



No. 157: December 1, 2019

Let's hand down the UNESCO philosophy without being confused by political developments

Hiroshi Nagano, President, Minato UNESCO Association



To our regret, the relationship between Japan and South Korea has turned increasingly sour in recent years. Still the representatives from the Federation of UNESCO Associations in South Korea have annually participated in the national convention held by Japan's counterpart organization. In retrospect, the bilateral relationship has undergone a cycle of improvement and aggravation. It is not likely that the sentiment of an individual citizen suddenly changes to the opposite direction without any reason. After all, the mentality of ordinary people cannot be exempt from the changes in bilateral political developments. When I see historical visual images, I suspect that, in the past, people's negative sentiment about political developments culminated to an unexpected degree and resulted in warfare. We are fortunate today because a reasonable level of mechanism has been established to deter such a negative escalation. However, when we turn our eyes to the world, we regret to notice that there have been ongoing regional conflicts. Indeed we are facing concerns of potential conflicts in Asia as well

UNESCO was created after the end of WWII, in the hope that world peace be established through the promotion of activities in education, science and culture. During the years immediately following Japan's defeat, the UNESCO's philosophy was enthusiastically hailed throughout the country against the backdrop of people's ardent aspiration for peace. In recent years, to our regret, people's enthusiasm for UNESCO seems to have declined as Japan has not experienced any war during the long postwar years.

However we should not forget that history repeats itself. To prevent it from happening, each one of us must have a well-established value concept at the base of our behavior. Otherwise we may be carried away by demagoguery and forget our original committed value. As we all know, the preamble of the UNESCO constitution goes, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." I trust that this UNESCO philosophy should be shared and sustained firmly in the mind of each individual because it will have a greater meaning in the future. It is fortunate that people in our neighbor countries have also endorsed the UNESCO philosophy. Indeed, to our great pleasure, the joint UNESCO program, participated by China, Japan and South Korea, has been maintained regardless of the fluctuation in political sentiments.

As mentioned earlier, Japan has been through a long peaceful period since the end of the last war. This environment has caused the UNESCO philosophy in Japan, which once symbolized people's fervent aspiration for world peace, to become almost like a good luck charm for the elderly. Therefore it is the utmost challenge for us today to revitalize the UNESCO philosophy and hand it down to younger generations. During the immediate postwar years, mass media in Japan also hailed the UNESCO mission and extensively reported about it. However, we cannot expect it to happen today.

This is indeed a trying time for regional UNESCO associations in Japan to prove their worth by
(To be continued on P. 3)

Reception for MUA New Members

-Orientation on our activities and convivial gathering-

Date: June 14, 2019 18:15 --

Place: Minato City Life-Long Learning Center

Eleven new members participated in the reception this year, and the gathering was a blast through its end. Mr. Hiroshi Nagano, President of MUA, and Mr. Kensuke Kikuchi, Vice President, gave welcoming remarks. Mr. Hisashi Tsuno, newly appointed as Secretary General, was introduced to everyone. Then, Ms. Masayo Akiyama, Standing Director, introduced each new member.



Next, representatives from MUA committees gave brief presentations on the outline of their respective activities with a hope that many new members join the committees and participate in the planning and operating activities.

One of the most notable activities of this year is that Youth Committee was reestablished under the leadership of Mr. Shigekatsu Mineo, Director. With a great effort extended by Mr. H. Nagano as well as Ms. M. Akiyama, it was restarted in the form of collaboration with UNESCO Club of Keio University, represented by Miss Mako Tsutsui and Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT), led by Mr. Tsuyoshi Sasaki, Professor of TUMSAT.

In addition to the above mentioned introduction to the new activity, the orientation was proceeded on to other plans for this year as shown below:

We currently have a plan to present a symposium every year with a main theme of “thinking of peace” with Ms. Aya Yokoi, United Nations University – Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability as a central figure. Japanese Speech Contest is planned to be held three times. Zazen Trial Class, Hands-on Cultural Workshop on The Japanese Folk Song & Folklore, Dialog with the UNESCO committee students of Tokyo Metropolitan Mita Senior High School will continue to be presented. We also will continue our efforts to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with Tokyo UNESCO Liaison Council and National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan.

