

Let's make our society more innovation-oriented while also maintaining Japan's sophisticated values

NAGANO Hiroshi, President of the Minato UNESCO Association



Progress in technology has been amazingly rapid. We can't spend a single day without using a mobile phone. The other day I noticed while passing a Keio Line exit that I had lost my smartphone. I immediately submitted a search request to the lost & found office at the station. Fortunately, it turned out that a passenger had kindly turned in the smartphone to a nearby railway station. Last year I lost my precious pocketbook while on board the Oedo Line subway. In this incident, I also experienced a fortunate case of being helped by an honest passenger. In contrast, I remember that I had my pocket picked three times on the subway in Paris. We are blessed to live in a country where people still retain honesty as a human value.

The above experiences motivated me to take a cross-cultural look into the behavior of average Japanese. Let's take a case of mask wearing. Mass media reports that, in several Euro-American countries, citizens were infuriated by the governments' mandate for mask wearing and went into riots. In contrast, the pandemic spread in Japan has been comparatively curbed well even though the government measures taken against the coronavirus has been not well organized. A decisive factor must be each citizen's awareness & proactive practice to wear masks and wash hands.

However, there are practices in Japan which I do not like. For example, a traffic sign was recently installed on a 2-meter-wide narrow street, close to my home, where we rarely see car traffic. I don't think a traffic sign is necessary there because any car driver, who sees a pedestrian, can easily stop. In reality, most pedestrians disregard red light and cross the street although some wait until the sign okays. Once, when I crossed the street at red light, a policeman came up to me from the Koban and cautioned me not to do so because other pedestrians were waiting for green light. I know he did only what a policeman is expected to do. However, this incident poses two issues. First, the traffic sign was installed without any public hearing about its necessity. Second, the policeman cautioned me based on the conform to the norm principle. Let me elaborate on the latter mindset.

Today one of the largest challenges in the world economy is how to foster innovative startups. Regrettably, Japan lags behind in the number of startups. Unless Japan eradicates the die-hard conformist culture where people hammer down a peg that sticks up, we cannot expect timely emergence of societal innovations, including the birth of unicorns. According to a professor who has established the highest score in launching startups from the University of Tokyo, he cannot receive even today wholehearted respect for entrepreneurial efforts from the ivory tower.

Let's turn our eyes to UNESCO activities. The civilian UNESCO movements have enabled

regional UNESCO associations to undertake in their own style efforts to pursue peace. It embodies well the spirit of grass-roots activities which prioritize the importance of respective values. It is truly amazing to know that this bottom-up grass-roots power enabled Japan's accession to UNESCO even before the end of Allied Forces' occupation of Japan. Regrettably, however, many leaders in regional UNESCO associations, who have been driving forces under the banner of world peace, are old today. Therefore, the largest challenge is how to hand over the UNESCO activities successfully to the succeeding young generation. In Tokyo, a new initiative named "2000 Project" is underway, in an effort to double the members, especially young people, who would share the UNESCO spirit. I sincerely hope that we can strengthen UNESCO activities by welcoming innovative & disruptive ideas while also maintaining good sophisticated Japanese values.

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No. 165: December 1, 2021

What future course should we pursue once the pandemic settled under control?

NAGANO Hiroshi, President of the Minato UNESCO Association



First of all, I sincerely hope that, despite the emergence of a Delta variant of the new corona virus, all of you have maintained good health. Frankly speaking, I did not expect initially that the pandemic would last so long. Nor did I expect it to force the Tokyo Olympic/Paralympic Games to be held without spectator attendance. However, history teaches us not to be so optimistic as to expect the pandemic to settle down in a year or so. It is demonstrated by the cases of the pest which raged during the Medieval Ages or the Spanish flu which persisted 100 years ago. I should have recollected such historical facts.

On the other hand, it is a blessing that, thanks to the advancement of science & technology, mankind could develop and obtain necessary vaccine in less than one year. Regrettably, however, Japan lagged behind in both vaccine development and vaccination. This caused us to squarely face the reality that Japan's relative strength in science & technology has been dwindling internationally. We share the notion that the only asset Japan possesses is human brain. From this viewpoint, we cannot envision a bright future for Japan if the government continues to fail in valid investment in science & technology.

The corona virus has also extensively inflicted negative impact on the activities undertaken by regional UNESCO association. The Minato UNESCO Association was no exception. We were forced to cancel quite a few planned programs. To cope with the new normal, we started to introduce

information technology such as ZOOM. This shift is quite challenging and we are yet to fully acquire necessary skills. Still, as a starter, we held last year an annual symposium, featuring the start of the U. N. Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Many people from Hokkaido to Kyushu participated in this event. Formerly the attendees to MUA programs were limited to those who live in the neighboring communities. Therefore, this shift marked an epoch-making revolution of MUA activities, brought about by the pandemic.

What would our society look like after the corona virus settled down? Without any doubt, it would not be in the same shape as it was before. It would be characterized not only by an expanded use of information technology but also by many other factors. For example, we will have to reconsider such issues as whether or not we should continue our daily commutation to offices, where we should live, whom we should work for, or what is the source of happiness for mankind, etc.

In addition, large-scale societal issues, including global warming caused by climate change, will become increasingly an integral part of our life. This may end up in a drastic change in our perception of values. Regional UNESCO organizations which have undertaken diversified activities toward a shared goal to realize world peace will be required to work out their own vision on desirable priorities and objectives. We at MUA will also make still more efforts, based on our shared vision, to undertake such activities as are meaningful for an evolving society.

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

No. 164: September 1, 2021

A thought upon the 70th anniversary of Japan's accession to UNESCO

NAGANO Hiroshi, President of the Minato UNESCO Association



This year marks the 70th anniversary of Japan's accession to UNESCO, admitted in 1951. Japan was then still under the occupation of the U. S. military forces, and was yet to gain independence under the San Francisco peace treaty. Therefore, I trust this UNESCO membership brought to Japanese people a great hope for the future. In retrospect, the grassroots UNESCO movement started in Sendai soon after Japan's defeat in WWII, and it worked as a driving force to attain the UNESCO membership. It is not hard for us to imagine how much Japanese people in those days aspired for peace.

I have a memory in my childhood of learning a phrase that went "Japan should become a Switzerland in the Orient." I don't think the intention of the phrase was to follow the suit of

Switzerland in the preservation of natural beauty. Rather, it must have meant a longing for a future image of Japan like Switzerland, a country which has maintained peace as a permanently neutral country.

Realization of world peace, which is the ideal of UNESCO, is an extremely challenging task in reality. We are seeing battles and coup d'états under way internationally while state-to-state frictions emerge one after another in East Asia. Regrettably, we don't have any quick medicine to remedy these conflicts. The only means to eradicate root causes, I trust, would reside in promoting cross-cultural understanding and providing education to foster inclusive mind.

However, it would require time and resources to put the said means into action. In addition, expected betterments are not likely to occur under the direction of a single influential figure. In Japan, a bill was recently passed to cope with increasing cases of hate speech. In the U. S., a country which has been perceived as a successful model of an immigrants-inclusive country, we are seeing repeated assaults on Asian citizens, triggered by the spread of the pandemic. These cases demonstrate that the promotion of cross-cultural understanding is not an easy task.

In response to such reality in the world, UNESCO formulated in 2005 a convention which aims to "protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions." It is extremely unique in nature among other multi-lateral treaties agreed upon among nations. The world is now being tested in the implementation of the objectives proposed in this UNESCO convention.

In addition to the 70th anniversary of Japan's accession to UNESCO, this year also marks the following two milestones: (1) the 50th anniversary of "UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme." It aims to promote UNESCO Eco-Parks which are designated areas to realize harmony and coexistence between Nature and Humans. Japan has ten such parts at present. (2) the start of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, in which UNESCO is expected to take a leading role.

In view of the rising geopolitical tension in East Asia, it must be a still more important task for grassroots UNESCO movements to re-assert the UNESCO ideals and provide opportunities, to be shared domestically and internationally, to think about world peace. In this connection, it is necessary for us to call out for new members who can share the said UNESCO values. Due to the persistent pandemic, activities undertaken by regional UNESCO associations have been kept under restraint. Notwithstanding, let us maintain our steady activities in cooperation with other UNESCO associations.

