

Research by neurologists have unraveled how the brain works but scientists are yet to shed light on the human mental growth. The brain for consciousness starts to bud from the age of four while critical thinking becomes possible from the age of six. Children acquire the capability for critical thinking only through their experiences. At our Bunko's, we try to encourage children's learning capability by presenting two alternatives for their choice, for example.

Q&A with the Attendees:

Q1: At a non-registered nursery facility, accommodating two to three-year old infants, we are requested by non-English speaking parents, often Asian or Arabic, to teach Japanese. What kind of picture books would you recommend for such a purpose?

A1: I'd recommend traditional books of well-established reputation internationally, including Cinderella for example. Stories written in simple words are recommendable, as in picture-card shows. It is also important to know how educated the parents are.

Q2: I'm a Brazilian who lives with children in Japan. Please give me advice on how to guide our children in coping with the linguistic barrier.

A2: I recommend you to contact Maruyama-san at ICBA. One idea is to organize at a local church a community, involving those who can speak Portuguese, and start Bunko activities.

Q3: I was born and raised as "double." My major language is English. I have a big challenge in knowing Japanese culture. Please give me advice.

A3: Each one of us is unique. There are many "doubles" in their 20's who lament their ignorance of either culture. It is necessary to provide all doubles with the basic foundation of the two cultures. At our Bunko's, we recommend children to visit their grandparents in Japan during summer vacation and engage in Japanese communication. We also make efforts to provide "double" children with opportunities to learn two cultures.

Q4: What's your opinion about digital books?

A4: I think that the merits of paper books include the thrill we feel when we turn over pages as well as the smell of the book. I think it's important for children to use their all senses, as in reading picture books.



All of us were impressed with Ms. Dunn's presentation, demonstrating her tireless enthusiasm for mentoring children at the Bunko's. We'd like to extend our whole-hearted appreciation for her illuminating lecture.

(Written by K. Okumura, Vice Chairperson, the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The World Cooking Workshop

Home Dishes in the South of the USA

Date: November 6, 2016

Place: Minato City Libra Gender-free Center

We had the pleasure of having Ms. LaTonya Whitaker, a food consultant and leading chef at the “Soul Food Home” restaurant, for this workshop. Let me introduce Ms. Whitaker’s bio briefly. She was born in the State of Mississippi in the U. S. She has been in Japan for 15 years. Initially she was an instructor at a language school. Later she became a cook at a restaurant which offers the dishes of the U. S. southern states. At one time her mother visited her in Japan and cooked for her dear old home dishes by procuring necessary food materials from the neighborhood stores. That’s the time when Ms. Whitaker realized that it is possible to cook her home dishes even if she stays in Japan. Ms. Whitaker is also a gospel singer with beautiful voice.

Dishes in the Southern Region

Cajun and creole food are well known as typical tastes from the U. S. south. They have inherited different elements from Africa, England, France, Germany, Ireland and Scotland as well as indigenous Americans. Simply put, they represent the dishes and tastes, embracing the whole history of the U. S. southern states.

The Day’s Menu

① Blackened Shrimp and Spinach Fondue

Prepare blacken-seasoned shrimps, butter-sautéed onion and spinach. Mix them with white source, made up from wine, fresh cream and wheat flour. Top it with U. S.-made Monterey Jack cheese, and bake it in the oven.



② Blackened Chicken with Maquechoux

Dip chicken meat in olive oil, soy sauce and garlic paste. Cover it with garlic, paprika, Cayenne, oregano, thyme, salt and pepper (This is Blacken seasoning). Bake it in the oven. For Maquechoux, fry corn, green pepper and tomato in Cajun seasoning.



③ Bread Pudding with Bourbon Sauce

Tear off French bread into pieces of appropriate size and dip them in the mixture of milk, egg, sugar, vanilla extract, raisin, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Then bake them in the oven. Prepare Bourbon sauce by mixing yolk, sugar and Bourbon whiskey.



Cooking Lessons

Initially we listened to LaTonya-san’s talk on how she started to cook in Japan the typical home dishes of the U. S. southern states. Then we started cooking. First our instructor explained how to secure quality food materials. All the spices and seasoning were prepared by her. The Blackened seasoning, used in the class, was LaTonya-san’s proprietary taste. It assures the superb taste of her home dishes which we cannot expect in ready-made food. She said that she often uses soy sauce.