Then, the convivial gathering was held in MUA’s secretariat office. We all enjoyed a very cheerful and friendly atmosphere and the gathering was closed in a hope to have a fruitful year.



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

Dialog with the UNESCO committee students of Tokyo Metropolitan Mita Senior High School

Date & Time: 16:00 – 17:15, June 20

Place: Sakurada Memorial Room of Minato City
Lifelong Learning Center

A total of twenty-two students of the UNESCO committee of Tokyo Metropolitan Mita Senior High School, led by Ms. Tamiko Suzuki, a teacher, visited Minato UNESCO Association. This was the eighth visit in eight consecutive years. Mr. H. Nagano, President of MUA, talked about the significant grass-roots UNESCO activities in Japan, referring to Constitution of UNESCO which first declares that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed. Then, Mr. G. Shimizu, Director of MUA, explained his miserable experience during the World War II (hereafter “WWII”). He not only spoke but also sang, along with accompaniments by himself on the accordion, songs sung quite often to encourage people during the period of WWII in Japan. He added some explanation on the sentiment of people of the time when they sang those songs.

After the visit, Ms. Suzuki kindly forwarded us the letters written by all the students participated in this visit. We took the liberty of showing summary of the letters below:

- I could understand misery of people under the war.
- I was astonished to know that even people evacuated to provinces to avoid the maelstrom of war, they only lived cheek by jowl with the danger and not safe at all.
- I understood the importance and value of peace.
- I strongly felt that we the member of UNESCO committee are obliged to tell the story we heard today and our determination not to start a war again to the next generation.

All of these letters are made available for your review at the secretariat office.



Center row (from left): MUA Director Mr. Shimizu, Ms. Tamiko Suzuki and MUA President Mr. Nagano

(Written by H. Tsuno, Secretary General, and translated by Y. Suda, the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

(Continued from P. 1): Let's hand down the UNESCO philosophy

action. As for the Minato UNESCO Association, we have embarked on various joint programs in local partnership with the UNESCO committee of the Mita High School, the UNESCO clubs of the Keio University and Tamagawa University as well as the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology. We hope that our activities will help expand the awareness about UNESCO among young people, and that our steady efforts will contribute to the realization of world peace from a long-term viewpoint.

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

The First 2019 Cross-cultural Awareness Lecture
The Joy of Appreciating the Jomon Beauty

Speaker: Mr. Yoshiya Shinagawa, Chief Curator of Archeology
Curatorial Research Dept., Tokyo National Museum

Date: Friday, June 21, 2019

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center



We had the pleasure of having Mr. Shinagawa as the speaker of this event. He gave a most interesting audio-visual presentation, drawing on the special exhibition titled “Jomon – the echo of the beauty that lasted for 10 thousand years,” which was held in Tokyo in July 2018. This exhibition attracted over 350 thousand visitors, reflecting the growing interest in Jomon among ordinary people. The start of modern archaeology in Japan dates back to the discovery of the Omori shell mounds in Tokyo. The discoverer was Edward S. Morse, an American zoologist, who came to Japan in 1878. He discovered the shell mounds while moving from Yokohama to Shimbashi. This discovery gave birth to the Japanese word “Kokogaku” as a scientific terminology in Japan. The following is a summary of Mr. Shinagawa’s presentation, focusing on the formative beauty of the Jomon artifacts:

Introduction

Historical review of the Jomon period:

- Time duration: Approx. 10,000 years from 11,000 B. C. to 2,400 B. C.
- Physical expanse: The Jomon period is generally divided into six chronological periods.
- Natural environment: During the pioneer period, the climate was as it was in the final glacier age. From the early period onward, the climate was mild and humid as it was in the late glacier period. During the early period, the climate became basically similar to today’s climate, establishing Japan’s archipelago scenery and four seasons.
- Animals: Large-size animals, including mammoth, Naumann’s elephant and large-horned deer, decreased in their presence. Small to medium-size animals, including deer and boar, came into the scene.
- Vegetation: The presence of coniferous forests was replaced by hard-nut growing trees and by the expansion of abundant deciduous and broad-leaved forests;

Definition of the Jomon

Economy and residence:

The Jomon was characterized by the acquisition-based economy where people hunted, fished, and collected or grew vegetables. As for residence, people settled down in selected places.