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

UNESCO and the Ocean

NAGANO Hiroshi, President, the Minato UNESCO Association



This year marks the start of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030). This is an initiative, undertaken by the entire U. N. organizations, addressing the expanded shared knowledge of the ocean and sustainability of the earth. Japan is surrounded by a long stretch of coastlines and has obtained various benefits from the ocean. However, it has been accompanied, from time to time, by natural disasters such as the devastating tsunami which accompanied the Great East Japan Earthquake ten years ago.

In recent years we became aware of the environmental problems caused by plastic wastes thrown into the ocean, along with the negative impact of the climate change on the ocean. We see photographs of sea creatures which have drunk a large quantity of plastic. However, it seems we are yet to know the result of scientific research on the possible implications of plastic wastes, broken into micro pieces in the ocean, on human body after they were initially drunk by fish and secondly eaten by humans. As for the impact from the climate change, we have seen more cases where fishery in the coastal waters became less productive due to the ocean temperature rise, and where more violent typhoons have hit Japan.

UNESCO is the leading organization of the Decade of Ocean Science initiative. Why so? As shown in its name – the U. N. Education, Science and Culture Organization, it is responsible for scientific issues, including the ocean. There is a good reason for including science in UNESCO activities. Toward the end of WWII, the allied nations were engaged in a discussion to establish an international organization which would address the promotion of education and culture, in an effort to establish world peace. Initially science was not included. However, the U. S. dropped atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and this necessitated the addition of science into the organization's name. I cannot help taking a special meaning for Japan from this historical episode.

In December 2020, MUA held a symposium titled “Let's consider ways to hand down a resourceful ocean to the next generation.” The keynote speaker was Professor MICHIDA Yutaka of the Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute of the University of Tokyo. He concurrently heads the Intergovernmental Oceanography Subcommittee in Japan's National Commission for UNESCO. Due to the corona virus, MUA was forced to hold this event by an online ZOOM format for the first time. This enabled participation from different places throughout Japan.

We were fortunate to have an opening remark by Mr. TAGUCHI Yasushi who is Director-General of International Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and who is also Secretary-General of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO. Extensive discussions

were made during the symposium, focusing on what the U. N. Decade of Ocean Science addresses and specific actions to be taken.

This past January, MUA made a canal cruise along the Tokyo bay, in collaboration with Professor SASAKI Tsuyoshi of the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology and his research staff.

On board the cruising boat, a workshop was held for young attendees, ranging from elementary school pupils to university students, to learn about forests, rivers, the ocean and their interrelations. It was a good opportunity for us to observe the live view of Tokyo from the cruising boat and have a hands-on feeling of the close connection Minato City has had with the ocean.

In my childhood, people used to dig out shellfish on the beaches at low tide near Tokyo. Therefore, we felt the presence of the ocean close to our everyday life. But the environment has drastically changed over the past years. We at MUA will strive to provide casual opportunities for our members and citizens to feel close to the ocean and think squarely about various issues related to the ocean. It's all because the ocean will continue to have a critical influence on the sustainability of human life.

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No. 162: March 1, 2021

Let's create a vision of the post-pandemic society through UNESCO activities

NAGANO Hiroshi, President, the Minato UNESCO Association



The second year of the Reiwa Era (2020) will be remembered as the year of COVID-19 by the posterity. Under the proclamation of the state of emergency, human traffic such as business trips has been substantially restricted, and we are strongly requested to adapt to a “new normal” way of life, including remote working. A silver lining from this hardship includes freedom from commutation by crowded train and more flexibility in business scheduling. However, media reports on those who are at a loss because they do not have enough space for work at home.

The pandemic is likely to forcibly change our life pattern in many ways. For one thing, more digitalization will characterize our society. Indeed we often see the word “Digital Transformation,” abbreviated as DX, cited in media reports. Remote working has long been regarded as a pie in the sky in Japan but in about six months it became a new normal. DX may also cause abolition of the “Hanko” stamp which has been almost a part of the traditional Japanese culture. It seems like a typical attestation that Japan accepts changes only after it was placed under mounting external pressure.

We are now at a crossroad, individually and as a society, facing a big challenge – whether or not we can respond appropriately to the substantial change. It seems unavoidable in the post-pandemic years that changes be incorporated extensively into societal backbone systems, including working style, how to utilize time at home, how to enjoy leisure, how to educate, and how to balance cities and rural areas. It seems the most critical challenge for us is to choose between the following two approaches; to passively respond to the changing environment or to proactively create new systems out of our own ideas. I trust it is our responsibility to conceptualize, discuss and create a desirable society where all of us can be happy in the foreseeable future.

Regrettably ordinary citizens in Japan do not have enough opportunities to engage in such discussions in daily life. In this respect, the civil UNESCO activities, which originated from grassroots initiatives, offer an optimal platform to promote such discussions and actions. Here at the Minato UNESCO Association, we launched a new series of symposia titled “Let’s think about peace” from 2019. The first symposium aimed at how to learn SDGs and take necessary actions, drawing on cases of individual and regional efforts which have addressed the climatic changes. In the second symposium, scheduled this month, we will promote attendees’ understanding of the ocean which has a deciding impact on the humans’ survival, thereby heightening their awareness of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development initiative which will start next year.

Keeping the UNESCO Constitution philosophy in mind, we at MUA will provide continued opportunities for its members and citizens to discuss what kind of society we should hand down to the following generations.

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

No. 161: December 1, 2020

**Japan’s reality, as exposed by the coronavirus pandemic, and
challenges to its future**

NAGANO Hiroshi, President, the Minato UNESCO Association



All the world has been in turmoil since early this year, with the alarming news on the new coronavirus pandemic. Not a single day has passed without our exposure to such news provided by mass media internationally. For those at age 75 or younger, who have not experienced any war, the stay-at-home regulation may have sounded like a bolt from the blue. Indeed, not a soul seems to have predicted the emergence of such a threat during the short course of our life.

Under the threat of the new pandemic, many issues were brought to light in Japan. Back in 2001, Japan proudly announced the e-Japan initiative to establish a digitally-competent government. It was based on Japan's advanced position at the forefront of ICT technology as well as its manifestation to become a science & technology-centric country. Today, 20 years thereafter, we are facing a reality where our government uses facsimiles for delivering information on the tested-positive citizens, and where civil servants prepare necessary lists by manually modifying the received information.

Japan is a democracy-based law-governed country without any doubt. Still the stay-at-home regulation was announced entirely on a request for cooperation basis and it was up to each individual's discretion, apart from the law, whether or not to follow it. Under this circumstance, nasty activities called "self-regulating police" have emerged.

Due to ambiguity in the division of administrative power between the state and local autonomous bodies, necessary actions were not taken timely or lacked in alignment across different local bodies. If the definition of a serious-case patient varies among different prefectures, how can we expect validity in the statistical figures? However, if we interpret this situation from a positive viewpoint, it has provided an optimal opportunity for Japan to correct what has been neglected in the past.

A majority of Japanese citizens have not been satisfied with the way the government has taken measures to fight back the coronavirus. It is because the government has not clearly expressed the objective and background of such measures while being mindful of how to encourage the shrunken economy. Under the current circumstance, the government has to consult with infection experts. However, the government does not disclose the process where such experts express their candid opinions. All information, openly announced to the public, is the aftermath of what has been coordinated between the experts and the government or politicians. People's inability to listen directly to what experts say has caused suspicion, which in turn resulted in the decline of people's trust in the government. This situation may even cause people to have criticism about the experts.

Additionally, it is difficult to understand why the minutes of the experts' discussions are not produced or made public. It is only natural that the experts and politicians have different opinions

because their backgrounds are different. If people could have the first-hand access to what the experts say and to the way politicians arrive at their decisions, based on their own logic after digesting the experts' opinions, people would understand the decision-making process and, where necessary, come up with arguments. If government continues to reject people's request for the disclosure of the process of their discussions with the experts, we cannot help concluding that the viewpoints of both the government and politicians are regrettably derailed from what citizens expect.