As usual, the cooking workshop progressed in a hurried manner. Fortunately we could finish our cooking on time, largely because we wanted to taste what we had cooked. We greatly enjoyed eating self-cooked dishes.

After the cooking lesson, LaTonya-san demonstrated her beautiful voice. All the attendees joined her gospel singing and enjoyed the atmosphere of the U. S. southern states. Before we noticed, young



boys and girls from foreign countries, who were meeting in the next room, had come into the cooking room and listened to our sing-along. This workshop convinced me that tasting dishes and listening to good music have no national boundaries.

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

The 35th Minato Citizens Festival

Date: October 8 & 9, 2016

Place: Minato City Shiba Park

The annual Minato City event was partially marred by rainy weather during the morning of the weekend days. Still the total number of visitors turned out to be almost the same as in former years. There was a partial renovation inside the Shiba Park, resulting in the relocation of MUA's tent. We were somewhat concerned about a possible decline in the flow of visitors in front of our tent. However, thanks to the fact that our tent faced the passage which connects the nearest subway exit to the center stage, the result was favorable. Many people passed by and, in particular, male or elderly visitors dropped in to our tent.



Mayor Takei with MUA staff

On the second day, Sunday, Mayor Takei visited each and every tent installed in the park. We were pleased to receive his encouraging words when he visited our tent. As usual, we erected publicity panels, introducing different MUA committee activities. We also distributed flyers of forthcoming MUA events. We answered questions from the visitors and recommended interested people to join MUA.

As done in the past, we provided a mini-bazar corner for fundraising. Thanks to the cooperation from MUA members, we could raise proceeds comparable to the amount of last year's. We plan to donate the proceeds to the "East Japan Great Earthquake Children Relief Campaign." We'd like to extend our hearty thanks to MUA President Nagano, who generously offered his car for the transportation of necessary items, as well as to all the MUA members who helped with the preparation and/or wrap-up cleaning of the tent and other items.

(Written by T. Isobe, Acting Director, the Minato Citizens Festival Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

The 2016 Kanto-Block UNESCO Study Forum in Tokyo

- Theme: Together for Tomorrow -

Date: September 3 & 4, 2016

Place: Aoyama Gakuin University

This annual event is co-hosted by the National Federation of UNESCO Association in Japan (NFUAJ), the Kanto-Block UNESCO Council, and one of the six regional UNESCO Liaison Councils within the Kanto Block. This year the Tokyo UNESCO Liaison Council was the third co-host for the annual event. The forum was held at the Goucher Hall of Aoyama Gakuin University, located in Shibuya-ward, with the attendance of over 400 UNESCans and visitors.



For attraction, on the entrance wall of the main hall, the secretariat pasted the “UNESCO Senryu,” short humorous verses, which had been turned in from UNESCans. The attendees were also entertained by the chorus, presented by a Meguro-ward junior chorus group called “Cosmos,” as well as the pipe organ performance which the chapel hall boasts of.

The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Ken-ichi Mogi, a renowned neuro cerebral scientist, on “Toward creation through the networking with others.” His focus was on human relations today as well as the significance of UNESCO activities.

This year a special workshop titled “UNESCO Youth Activities Forum” was provided, dedicated to the presentations by the next-generation youth. It was an effort to rejuvenate UNESCO participants and promote cross-generational interactions.

The concurrent sessions comprised five workshops, namely “UNESCO Schools and ESD Passport,” “Juvenile Issues and Fostering of Next-generations,” “World Heritages and Future Heritages,” “Discussions on War and Peace,” and “Worldwide Terakoya Movement and International Exchange and Support.” Each session was characterized by study presentations and active Q&A developments.

The Minato UNESCO Association sent nine members and one guest to this forum. MUA’s President Hiroshi Nagano played the role of MC in the Discussions on War and Peace” session. At the end of Day 1, a reception was held from 18:30, inside the Ivy Hall located within the campus premises.

On Day 2, there was a conference among representatives from participating organizations. Also there was a workshop, titled “Field Workers Conference,” which was an opportunity to learn basic knowledge about UNESCO in an enjoyable gamified format. At the end of Day 2, it was announced that Chiba Prefecture will be the host for the forum next year.

All the related project members started preparations for this forum last summer. We had a great feeling of fulfillment after seeing the successful completion of the 2-day event which was enabled through joint efforts with other regional projects.

(Written by T. Kobayashi, the Membership Committee, and R. Sato, Chairperson of the International Science & 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:

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