Discovery of earth ware and bows:

Earth ware was used mainly for cooking and for removing the harshness of hard nuts. People became aware of the useful chemical change in clay’s nature, in that it becomes hard when burned, that it becomes resistant to fire, and that it can hold water. In response to the increased presence of small to medium-size animals, people invented bows. Bows helped them in capturing fast-moving animals or those located away. In addition, people became active in fishing as the milder climate produced more inlets and bays.

The Old Stone Age was characterized by a nomadic life-style. In contrast people in the Jomon period stayed at certain places, experienced changes in their economy and life pattern, and accumulated tools for everyday life and household goods.

Chapter 1. Beauty in Life-style

The following tools were made to sustain people’s everyday life:

- Molds made by deducting from original materials: stone, bone or wooden tools. These tools were

made by hitting, cracking or carving off the natural objects while preserving the original nature or characteristic. The fishing hooks were shaped almost like those metal hooks which we use today. They had functional beauty.

- Molds made by adding to the original materials: Typical examples are earth ware made of clay. They were molded to suit people's taste. Elaborate patterns are characteristic of the Jomon earth ware. People were good at molding earth ware even in the pioneer period.
- Japanese lacquer tools: People strengthened the waterproof resistance, durability and decorative nature of tools by Japanese lacquer coating.
- Tools for decoration and ornaments:
 - Red, black and green colors meant something special for the Jomon people. They painted these colors on important objects or special figures.
 - Fashion known from clay figures such as the owl figures found in Saitama City. People used to put hair ornaments on the head and wear pierced earrings.
 - Earrings worn on important occasions in life: Fairly large-size earrings, found in Chofu City in Tokyo, seem to be used by middle-aged women. The size and patterns of the earrings seem to symbolize the different status of one's life such as the coming of age, marriage or menopause, as well as one's family lineage. They also represented wearers' responsibility in proportion to their affiliations.
 - Coveted shellfish ornaments (Found in Funabashi City, Chiba Prefecture): People, who lived in places where they could not get shellfish, molded clay into a shellfish shape. It represented their strong yearning for real shellfish ornaments.
 - Ornaments worn to represent people's yearning or fear of certain animals (Found in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture): It seems that people wanted to demonstrate their strength by wearing animal ornaments, made from boar's tusks or shark's teeth, for example. They wanted to acquire the strength, wisdom and vital power.

Chapter 2. Different way of producing beauty

During the approx. 10,000-year period, the molded beauty of the Jomon earth ware underwent persistent changes.

- Filled-up beauty (in the pioneer to early periods); Found in Matsudo City, Chiba Prefecture)

People enjoyed as ornaments the traces of ropes and bamboos which were used as tools.

- Pasted beauty (in the middle period); Found in Tokamachi City, Niigata Prefecture.

Earth ware in the shapes of a flame (right photo), a crown or clouds of sprayed water.

Several layers of clay were pasted, producing abundant ornamented strength.



- Drawing beauty (in the latter period); Found in Hachinohe City, Aomori Prefecture. People drew lines or gave rope traces, in an effort to highlight the design.
- Judging from the changes in the variety of earth ware, we can presume that the dietary habit or occasion to use earth ware underwent changes.
- The Jomon mold is characterized by the "Group Personality" as a rule. In the Jomon period, there was not any recognized individual personality of the earth ware creators. Earth ware items were created not by an individual's intention but based on the approval of all neighbors. People strengthened the group's integrity or unity, observing the rule to use the same shape and the same pattern when they created earth ware.

Chapter 3. Beauty from international comparison viewpoints

During the middle period of Jomon, people in different places over Eurasia were already engaged in agriculture or cattle raising. City states or nation states were also built where people started the production of metal ware. Major examples of earth ware found at different places:

- The Yellow River plateau in China: Simple ware printed with metrical patterns
- The Indus Valley in India: Simple ware printed with animal, vegetation or metrical patterns
- Egypt: Simple and practical ware. Metal or precious stones were used to demonstrate dignity

During the Jomon period, the stability in settled life-style lasted long and provided opportunities for creating beautiful ware. Also, due to the lack in international exchanges, a very unique molding beauty in the Jomon ware, peculiar to Japan was created.