The pandemic, which has been a tremendous threat to the whole world, will force us to seek continuously a new system with our way of life or society at large. This won't be a simple change such as more introduction of remote working or reduced burden in commutation. We would face a

new challenge to what we have regarded as important and would need a conversion of our value system. Ultimately each one of us will be required to have a clear opinion of our own on various societal issues. To prepare for such a new normal era, it is essential that we secure a place where we can routinely talk and exchange opinions freely. This must be a clear sign that the grass-roots culture of our UNESCO activities should expand its presence further in the “new normal” society.

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

No. 160: September 1, 2020

The Delicate Sensitivity of Japanese People to be Cherished

KIKUCHI Kensuke, Vice president, Minato UNESCO Association



The rainy season will begin soon this year and I wonder why do you write "rainy season" and read it "Tsuyu"? I searched the reason as follows. It is a plum rain when the plums are ripe, it is mold rain that brings mold, but considering the taste, it was plum rainy season. "Tsuyu" is called that because tree is constantly dewed by the continuous rain. "Tsuiyu, Tsuyu" is called that because the moisture from a long rain causes food and clothes to collapse, etc., but the origin was not clear yet. After all, I think the origin of Japanese language is complicated and difficult. In addition to that, long rain from late March to April is "rapeseed (Natane) rainy season". Long rain in May is "Running rainy season". Long-term rain after the rainy season is "Return rainy season". In addition, the lunar May rain, in other words, the Baiu rainy season is also called May rain (Samidare). By these naming, the ingenuity of living that lives in harmony with nature, and the sensitivity of the Japanese people can be reminded.

In this domestic infection caused by the new coronavirus damage, each Japanese can keep social order and have a delicate caring and national character that likes cleanliness, which can be minimized from the viewpoint of the world's infection rate and it attracted attention from all over the world. However, we may have no choice but to respond to the changes in new social systems going forward.

"New normal (new lifestyle)" brings changes in social environment, I am wondering what will happen in the future, such as the wonderful national character, compassion for people, and family love that the Japanese have accumulated over a long history. The tide has changed now, rebuilding the educational system, various experiences, and analog face-to-face interaction with many people are indispensable to further enhance the sensitivity as a person and AI (artificial intelligence) conversion, Teleworking cannot be avoided. While balancing and observing the correct direction, I think the endeavor to prevent the loss of the traditional Japanese culture, such as the sensitivity of

the seasons or emotional sensitivity that we have inherited from our ancestors is a wonderful, distinctive Japanese figure from the world.

For the eyes, Aobayama, Hototogisu, First bonito.

by YAMAGUCHI Sodo, a poet in the Edo period

(Translated by MAEDA Mikihiro, the PR & Internet Committee)

No. 159: June 1, 2020

What “the Symposium Series of Thinking for Peace” Aims for NAGANO Hiroshi, President, Minato UNESCO Association



Our association started “the Symposium Series of Thinking for Peace” since last year. The first symposium was titled "What we can do for the climate change-Learning and Action for SDGs," planned and conducted by the Professor NAGATA Yoshiyuki of the University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo. The symposium was able to show unintended excitement due to the two reasons. One was heavy rain damages occurred successively on the Boso Peninsula (in Chiba Pref.) after the symposium was planned. Next, the date of the symposium was coincided with the holding time of the COP25. This is the International meeting in Madrid discussing how to achieve the target temperature increase of 1.5 to less than 2 degrees under the Paris Agreement.

Thinking the relation of the climate change and the peace, this is largely associated with the world peace. I myself was requested to take part in the panel discussion called “Climate Change” almost 10 years ago in the US and I remember struggling with what I should talk about. At that time, what I realized was that the turmoil in the Middle East and central Africa forced people to move because climate change made it difficult to secure food in some areas and this was one of the causes of the regional conflict. With that memory in my mind, I thought climate change would be the best theme for this peace symposium.

Today, the social change movement of young people is spreading around the world against the background of this climate change problem. When I visited Germany last year, I heard the FFF’s movement was amazing and I asked what did that mean and I learned it stands for Fridays For Future, a youth-led activity that seeks to combat climate change. This movement started by Swedish Greta Thunberg at the age of 15, in order to urge adults to reflect on past actions due to climate change issues, they are going to go out and press for social change, and school classes are not available on Fridays in Germany due to this movements.

When I heard the FFF for the first time, I thought it was not related to Japan for the time being. But I was able to feel the strength of young people and Japan is not abandoned with everyone at the venue by realizing Ms. OKADA Eri, 4th year student at the University of the Sacred Heart, invited by Dr. NAGATA as a panelist at this symposium, leads FFF campaign in Tokyo. Involving young people in the UNESCO movement in the city is not easy, our Minato UNESCO Association recently contacted the UNESCO Club of Keio University and in cooperation with Professor SASAKI of Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, we toured canals near Shibaura (in Tokyo) by boat and observed biological resources with students. I hope that we should be able to successfully introduce young people to the UNESCO movement and support the dissemination of young people to society. And that could be the driving force for regional UNESCO revitalization.

(Translated by MAEDA Mikihiro, the PR & Internet Committee)

No. 158: March 1, 2020

Surveillance Systems exported by Chinese Companies

MIWA Kimitada, Honorary President, the Minato UNESCO Association



When we give a glance at China's white paper on its military spending, we cannot help noticing their intention to build military bases all over the world. We should not be upset, though. It is not something we should get angry about if we face squarely the reality of antagonism between the U. S. and China. After all, it is the reality of the international politics today without any doubt.

If you give a retrospective thought on the history of the U. S. military base buildup overseas and its military interventions, you would understand China's intention and activities. In the past, we had experienced the Cold War confrontation between the U. S. and the Soviet Union, the two world's powers, for decades. That is what we call the Cold War era. Time has passed. Today it would not be any exaggeration to say that we are seeing a new Cold War emerging between the U. S. and China which exert influences all over the world.

This is an age where national defense or security cannot be perfect without the aid of Artificial Intelligence. Under the dictatorship of Chairman Xi Jinping, Chinese companies are aggressively selling surveillance systems, with built-in advanced functions, to different markets in the world. If China continues to expand the customer base of such systems, the country is expected to succeed in penetrating and changing the existing rule-based world order to their advantage. A new world order, convenient for China, may emerge from such developments.

As the citizens of a country committed to the U. S. – Japan alliance, we must be aware that China is our imagined enemy. We should be also mindful of the fact that China today boasts a large

economy in GDP comparable to the U. S. In contrast, Japan today is placed No. 5 in GDP, a far cry from the powerful status it once possessed where it was stepping up to the world's top GDP position.

In no more than twelve months, Japan will host the 2020 Tokyo Olympic & Paralympic Games. The new national athletic stadium, which will function as the main theater, will be completed soon. I sincerely hope that the visitors from all over the world will have a favorable impression about Japan and its people as a matured nation and decent citizens. (Written on July 28, 2019)

(Professor emeritus, Sophia University; Ph.D. Princeton University)

(Translated by TANAHASHI Seiichi, the PR & Internet Committee)

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 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)

No. 156: September 1, 2019

Recollection of an episode while at Colegio de Mexico

Kimitada Miwa, Honorary President of the Minato UNESCO Association

On October 1 this year, the modern China as the People's Republic of China will observe the 70th anniversary of its foundation. The driving force behind China's national development was Mao Zedong (1893 – 1976) whose life had been characterized by both praise and blame. While his contributions in beating Japan during the last war was conspicuous, he was to blame for the Cultural Revolution which precipitated the newly born China into fathomless chaos.



In this connection, I had an intriguing experience while I worked six months (September 1969 – March 1970) as a visiting professor at the Colegio de Mexico (COLMEX). Dr. Michio Nagai, then the Minister of Education, newly opened a Japanese culture course at COLMEX and asked me to be the lecturer for the course.

Dr. Nagai suggested that I lecture on the history of Japan's modernization efforts since the Meiji Restoration. It was the time when Japan had just observed the centennial of the Meiji Restoration. Japan had been regarded as a successful model in modernization. In contrast, China then was in a total chaos as the result of the Cultural Revolution which had been driven under the leadership of Chairman Mao.

In those days, there was a rising trend in universities in the U. S. to study modernization from the context of comparing Japan and China. A central figure in such an academic trend was Professor Marius B. Jansen of Princeton University. I earned my doctor's degree in historiography at Princeton with Professor Jansen as my mentor and returned to Japan in time to take part in the inauguration of the Institute of International Relations at Sophia University in Tokyo.

Upon the centennial of Japan's Meiji Restoration, the country was hailed for its peerless accomplishment of modernization in East Asia, rather than being labelled as a modern nation which had undergone defeat and failure in the Pacific War. It waded a sharp contrast with the ailing China then.

In Japan, academics engaged in historiography denounced the aforementioned pro-Japanese attitude as "Reischauer offensive to strengthen Japan as U.S. ally." It was the time when Dr. Reischauer, a Harvard University professor, was just appointed as the U. S. ambassador to Japan. Japan was expected to follow the footsteps of the U. S. and become a "New Japan hailing democracy and freedom," departing from the old image of a "Militaristic state with a criminal record."

In those days, most of the China-hand scholars evaluated highly the Cultural Revolution as "Another approach to modernization." They reported that what the revolution had addressed was not a large-scale industrialization, as in the case of Japan's Yawata Steel, but rather an "Individual citizens' efforts to produce pans or iron kettles in their backyards." The only exceptional academician among China experts, who made a different interpretation about the Cultural Revolution, was Professor Mineo Nakajima of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. He secured a residence in Hong Kong and observed carefully the development of the revolution. He reported that every day many dead bodies were drifting into waterways around Hong Kong from the continental China. I recall that the total number of the victimized Chinese nationals, as announced publicly by the Chinese government, topped 30 million. It was regarded as a part of the aftermaths brought about by the Cultural Revolution.

As mentioned above, China's Communist Regime will mark the milestone 70th anniversary of the national foundation on October 1 this year. It is reported that Chairman Mao's popularity has been emerging again recently. It is also reported that his image this time is totally insulated from his leadership in the Cultural Revolution and is perceived as a "Nice figure with a simple and moderate personality," whose way of life seems to assimilate successfully with the ordinary citizens. It seems that Mao's said image will work as a successful model of a leader with great personal integrity, in tune with the anti-corruption campaign hammered out by President Xi Jinping, China's top most leader today.

Now let me get back to what I experienced at COLMEX. A few weeks after I started my class, a Colombian student named Celestino raised hand and opined: "The history of Japan's modernization efforts during the Meiji period is irrelevant to Latin American students like us. Rather the Cultural Revolution under way in China seems to provide many positive lessons to us." And he continued, "By all means, I'd like to receive a lecture on China's Cultural Revolution."

How did I respond to his request? I immediately contacted Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and requested the officer in charge, saying "Would it be possible to send Professor Shigeaki Uno of Seikei University? He is the only academician I knew who could lecture on China's Cultural Revolution." To my great pleasure, my request was accepted and promptly realized. The motivation behind my action was an experience while I was working as a visiting professor at my alma mater Princeton University. After the campus turmoils which had raged at universities worldwide during the late 1960's, there came a temporary period of peace. That's when Princeton undergraduate students requested that their class read Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*. The faculty responded favorably and took a necessary action to modify the syllabus. I was impressed with the faculty's response which created added value to the course.

The episode at COLMEX may sound like a somewhat archaic and overly peaceful incident. Still, judging from the urgent need for reforms emerging at higher education institutions in Latin America, the faculty's response seems to be quite appropriate. Only several months before the incident took place, the police had come into the campus and resorted to gun shooting to put the student riot under control. Indeed, on the surface of the thick glass wall of the 6th floor classroom which faced the street, I could see here and there the vivid traces of bullet penetration, about two centimeter diameter holes.

On one occasion I saw a large-size portrait of Fidel Castro pasted on the inside face of the door to the room for a young political science instructor. On another occasion a young Japanese-Mexican female instructor said to me, "Caucasian instructors are all concerned about the possibility that poor Mestizo farmers in the suburbs, armed with scythes and plows, may swarm into urban areas to wage a class struggle, counting intellectuals among their enemies." That was a cross section of the social conditions in Mexico in those days. (March 3, 2019)

Note: Dr. Kimitada Miwa is a professor emeritus of Sophia University where he was formerly the Director of the Institute of International Relations.

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

No. 155: June 1, 2019

The Death of Tokko Pilots and the Nobel-laureate Novelist Kawabata Yasunari

Kimitada Miwa, MUA President Emeritus



I have a memory of writing an essay about my experience during the years I studied in the U. S. It concerned a Jesuit priest Professor's judgement lectured in the class of special ethics. I cannot recall whether a written essay was contributed to this newsletter. The case in question was about the so-called "Tokko" or go-for-broke aircraft attack operation which was introduced by the Japanese military toward the end of the Pacific War. The Jesuit professor asked the class, "Should the death of the Japanese

Tokko pilots be regarded as suicide or should it be perceived just like any other type of death on battlefields?" Students as young as uppteenagers were in the class of Georgetown University located within Washington, D. C.

Most of the students were Irish Catholic boys. It was the zeitgeist for boys then to behave like a macho. Suicide is a grave sin in Christianity and those who commit it is bound to fall to hell. No Christian funeral can be officiated for those who have committed suicide. Indeed the dead body of such a person used to be buried in a crossroads of the locality of his/her living quarters. Thus the sinful person who has committed the grave sin of suicide will be stamped by passers-by who happen to come along.

As for me, the death of a Tokko pilot was a "heroic death." In my perception, against the backdrop of the masculine culture prevalent in the U. S. then, such a death must be counted as a "brave one's honorable death." There is an intriguing episode in the U. S. navy which seems to validate such a perception. When the dead body of a Tokko pilot was thrown out on to the deck of a

U. S. aircraft carrier, her captain concluded that the dead pilot deserved the same honorable treatment as granted to the dead U. S. soldiers, and ordered that the body be wrapped with the Japanese national flag, most likely the rising-sun flag worn diagonally across the pilot's upper body, and buried courteously at sea.

The ethics which motivated the captain's response was based on the same logic as I learned at

Georgetown University. The interpretation, which supported the logic, was that “The Tokko death is not suicidal because the objective of the Tokko pilot was to hit and sink the enemy battleship. As a means to fulfill his objective, the pilot steered his aircraft to crash into the enemy ship’s deck. Death was anticipated as a result of such an action but it was not his objective.”

I attended the ethics class during the 1950’s when the masculine culture prevailed under the stereotype macho image. The aforementioned ethical judgment sounded to me like a typical sophistry partly because I was yet to be completely severed from the education I had received during the militaristic years. The Death of Tokko Pilots and the Nobel-laureate Novelist Kawabata Yasunari

However, I felt relieved in the class to know that the Tokko pilots’ death was not categorized into suicide in Christian ethics. My mindset would not tolerate such an idea as that the Tokko pilots, who gave up courageously their youthful lives for the sake of their country, be recompensed by a hellbound destiny. Indeed I felt as if I were saved by the ethical logic.

Decades have passed since then. The proposition of “Was the death of the Tokko pilots suicidal or not?” had sunken into the corner of my old memory. Strange to say, however, the proposition recently surfaced to my consciousness all of a sudden.