Chapter 4. Crown jewels with the Jomon beauty

Among the Jomon ware, there are only six items which were designated as national treasures in different years as follows:

1995: Venus of the Jomon

1999: Flame-shaped earth ware

2008: Center-vacant clay figure

2009: Clay prayer figure with joined hands

2012: Goddess of the Jomon

2014: Masked Goddess of the Jomon

All of these national treasures were exhibited during the said special exhibition held last year.

Chapter 5. Beauty and forms in prayer

It is estimated that clay figures were produced to wish for safe and productive offspring delivery as well as rich harvest.

- An early-time figure was a 3.1 cm-high Goddess (Found in Ohmi City, Shiga Prefecture)

A final-period figure was 34.2 cm-high goggle-eyed figure (Found in Tsugaru City, Aomori Prefecture) (right photo)

The size and shape of figures as well as the number of people who participated in festivals had undergone changes.

- Faces of figures: They seem to represent festival masks or death masks.
- Human-shaped earth ware: Those, found in Fujimi-cho in Nagano Prefecture, seem to represent the back of a human carrying a vessel and symbolize people's wish for rich harvest. Those, found in Alps City in Yamanashi Prefecture, are attached with doll ornaments and seem to represent a human raising one arm for giving some signals.
- Animal figures: The most abundantly molded figure is that of the boar. The boar figures are estimated to represent people's wish for offspring reproduction and strength.
- Figures representing ideal interrelation between humans and animals: Those, found in Hachinohe, Aomori Prefecture, represent hunting scenes. The dog-shaped figure, found in Tochigi City, Tochigi Prefecture, seem to represent hunting dogs.



- Figures representing love between parents and children

Those earth ware, found in Kitamori City, Yamanashi Prefecture, have faces, similar to those of the clay figures attached to the brim and also have faces at the torso. The entire shape of the earth ware seem to represent mothers' body and symbolize offspring delivery. Some clay figures seem to represent baby fondling gesture.

Those earth ware, found in Rokkasho Mura, Aomori Prefecture, have hands or foot prints which were produced by physical pressing. The ratio of stillbirth and infant fatality was much higher in the Jomon period than today. The earth ware and clay figures seem to represent the parent-child close bond as well as their wish and prayer for healthy child growth.

Chapter 6. Newly spun beauty

There are different creators and artists who have discovered and loved the charm in the Jomon earth ware and figures. They have perceived such items not as archaeological objects but as artistic expressions. Such perception has helped them to produce new beauty.

(Written by T. Isobe, Standing Director, the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR & Internet Committee)

Hands-on Workshop for Self-dressing Yukata

Date: Saturday, June 29

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

In this workshop, more than half of the participants were foreigners. It was a pleasure to introduce Japan's culture in this class and promote friendly interaction among Japanese and foreign participants.

The program proceeded as follows:

- ①Lecture on the history of Yukata
- ②Instructor's demonstration on how to self-dress Yukata
- ③Participants' practice for self-dressing
- ④Commemorative photo shooting of all participants dressed in Yukata
- ⑤Self-introduction of participants and networking
- ⑥Exercise of how to fold Yukata once taken off



Major comments from the participants:

- I'm thankful for Mom to let me participate in this workshop with her.
- My objective was to learn how to dress my daughter, a university student, in Yukata.
- I was intrigued by the fact that foreigners have learned Yukata-dressing more frequently than the Japanese.
- I was once dressed up in Yukata by a rental shop clerk. I'm very happy I could self-dress Yukata for the first time. (Foreigner)
- I just love Yukata. (Foreigner)
- It's so rewarding to learn how to self-dress Yukata (Foreigner)

Comments from MUA staff:

Yukata, a symbol of Japan's summer season, has been more widely worn than any other type of Japanese dress. It became very popular among the young generation recently. More inbound tourists started to either purchase Yukata, designed for easy self-dressing, or rent it at a reasonable cost. The popularity of Yukata may be attributable to the growing motivation for young people to upload their Yukata-clad images on the Internet.



(Written by K. Hirakata, Vice President, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR & Internet Committee)

Call on His Excellency Mr. Mohamed ELLOUMI, Tunisian Ambassador to Japan

Date: July 9th, 2019

Place: Kudan-Minami, Chiyoda City

I visited the Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia together with MUA Vice Presidents, Mr. Kikuchi, Mrs. Okumura, Mrs. Hirakata and Mrs. Miyashita. The visit was paid in response to an inquiry on a possibility of coordination on UNESCO activities posed by His Excellency Mr. Mohamed ELLOUMI. Mr. Mohamed TOUKABRI, First Secretary, accompanied the ambassador.



Mr. ELLOUMI kindly explained to us that Tunisia belongs to French cultural region, has quite a few relationships with European countries, is quite well known as a resort and has a plentitude of historical heritage since Cartage destroyed by Roman Empire. He also added that Bardo National Museum among others located in capital city Tunis presents excellent exhibitions. There occurred a terrorism-related incident just in front of the museum executed by Islamic extremists in 2015. However, the security has already been restored and look forward to receiving many visitors from Japan.

On behalf of MUA, we introduced that a woman associated with Tunisian Embassy once undertook an instructor of world cooking workshop, one of MUA's activities. Since then, the relationship with her has been well maintained and eventually held a farewell party when she left Japan. Thus, we at MUA have maintained mutual exchanges with Tunisian Embassy to date.

I also explained my personal experience that I happened to meet Mr. ELLOUMI at a meeting sponsored by an international foundation back in 2014 when Mr. ELLOUMI was then in office, and further back in 2004, I had an opportunity to exchange opinions on how to proceed the bi-lateral exchanges between our countries with His Excellency Mr. Salah HANNACHI who was an ambassador to Japan at that time. I was quite impressed by one of the stories I heard in 2004 on the Republic of Tunisia that the number of female university students exceeded that of male, accounting for over 50% of total number of university students. According to a researcher of Tsukuba University who majored in the northern part of Africa, especially Tunisia, the Sahara seemed to be uninhabitable for most of creatures. In spite of such an image, various creatures actually live under a layer of sand, and, thus, is rich in biodiversity. I remember these two stories quite well as they were perhaps beyond my mediocre imagination.



Center: His Excellency Mr. Mohamed ELLOUMI
Far right: First Secretary Mr. Mohamed TOUKABRI

(To be continued on P. 10)

World Cooking Workshop Home Dishes in Mongolia

Date: Saturday, July 20, 2019

Place: Minato City Gender-equality Center

We had the pleasure of having two instructors for this workshop. They were recommended by Ms. Yoshiko Nagato, who heads the Utsunomiya UNESCO Association and the Inter-Cultural Community Life Association (ICCLA). One is Ms. Shirendev Oyun-Erdene (nicknamed as Maya-sensei) who is studying in the master's degree course at the graduate school of Utsunomiya University. She has researched the civil engineering in Asian countries, and has abundant experiences in volunteer activities, including the introduction of Mongolian culture. The other is Ms. Batsukh Unubileg (nicknamed as Uno-sensei) who is working on a dissertation titled "A comparative study of Japanese and Mongolian NGO's engaged in international cooperative activities." Apart from her research, she is teaching Japanese to Mongolian children who live in Japan. Both of our two instructors are enthusiastic about the interaction between Japan and Mongolia and are quite fluent in Japanese.



Uno-sensei and Maya-sensei



At first, we enjoyed a visual-centric presentation on Mongolia. Uno-sensei kicked off the slide show, saying hello in Mongolian. After this, she spoke in Japanese and explained the climate and history of Mongolia. We learned that the country has extensive plain areas, and that the temperature fluctuates substantially within a year. Next, Maya-sensei introduced Mongolian festivals and children's major plays and toys, thereby presenting the vibrant lifestyle in the country.

Finally the time came for us to try hands-on cooking. We were informed that people in Mongolia often use beef or mutton in their cooking. In this workshop, we used beef for the following dishes.