It was triggered when I found a novel passage where the author Kawabata Yasunari, the first Japanese Nobel laureate in literature, referred to the death of the Tokko pilots. To me his logic seemed vulnerable to the labelling by some intellectuals as “Jesuitical,” an adjective often used in English to imply a scornful sophistry. The novel, titled “Seimei no ki,” or tree of life, was included in the July issue of the Fujin Bunko” published in 1946, a year after Japan’s defeat. In the novel, Kawabata let the protagonist, a young woman who worked at the Tokko airbase in Kyushu, give the following remark;

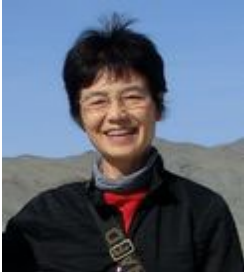
“It was seemingly a death in a forced, produced or performed manner. But I don’t think that, in reality, it could be categorized into death as normally perceived. It was the result of Tokko pilots’ action that led them to their death. Their action in itself meant death. Still, death was not the objective of their action. Therefore, their death was not suicidal.” (P. 96, Collection of short novels published during the post-war occupation period, 1945 – ’46, Volume 1, Fujiwara Shoten 2007)

As mentioned earlier, I was a student at Georgetown University between 1952 and ‘55. That is when I learned in the special ethics class that “Tokko pilots’ death was not suicide.” It was the logical conclusion of Jesuit Professor Hugh. His logic turned out to be totally identical with that of Kawabata’s which was expressed in the aforementioned novel published in 1946, a year after Japan’s defeat in the Pacific War. Kawabata, who later would win the Nobel Prize in literature, was 46 years old at that time.

(February 9, 2019)

A Trip to Mongolia – Homestay Experiences at a Carcan Village in the Province of Bayan-Olgii

Toyoko Isobe, Standing Director, MUA



In September 2017, I joined a group tour to Mongolia titled “The Golden Eagle Festival and Homestay with a Kazakh Family.” The village was located at the western edge of Mongolia, which is bordered by Russia, Kazakhstan and China, and which is at the foot of the Altai Mountain range. Many Kazakhs live in the community, speaking the Kazakh language as the mainstream mother tongue rather than Mongolian. People live in an assembly-format shelter called *ui* which has a ceiling slightly higher than that of a *ger*. Major attractions of the group tour were three-fold – we could experience a homestay with a Kazakh family, enjoy seeing the annual Golden Eagle Festival, and join a car drive along the Altai heights to see the glacier.

During the Golden Eagle Festival, local people compete enthusiastically in different skills, including golden eagle-driven hunting, snatching of a goat skin played on horseback, called *Bushkashi*, as well as a race between a man and a woman, both on horseback, called *Kyz Kuar*. People came from the vicinity to join the festival, dressed in traditional costumes. The men, who participated in the competition, were dressed up in fur clothes to appeal their brave attitude.

My host family had already assembled their *ui* before my visit. They butchered and cooked a sheep as a way of expressing hospitality to me. When they let me help with the sheep skinning, I realized that the work calls for some physical strength. They treated me to stewed mutton and vegetables, as well as milk tea. I found that, by adding a small quantity of salt, I could enjoy drinking many cups of their tea. After the dinner, the whole family got together inside the *ui* and stated to play music to welcome their guests. The *dombra*, a local musical instrument, was played while adults and children sang songs by turns.

In summer and winter, many of the local people, along with their domesticated animals, relocate to different places. Therefore, there is not any paved road or any facilities for water supply and sewage in the community. For toilets, people use holes, dug in a U-shape and covered with a blue sheet. They are generally located about 40 - 50 meters away from the shelters. It was a bit thrilling to walk out at night, wearing a head lamp, and look for the toilet, avoiding the risk of losing the way.

At night you can hear the breathing of cows and horses, lying here and there. In the sky you can see a constellation which looks as if it were falling down upon you, along with the arc-shaped Milky Way. At that moment I renewed awareness that I’m only a tiny piece of creature. Because people use water brought from the river, they pay utmost attention not to pollute the stream, reflecting their lifestyle to be thankful for what nature offers.

Once we returned to Ulaanbaatar the capital, we saw buildings after buildings and an overflowing number of cars. We were told that the air pollution in the city is worse than in Beijing. Although our stay was only about a week, we were exposed to a lifestyle where people don't possess more things than they really need. Once back in Tokyo, I was overwhelmed with a flood of information and commodities. I became tired of resisting the allure of the materialistic environment. I wonder why we in Japan need to possess so many commodities around us.

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

No. 153: December 1, 2018

A Recollection in August

Kazuko Matsuzaki, Standing Director, MUA

TV stations broadcast many WWII-related programs in August every year. On August 12 this year, NHK-BS aired a program titled “How did the evil weapon come into being? – the anguish of the scientists who developed the atomic bomb.” The program showed several photographs of the groups of scientists who were engaged in the Manhattan Project which sought the development of A-bombs. That's when I noticed Dr. Louis H. Hempelmann (1914 – 1993) among such scientists. He looked like a typical American youth, decent and slender, in contrast with other physically dumpy physics and chemistry scientists. He was the boss of my deceased father during his young researcher days in the U. S.



My father graduated from a medical department in 1949 and chose as his future career the field of basic medical science, working for a bio-chemical laboratory. Although I don't know any details concerning how he was invited by the U. S. Atomic Power Commission, he accepted the offer to work under the guidance of Dr. Hempelmann who was presiding the radiation faculty in the Rochester University in New York, My father opted to be accompanied by his family. In those days the U. S. dollar vs Yen exchange rate was at ¥360 for one dollar. Also the amount of foreign currency, granted to an outbound Japanese traveler, was strictly controlled. Because I was only a child then, I did not have any idea how my parents worked out the home economy of our family while in the U. S.

Rochester, New York was then a community which had flourished in parallel with the growth of Eastman Kodak Company. As a child, I enjoyed very much the local environment in Rochester. We could see squirrels in the garden and we had tons of snow each winter. Our stay in Rochester was only about a decade after the end of the WWII but I don't recall any memory of being exposed to hateful “Jap” calls. I guess the U. S. society then had a reasonable level of generosity as a victor nation.

Incidentally, I heard from my mother that Mrs. Hempelmann came from the Pulitzer family who established the famous award, and that she was a very intelligent person who had read many books, including a Japanese novel titled “Kani-koh-sen.” It was decades later that I heard about the rumor that Dr. Hempelmann had been involved in the Manhattan Project in one way or another. I don’t know whether or not my father was aware of Dr. H’s involvement when he decided to work for him in the U. S. The historical fact remains that many talented American scientists were engaged in the development of the A-bomb – a truly devilish weapon.

Those recollection activated my curiosity to find out how Dr. Hempelmann got involved in the A-bomb development and what kind of mentality he had maintained about it. Years back, this kind of historical research would have necessitated visits libraries. Today we can use the Internet instead. I logged Dr. Hempelmann’s full name into the net. Instantly I found the website of an organization called the Atomic Heritage Foundation which provided the following information: Dr. Hempelmann became acquainted with a physicist, who was engaged in the Manhattan Project, when he was researching the medical application of cyclotron in Berkeley, California. I also found out that while at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, he was studying the influence of radioactivity on human body. I could even hear Dr. Hempelmann’s live voice, at his advanced age, responding to an oral history interview.

From the information thus obtained, I felt to my regret that although Dr. Hempelmann was a medical doctor, it seems he did not think hard enough about the possible negative implication of the A-bomb development. The same seems to apply to many other scientists who were engaged in the Manhattan Project. Today when we discuss the progress in science and technology, I hope that the UNESCO spirit will be the platform to evaluate the positive or negative factors involved.

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

No. 152: September 1, 2018

My trip style focused on “hot springs and Shinto shrines”

Kazuyo Hirakata, MUA Vice President

I started the New Year 2018 by paying a “Mikakiuchi” formal visit to the Ise Shrine. The place was filled with a refreshing air. I felt tense in the solemn atmosphere as we walked on the pea gravel toward the Mikakiuchi led by a Shinto priest.

Because my hobby is travelling, I have made quite a few trips to different places in Japan. More recently I take pleasure in making an immediate petit



trip once I hit upon a good place to visit. If the weather is fine when I woke up, I look for hot springs or shrines which are accessible within one or two hours by car. In most cases, the destinations end up in places in Hakone or Atami areas. If I choose Hakone, I first pay worship to the Hakone Shrine and then enjoy bathing in a near-by hot spring. If I choose Atami, I make it a rule to visit the Kinomiya Shrine, enjoy sea-food and bathe in the hot spring.

Extending my trip style in Japan, I also try to look for and visit hot springs located close to the destination cities, whenever I make trips overseas. The destinations of my first overseas trip were Paris and Budapest. That's when I visited the internationally renowned Szechenyi spa. In the following years, I visited Terme dei Papi, located in the suburb of Rome, where it is said that the Popes have traditionally bathed in the spa. On another trip to Italy, I visited the Merano spa which was shaped like a large resort swimming pool. It was a memorable experience to see the grand view of the Alps as I bathed in the spa.

Once I visited Lourdes in France and had an unforgettable experience to bathe in a tub filled with the water from a spring that wells up. Lourdes is regarded as a sacred place where miracles happen. Many people from all over the world visit this place because they believe that the spring water heals all sorts of illness. I joined other visitors in purifying ourselves in the tub filled with the spring water to share a miracle. Sure enough I felt as if my physical condition had improved after the bathing.

I look for hot springs during trip stays but other people are interested in different activities while on a trip. In the future I'd like to visit more hot springs located in Japan and overseas, including those in Taiwan, Iceland and the U. S. When you receive kindness from local people, whether in Japan or overseas, the memory will last for years. I sincerely hope that the "Omotenashi" hospitality we extend to inbound foreign tourists to Japan will help work out a way to world peace.

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

No. 151 : June 1, 2018

Terrorism as perceived in Japan and the U. S.

Terrorism-triggered wars and world peace

**Kimitada Miwa, President Emeritus
The Minato UNESCO Association**

The most popular large Japanese dictionary is entitled "koujien," literally meaning "widely collected vocabulary." In fact it does include katakana rendered foreign words like "tero," a short for the English "terrorism." But the word "tero" used to be not used like a household word or even in mass media to report an exactly terrorist violence that had taken place that day.

This does not indicate that in prewar Japan there had not been any incidents of violence that would have been reported as terrorist acts in the English speaking countries. Then in the absence of the use of “tero,” how were they identified? Yes, there were other Japanese words such as “assassination” and “coup d’etat.”



Here I would like to introduce a Japanese book about terrorism to support my contention, authored by Murobushi Teturo and published in 1962 under the Japanese title of 日本のテロリスト on its dust cover. The English title of the book, engraved on its hard cover, was “The Modern History of Assassination and Coup D’etat in Japan.”

That’s it. Tero as a word was included in a dictionary, but in daily usage assassination and/or coup d’etat were the words more often heard. In that tradition of household language, when the subway sarin incident occurred in Japan in March 1995, I don’t think the Japanese mass media used the word “terrorism” in their reporting. In contrast, the U. S. media characterized it as an act of terrorism. In those days, Japan was yet to use this terminology in daily life while it belonged to the common vocabulary in the U. S.

Indeed, early on, the U. S. had perceived the Aum Shinrikyo as a terrorist cult which aimed at the takeover of the Japanese government. The U. S. security organizations were aware that the chemical weapon sarin was produced by the cult scientists. The Japanese counterpart should have been equally aware of the security risk. However, the common sense in the Japanese society then could not detect the potential risk. Ordinary Japanese citizens led a peaceful daily life without any suspicion about the wicked nature of the potential terrorist group. That’s when the sarin attack took place.

The Aum trial was finally concluded recently after years of legal deliberation. This enabled me to read summarized reports on the incident in newspapers. For example, I’ve read a series of articles about the incident, carried on the January 30 & 31 and February 1 issues of the Nikkei Shimbun. The initial forerunner of the incident was the murder of the lawyer Sakamoto’s family in November 1989. Five years later, in June 1994, a sarin-related incident took place in Matsumoto City, Nagano Prefecture. And finally, the subway sarin attack occurred next year, in March 1995, inside the subway train which stopped at the Hibiya station. Thirteen citizens were killed and more than 6,000 people were damaged.

Because the U. S. security organizations had persistently followed the behavior of the AUM cult as a terrorist group, they correctly perceived the airborne delivery of sarin as an act of terrorism. In contrast, as mentioned earlier, I could not see any report by the Japanese mass media, which characterized the incident as a terrorist attack.

Terrorism is not just an act of violence. It must be motivated by a will to gain control of the governing power. The ruling of the initial Aum trial concluded that Chizuo Matsumoto, the guru of the cult group, did have such a will. The ruling stated, "Matsumoto is the mastermind who tried to gain control of Japan under the disguise of national relief. As their absolute leader he ordered his followers to commit the crimes to elevate him to the sanctity of a deity, and the king of the Japanese.

The final ruling disclosed the real nature of the Aum Shinrikyo-related incidents as nothing but acts of terrorism. I wonder why the word terrorism was not used at the outbreak of the subway incident. Meantime, the U. S. security experts had perceived the incident as an act of terrorism early on. Maybe the stark perception gap between the two countries indicates that Japan has lost the sensibility to detect potential danger because it has enjoyed peaceful years for so long. However, in the prewar Japan, the words assassination or coup d'état were used as synonyms for terrorism.

As mentioned above, the U. S. mass media reported the subway sarin attack as a serious death & injury incident, conducted in the central district of the capitol Tokyo, and committed by a terrorist group. Again, the Japanese mass media did not use the word terrorism to describe the incident. I wonder what words were used historically to describe the act of terrorism in Japan. There is a book titled in Japanese "Terrorists in Japan," authored by Tetsuro Murobushi and published in 1962. On the face of the hard cover, it has an English title "The modern history of assassination and coup d'etat in Japan."

During the 1930's, if my memory is correct, a book titled "Government by Assassination" was published in the U. S. The author critically described the politics in Japan as one influenced by terrorism. It is interesting to know that Murobushi also translated the Japanese word terrorism as assassination in the English title.

During the prewar years, Japan's politics was overwhelmed by the military clique. This motivated the publication in the U. S. of the book titled "Government by assassination." In fact prewar Japan was characterized by acts of terrorism even before it started to wage wars of aggression overseas. The main hotbed of terrorists changed chronologically from the samurai or shizoku tier to the commoner tier while the number of terrorist incidents increased as Japan made its irregular advancement in democracy.

The U. S. in those days perceived the Japanese military as the ringleader who destabilized peace in East Asia and interpreted that terrorism was the driving force behind the military. The Pacific War, which was started by Japan's Pearl Harbor attack, antagonizing the Anglo-American and Dutch powers, was unavoidable as long as Japan could not drastically renovate its terrorism-driven leadership. Therefore, according to the U. S. logic, it was mandatory to completely destroy and break up Japan's militaristic nature to attain radical reforms in the country. Thus, the U. S. set Japan's unconditional surrender as the absolute requirement and ultimately went so far as to drop A-bombs to secure its attainment of the objective.

The A-bomb droppings should not be interpreted only as a revengeful act for Japan's war of aggression. It was also a clear manifestation to the world that the U. S. is committed to be the captain to preserve world peace. The A-bombs were the weapons of absolute terrorism obtained by mankind for the first time. With the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by A-bombs, the U. S. became the sole and absolute terrorist state. In hostile response, the Soviet Union worked out a successful armament with nuclear weapons. Thus, a new "Cold War" era was born where a peace-keeping mechanism prevailed between the two world leaders – the U. S. and the Soviet Union – based on the balance of power principle.

The U. S. citizens did not have the slightest idea then that their home country had become a terrorist state. On September 11, 2001, after almost a half century from the emergence of the nuclear weapons, the World Trade Center buildings in New York City were hit and destroyed by two aircrafts, an unprecedented way of attacks engineered by the terrorist group Al Qaeda. Concurrently the Pentagon building in Washington, D. C. also became the target of an aircraft crash attack. The whole U. S. society was totally bewildered how to interpret the monstrous attacks. The only association they hit upon was the sneak Pearl Harbor attack which shook the whole nation a half century ago. The U. S. citizens analogized the unlawful destruction by the state-less terrorist group Al Qaeda with the Japanese empire's attack, a sovereign state act, which started the Pacific War. Based on the interpretation that the 9.11 attacks were committed by Islamic radicals, President Bush drew on the crusaders in the medieval age and declared his commitment to wage a revengeful war of "crusade" against the enemy.