Day's Menu:

1. Huushuur

Wrap up the ingredient, comprising ground beef, finely chopped garlic and onion, which were seasoned by salt and pepper, by a sheet of kneaded wheat flour. Fold it to half size and fry it. Serve it, garnished by kimchi. (Middle in the upper row in the photo)

2. Tsuiwan

This is a pasta dish. Steam a sheet of kneaded wheat flour and, after it cooled down, cut it into thin pasta. Add thickly cut onion, beef and potato to the pasta, and fry it. Season it with salt and pepper. Scatter scallion over it. (Middle in the lower row in the photo)

3. Niislel (Salad)

Prepare boiled potato and carrot, sliced cucumber and thickly cut ham (all pieces shaped in 1cm-sided square). Add boiled egg and dress it with mayonnaise. Put Italian parsley over it. (Left in the lower row in the photo)



To be continued on P. 10)

The Beginners Course for Tea Ceremony

Date & Time: Mondays on May 27, June 24 & July 22 at 18:00 – 20:00

Place: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

This course is titled “Let’s taste Matcha tea casually” and is held monthly for three times. Our instructor is Ono Sokei who is a dedicated instructor of the Ura-Senke School. The course fee is ¥6,000 (¥2,000 per class). Our students will learn the basics, including how to taste Matcha tea, how to handle tea-ceremony utensils, and how to fix Matcha.



We designed this casual course in response to the growing interest among citizens to learn Japan’s traditions or to share such traditions with foreigners. It started in June last year. In the next series, we plan to offer a ¥1,000 discount for MUA members. We hope to see more participants from MUA members in the future.

(Written by K. Hirakata, Vice President, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 8) Call on His Excellency Mr. Mohamed ELLOUMI

Toward the end of our meeting, we finally reached the core topic on how we could proceed with the mutual cooperation. We at MUA started off the discussion inquiring about the possibility of having an instructor for our world cooking workshop and also a speaker of a lecture meeting from Tunisian Embassy. Mr. ELLOUMI and Mr. TOUKABRI, in turn, inquired about the possibility of MUA establishing an opportunity to introduce Tunisia using a lot of large pictures archived in the embassy, and so on. Though we need to further study the viable way to realize these ideas, we feel that we could start with the world cooking workshop on authentic Tunisian dishes.

(Written by H. Nagano, President, and translated by Y. Suda, the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

(Continued from P. 9) Home dishes in Mongolia

The kneaded wheat flour sheet, used for Huushuur and Tsuiwan, were prepared beforehand by the instructors, helped by MUA staff. These sheets, well prepared and soft, were easy to handle during the cooking process. During the sample eating, participants expressed their impression, saying, “The texture feeling is different from Japanese meat-and-vegetable fried dumplings or noodle grilled with vegetables” or “The taste of the sheet is palatable.” After eating the cooked dishes, we enjoyed drinking milk tea (Right in the lower row in the photo), which is milk tea with salty taste, and eating Mongolian cookies (Left and right in the upper row in the photo). All tables became vibrant and friendly, with participants interacting closely with the instructors.

(Written by M. Yanagimoto, the World Cooking Committee, and translated by S. Tanahashi, the PR & Internet Committee)

MUA Visit to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Tokyo

Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2019

Place: Moto-Azabu, Minato City

A group of 26 participants, headed by President Nagano of MUA and including its members and their families, visited the Chinese Embassy located in Moto-Azabu. At first, Ms. WANG Xiaoying, Political Section Attaché, kindly introduced to us Mr. NI Jlan, Political Section Minister Councilor, and Mr. SHAO Hongwei, Political Section First Secretary. In response, Mr. Kobayashi, MUA Standing Director, introduced MUA President Nagano to the Chinese hosts. We had the pleasure of receiving the following welcome speech and presentation, respectively, from Minister Councilor NI and the First Secretary SHAO, concerning China today.

Welcome speech by Minister Councilor NI

Mass media has reported that the bilateral relations between China and Japan already recovered to the normal level, owing to the repeated meetings held between Prime Minister Abe and Chairman Si Jinping at the G20 Osaka Summit and other events. However, in order to build a nation-to-nation friendship, it is very important to promote grassroots, citizen-to-citizen interactions. I think we should let you know what occupies Chinese people's minds so that a favorable neighbor country relationship can be established. Based on our two countries' interaction, which has lasted for over 2,000 years, we should promote face-to-face dialog. From this viewpoint, I welcome whole-heartedly this meeting, which will strengthen our friendship with the Minato UNESCO Association, as a foothold of the state-level bilateral relations.