In contrast, here in Japan, some citizens might have felt a bit of sympathy toward Al Qaeda, in retrospect of the motivation behind the acts of terrorism which had been committed in the modern and contemporary history of Japan. The 9.11 could have been interpreted as an "attack to correct the world," in an effort to challenge the helpless inequality prevailing in the world which was brought about by the finance-centric capitalism under the name of globalism. However, almost none of the U. S. citizens seemed to have given a thought from such a viewpoint. Because of their analogy of the 9.11 to the sneak Pearl Harbor attack, Bush's revengeful stance must have looked comprehensible to the eyes of the U. S. public. It seems as if the U. S. leadership concluded that they could root out the anti-U. S. terrorism if they knock down the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq.

The U. S. stance toward Iraq was based on its experience in post-war Japan. After Japan was defeated, its leaders steered the national direction toward democratic politics and free economy under the ruling of the U. S. occupation. It resulted in a successful societal reform in a short period of time. The U. S. leaders were optimistic about the postwar progress in Iraq, believing that they could work out a similarly successful reform as experienced in Japan.

However, the reality did not develop as they expected. The U. S. ruling in Iraq came to be characterized by the U. S. soldiers' revengeful acts in retaliation for the 9.11 terrorism. Their

treatment of the imprisoned Iraqi POW's culminated to such a grotesque level that the ordinary citizens of the civilized nation U. S. could not look straight at the televised images. Maybe it was a symbolic scene of the clash of civilization which emerged inevitably from the revengeful war against the terrorist attack.

As mentioned earlier, the American journalism sneered at the Japanese politics in the prewar years, labelling it as the "Governance by assassination." However, we can find similar cases in the U. S. history as well. For example, African Americans had been victimized in innumerable cases of unlawful lynching but the interest of white assailants were almost always protected against criminal charges based on supra-legal judgements. Also, John F. Kennedy was not the only U. S. president who was assassinated. I've been impressed more than anything else with the terrorist-like behavior of the U. S. as a state in the international politics. Simply put, it is the intimidating stance of the U. S., with the nuclear weapons as their bargaining power. This stance is well attested by their dropping of A-bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki toward the end of WWII.

The U. S. politics to arouse fear in its opponents may be characterized as "A-bomb governance" or "Dominance by nuclear weapon-based terrorism." We can verify it by reviewing how the U. S. has unlawfully demonstrated its presence as the super power during the post-WWII period. The Soviet Union developed nuclear weapons with its own expertise to challenge the U. S. dominance and this ushered in the Cold War era. More recently, the North Korean regime made a stir internationally by accomplishing nuclear armament and demonstrating the practical level of its ICBM's. All these developments share their origin from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I wonder if the U. S. has ever perceived itself as a great terrorist state.

Professor Avram Noam Chomsky of MIT in the U. S. shows no hesitation in calling his home country as a terrorist state. He has demonstrated impressive academic achievements as a scholar of linguistics and is counted as one of the "World's Top Controversialists" in the field of cultural and social science. During the 1960's, he actively participated in protest movements against the Vietnam War waged by the U. S. It was only a natural extension of the years of his criticism toward the U. S. diplomatic policy.

During his expat work in the U. S., Mr. Yosuke Watanabe, a Japanese journalist with the Kyodo News, interviewed Professor Chomsky on January 18, 2002. Starting with the 9.11 incident which involved Al Qaeda's attacks to the WTC buildings in NYC and the Pentagon building in Washington, D. C., their dialog developed well into the definition of terrorism. This interview, summarized into an English article, was published on May 21, 2002 with the title "Chomsky states my home country U. S. is the world's No. 1 terrorist state."

The peace in Japan has been maintained owing much to the gigantic nuclear power of the U. S. under the bilateral alliance. To me it seems like a sinful peace. On the other hand, there are countless suffering people in other parts of the world who cannot afford even the sinful peace. It's

time that we hold more serious discussions on how to save those helpless people and take deliberate and committed actions based on the worked out proposals for solutions.

(February 24, 2018)

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

No. 150 : March 1, 2018

A Thought on World Heritage

Takayuki Kobayashi, MUA Standing Director



What is World Heritage? Is it simply an attractive site where people want to visit? “In 1954 the decision to build the Aswan High Dam was made. This dam would lead to the creation of a huge artificial lake covering the Upper Nile Valley from Aswan in Egypt to the Dal Cataract in Sudan - a culturally extremely rich area, which has been known as Nubia since antiquity. In 1960, UNESCO launched an International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia. This appeal resulted in the excavation and recording of hundreds of sites, the recovery of thousands of objects, and the salvage and relocation of a number of important temples to higher ground. It was when the principles of World Heritage Convention emerged and resulted in the adoption of the Convention in 1972.” Mr. Yukio Nishimura, Professor of Graduate School of The University of Tokyo, former vice-chairman of ICOMOS, started his speech this way at the Kanto Bloc Meeting back in October 2017.

I was very impressed by his speech and started to investigate a little more into a previous stage than the UNESCO campaign stated above. A concept of International Committee of The Red Cross created in the middle of the 19th century that the destructive actions of cultural heritages by the negative power of war were prohibited, and that any wounded soldiers needed to be saved no matter which countries they belong to, was eventually expanded to the preservation of cultural heritages. However, many cultural heritages were seriously damaged in some countries during the World War II, while a rule to save them was observed in some historical areas. Thereafter, UNESCO was established in November of 1945.

Minato UNESCO Association (hereafter “MUA”) last year hosted a lecture meeting titled “The present and the past of Bamiyan, the world heritage in Afghanistan” by Mr. Kosaku Maeda, Director General of Japan Institute for the Studies of Cultures of Afghanistan. Eastern Buddha and Western Buddha built in the 7th century were both destroyed in the spring of 2001 at the end of civil strife. UNESCO and Afghanistan Government started a talk on the reconstruction of the cultural heritage in 2002. Afghanistan cultural assets flew overseas due to plunders from museums or theft from

remains. The master artist Ikuo Hirayama gave UNESCO a suggestion that such cultural assets be treated as “cultural asset refugees”. His suggestion was accepted.

Salvation and preservation activities started in Japan as well and paved the way to have them returned to Afghanistan as soon as the situation there was stabilized. Some of them were restored by Tokyo University of the Arts and returned to Afghanistan in the end of 2016. I was deeply moved by his enthusiasm to preserve cultural heritages. In May of 2017, MUA presented a visit to The National Museum of Western Art which was designed by Le Corbusier and enjoyed an opportunity to listen to the presentation on the Matsukata Collection. I also personally enjoyed The Grand Exhibition on the Silk Road - SOSin - DENSin Clone Cultural Property: Revitalization of Lost Time ends held at The University Art Museum of Tokyo University of the Arts. It was an epoch-making event that advocated to think about world heritages on a global scale.

World Heritages are divided into such three categories as Cultural, Natural and Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage. World Cultural Heritage among them holds a universal value which does not belong to a specific ethnic group nor a nation. I could understand that it was a global thought based not only on international community but on all the people of the world.

It is not long since I was involved in the UNESCO activities. However, I believe it important that I touch on “tangible and intangible world heritages” and understand their cultural background and history as a step for thinking about the peace among many fields of UNESCO activities.

(Translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin and Internet Committee)

No. 149: December 1, 2017

My thoughts from Aizu to Minato UNESCO Association

Toshiko Watabe, MUA Standing Director



I presently live in the Yukawa Village in Fukushima Prefecture. It is located at the center of the Aizu-Bonchi basin. This may sound like an exaggeration but the location is geographically at the navel of Japan proper. I spend almost half of the month, shuttling between Aizu and Misato these days. For years my husband has had his business base in Misato and wants to remain there until his retirement. Therefore he expects me to work out appropriate shuttling schedule. It is a blessing that his office in Misato is spacious enough for my lodging whenever I visit there.