Viewing of the movie "Spring Festival"

We enjoyed watching an approx. 30-minute-long movie on a large theater screen. It highlighted a variety of traditional ways how Chinese people celebrate the New Year in different regions.

Presentation by First Secretary SHAO

A very informative speech, accompanied by slide show, was given concerning the following subjects:

- In China, there are 23 administratively divided provinces, five self-governed districts (including Inner Mongolia, Guangxi Zhuang, Tibet, Xinjiang Uighur), four directly governed cities (Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Chongqing), and two special administrative areas (Hong Kong and Macau). The population is almost 1.4 billion, ten-fold of Japan's, accounting for 18.6% of the world's total populations. In Japan, approx. 950 thousand Chinese live on a long-term basis and approx. 8.3 million Chinese visit Japan as short-term tourists.
- Long history and ancient civilization
China's history dates back to four thousand years ago, the time of Hsia Dynasty. During the long history, familiar names such as Terracotta Army, Battle of Three States, and the Silk Road became known. In 2013, the Chinese government launched the One Belt One Road initiative which spans even Nara, a place related with the Great Osho Jianzhen, in Japan.
- The following four world's earliest inventions were accomplished in China:
Type printing, gun powder, compass and paper
- Chinese characters comprises as many as 3,000 to 4,000 ideograph characters. Later they travelled to Japan and were converted into "Soshō" characters, followed by "Hirakana" and "Katakana" characters.
- Multi-ethnic country: China consists of 56 different races and languages, including those in Tibet, Mongolia and Uighur.
- Theatrical plays: The traditional Beijing opera is registered as an intangible UNESCO heritage.
Paper cutting skill: It is also counted among the said heritages.
Musical instrument: Lute and other traditional string instruments are well known.

- Major annual events
 - Spring Festival (Old New Year's Day): People in the north-side of the Yanzu River like jiaozi whereas those on the south-side prefer wonton dumplings.
 - Shang Yuan Festival (January 15 on the old calendar): People celebrate it by moon-viewing, dumpling eating and lantern lighting.
 - Boys' Festival: May 5 on the old calendar.
 - Harvest Festival: People eat round moon cakes.

- Education

The compulsory education lasts nine years, comprising a 6-year elementary schooling and a 3-year junior high schooling. About 140 million youngsters learn at 230,000 different places. Graduates advance to senior high schools and on to universities. About 26 million students study at universities located at 3,000 locations. Of these 7.5 million accomplish their graduation.

- World heritages

China boasts a total of 55 UNESCO world heritages, comprising 37 cultural, 14 natural, and four compound heritages. The Great Wall, one of the most renowned among them, was constructed for defense purpose, not for offense. Other popular heritages include the Forbidden City (the Old Palace), the Yungang Grottoes, the Classic Garden of Suzhou, the Potala Palace of Lhasa, Sinkiang Tien Shan, Sichuan Giant Panda, and the terraced rice fields in Yunnan Province.

- UNESCO activities

The first lady, wife of Chairman Si Jinping, received the title of “Special Ambassador for the Education of Children and Women” from the UNESCO headquarters. She has been active in her mission internationally. In February 1979, a national committee was organized by the Education Department, playing a central role, and the activities have been promoted by public offices in 30 different divisions. In 2013, Deputy Manager of China’s Education Department was assigned as Chairperson of the 7th World UNESCO Conference. Promotion of education and preservation of culture have been the central objectives in different public areas.

As for the private sector, 59 UNESCO clubs were established in 1986 which involved the participation of Beijing’s Board of Education and schools. Their shared slogan is “Let us interact with other countries with the objective to disseminate the peaceful and respectable philosophy of UNESCO.” Major financial resources for operation are funded by the government, with the rest provided by donations.



The Embassy of PRC in Japan

On September 29, 1972, diplomatic relations were established between China and Japan. Next year, both countries opened their respective embassies. PRC’s embassy was initially opened inside

the premises of Hotel New Otani. In 1978 the embassy relocated to Moto-Azabu in Minato City. Later on, the Friendship Exchange Department was organized with a mission to further promote public policies by private sector's efforts.

This embassy visit was wrapped up by taking a commemorative photo (P. 12 bottom) of all participants, in the hope that further interactions be promoted under the UNESCO philosophy.

(Written by T. Kobayashi, Standing Director, the Membership Committee, and translated with partial abridgement by S. Tanahashi, the PR & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 14) From the UNESCO Press Release

In recent months, UNESCO has:

- **Stepped up its work to coordinate** international actors in the field of education through important events: the G7 Education Ministers Meeting in July at UNESCO, and the SDG4 Steering Committee during the General Conference.
- **Begun focusing on the future** by launching the important initiative The « Futures of Education ». The consultation process has begun, following the launch of the initiative at the United Nations General Assembly at the end of September. An international commission, bringing together experts from various fields and regions around the world, was created under the leadership of Sahle-Work Zewde, the President of Ethiopia. The Commission will produce a global report on the Futures of Education in November 2021.
- **Launched other important initiatives:** « Her Education, Our Future » was launched at the G7 Summit in July, in the presence of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai and French President Emmanuel Macron. This initiative aims to collect reliable data with a view to taking effective action to support gender equality in and through education; improve legal and political frameworks and plans to advance rights; and implement better teaching and learning practices.
- **Two education initiatives yielded results during this General Conference:**
- The Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, which is the culmination of long-term efforts in favour of fairer and more transparent higher education. The convention will support the recognition of studies carried out abroad, facilitating academic mobility for students and professors. In practice, this text will ensure that the competencies of migrants and refugees are recognized and that they can access higher education, by removing a major legal obstacle. This convention will enter into force after being ratified by 20 countries. It will support inter-regional academic mobility and the implementation of universal principles for the recognition of qualifications. It will build on UNESCO's five regional conventions on the recognition of higher education qualifications.

Refugees will also benefit from the General Conference's second major achievement in the field of education and higher education: the Qualifications Passport for Refugees and Vulnerable Migrants, which is currently being tested in Zambia. Initial results are extremely encouraging, and show how these kinds of legal tools can improve refugees' everyday lives and mobility. Iraq and Colombia will be the next countries to pilot the initiative.

In parallel, over 100 education ministers and 100 representatives of universities taking part in the UNESCO Chairs programme met to discuss ways of encouraging a more inclusive "global campus" that can support better student mobility and handle rapidly growing enrolment in higher education.

Other initiatives during the General Conference focused on contemporary issues:

Science:

The General Conference decided to embark on a consultative, inclusive and participatory process to define a new **global normative instrument on Open Science** – the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science to be adopted by UNESCO Member States in 2021. (Excerpted)

From the UNESCO Press Release

UNESCO's 40th General Conference confirms the Organization's historic turnaround and its repositioning on contemporary issues (28 November 2019)



“We are entering a phase of renewal,” said Audrey Azoulay, the Director-General of UNESCO, summing up the fortieth session of the General Conference, which took place from 12 to 27 November. Noting that after more than 20 years of cuts and setbacks, the budget situation had returned to normal, she underlined that, “by accepting an increase in contributions, a rare event in the UN system today, Member States expressed their confidence in the direction given to UNESCO over the past two years, and especially its strategic transformation.”

The UNESCO General Conference brings together all 193 Member States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization once every two years.

As demonstrated by the attendance of so many political leaders, UNESCO is once again a venue for global conversation. Participants included:

- 14 Heads of State and Government
- 100 education and higher education ministers
- 122 culture ministers
- United Nations Secretary-General, Mr António Guterres
- The President of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
- The President of the host country, Mr Emmanuel Macron

UNESCO has rekindled its ambition to influence today's world, by addressing current and future issues.

Of these issues, education tops the list of priorities for Member States and UNESCO. UNESCO is responsible for coordinating the international community's actions to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), quality education for all. It transforms this ambitious goal into ideas, deeds and laws.

(To be continued on P. 13)

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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