Why do I live in Aizu? There is a good reason. My husband has been always understanding and cooperative with my years-long MUA volunteer activities. Also he has been a hard-working man.

With a sense of deep appreciation as spouse, I let him choose freely the place where he tentatively wants to spend his post-retirement years. Actually his self-employed business does not have retirement. He chose Aizu as his Shangri-la.

Simply put, he wants to lead a rural countryside life, I thought. At first I hesitated at his idea. However, after I made the shuttle by car a few times and found that it takes only about three hours one way, I began to accept this life style. As he has been a green thumb, I thought that the ultimate goal of his years-long hobby would be attained by living in Aizu.

Aizu is surrounded by mountains all around. Bandaisan to the east, Komagatake to the west, Chausudake to the south and Iinoyama to the north. It offers scenic beauty from season to season. In autumn, I notice from my car window groups of white swans pecking at gleanings in the post-harvest rice paddies. It's a beautiful sight to see and a great pleasure for me in autumn each year.

On March 11, 2011 the Tohoku area was hit by a disaster named later as the "East Japan Great Earthquake." My daughter's family lived in the Aoba ward of Sendai City then. For hours soon after the disaster, I could not get in touch with them. It was caused by massive traffic congestion as so many people tried to use cellphones simultaneously beyond the capacity of communication channels. Finally I could contact our daughter and confirmed the family's safety. A few days later, she sent me a cellphone video showing the scenery of the devastated seashore where traffic was restricted. I was just stunned at the miserable sight beyond my imagination.

The National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan immediately launched the "UNESCO Association Scholarship for 3.11 Disaster Stricken Children and Students." In response MUA started its fund-raising Co-Action efforts, requesting the attendees to donate each time it held different programs. The disaster destroyed not just physical facilities like towns and homes but also family ties. When I think of the future of those children who lost their families, I renew my resolution to continue MUA's fundraising efforts ever more actively. In the following years Japan experienced the Kumamoto Earthquake while the world has seen the occurrence of "guerilla" torrential rainfalls, super-size typhoons, and the rise in seawater temperature, among others. It seems to me as if the earth were screaming for help. Still the global warming is under way at an accelerating speed. How terrible! I'm determined to fulfill my share of duty in my capacity, joining other parents and global citizens, by advancing the "Stop the Global Warming" initiative for the future growth of all the children.

In retrospect it was in 1987 that I first joined MUA's New Year Friendship Party. I remember it was held at the Aoi Kaikan hall. I was briefed that Minato City, where MUA is based, accommodates many foreign embassies and business corporations, and that it is characterized by abundant opportunities for us to be exposed to different cultures. During the reception for friendship, MUA members and different attendees, including foreign guests, enjoyed cross-cultural interactions in a very pleasant family-like atmosphere. Motivated by such a favorable perception, I decided to join

MUA on the spot.

To become an active member, I joined the International Exchange Committee which was later renamed the Cross-cultural Awareness Committee. The committee held many rewarding lectures. The committee members used to have conferences in the evening at MUA's secretariat office. We enthusiastically exchanged opinions concerning different programs in a harmonious atmosphere as we ate Onigiri rice ball snacks. The meetings offered good opportunities for me to enrich my knowledge by listening to other members' opinions which were sometimes academic. Time passed so fast and we had to leave the room before the building was closed at 21:00. Sometimes, after those conferences, we relocated to coffee shops for additional talk. On such occasions, I used to take the train before last of the Musashinosen Line and came home at almost 24:00.

I'm of opinion that the spirit of service, the aspiration for peace and the respect for other people's equal rights are indispensable for those who engage in volunteer activities. I hope that I can continue my participation in MUA activities so that I can make humble contributions to the realization of world peace.

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

No. 148: September 1, 2017

Toward the Achievement of SDGs

Hiroshi Nagano, MUA President

After 70 years since the end of WWII, the world seems to be at a turning point where it may turn away from the international peace-oriented solidarity movement to a disintegrating direction. This trend seems to be visible in the recent developments in industrialized countries, such as the Brexit in the U. K. and President Trump's "America First" policy, as well as in incidents elsewhere including the acceleration of power shift to the president in Turkey.



Nevertheless we still have a philosophy today which can drive the whole world toward a shared single goal. It is the concept of "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" which was adopted at the United Nations summit convened in the fall of 2015. The SDGs are being sought after during the 2016 – 2030 time frame.

Once into the 21st century, the U. N. put into action two major initiatives which should be addressed as shared goals internationally. One is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which addressed primarily the eradication of poverty in the developing countries during the 2001 – 2015

period. The other is the “Decade for the Education of Sustainable Development (ESD)” which was originally advocated by Japan, and which was undertaken internationally from 2005 to 2014.

The SDGs were formulated based on the outcome of the said two initiatives. As the action plans to be implemented over the 15-year time frame, a total of 17 specific goals were formulated, including “Eradication of Poverty,” “Attainment of both Decent Work and Economic Growth” and “Work out Concrete Actions to Tackle the Climate Change.” In addition, a total of 169 targets were also set up.

As an example of major differences between the SDGs and the MDGs, we can point out that the former requires actions not only from developing countries but also from industrialized countries. Because the SDGs advocate so many targets, each country is required to work out ideas of its own in the achievement of listed goals.

Education plays a vital role here. Indeed, education is listed as the fourth goal of the SDGs, with an advocacy phrase that goes, “Quality Education to All.” However, the contents of the education initiative should accommodate all of the 17 goals comprehensively.

Japan has tied up with UNESCO and demonstrated its successful leadership in the promotion of ESD in the world. During the process, Japan has designated as the UNESCO schools more than 1,000 pivotal schools throughout Japan, comprising elementary, junior high and senior high schools, in order to promote ESD nationwide. This means that Japan has established the platform to promote the realization of SDGs in a grassroots bottom-up manner. It also means that Japan today has highly motivated young generations who can give a thought to sustainability not only from Japan’s viewpoint but also from the entire global viewpoint.

I hope that Japan can combine successfully the expansion of sustainability-oriented grassroots activities with the governmental initiatives so that it can develop world-leading ideas and action programs concerning SDGs. Last but not least, we at MUA should also discuss what we can do toward the achievement of SDGs.

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

No. 147: June 1, 2017

My Trivial International Exchange

Kazuko Okumura, Vice President, Minato UNESCO Association

I enjoyed strolling around such cities as Firenze, Arezzo, Monterchi, Perugia, Assisi and Ancona in central Italia with three friends of mine back in May of 2016. One of them loved the paintings of Piero della Francesca, an artist of the fifteenth century Italian Renaissance, and strongly requested



to visit the sites where his paintings are displayed. The rest of us accepted her request as we all agreed to the trip with the firm objective.

On the second day of our trip, we had a day trip from Firenze to Bologna where we visited Università di Bologna established in the eleventh century and were deeply moved by the history-laden lecture theater of anatomy as well as bibliotheca of those days. From the third day on, we started to visit paintings that was the central part of our objective. “Leggenda della Croce” was the great work painted by Piero della Francesca on the wall of Basilica di San Francesco and was really spectacular exhibit.

We visited a small art museum in Monterchi on the next day and were moved by “Madonna del parto” which shows Madonna in beautiful blue outfit escorted by two angels. We could not find a return route from the museum located on the top of hill. As a woman of class passed by with her dog, we dared to ask her about the way to the bus route in clumsy Italian we just learnt. We finally managed to make her understood and, then, she kindly led us to the bus stop. On our way to the bus stop, she talked to us that she visited Japan before and, also, the people in the city she lived were proud of the paintings of Piero della Francesca. There was a small grocery store beside the bus stop. As we told the storekeeper our destination, she anxiously looked up in the time table. She was kind enough to stay with us until the bus arrived. We enjoyed the heartwarming hospitality in a small village where you seldom see a passerby.

As I have enjoyed independent tours so far, I have been helped by many people of the countries visited. It might be quite different from the international exchange which Minato UNESCO Association sets out, but I believe that local people naturally extend hospitality to visitors from Japan for which I am really thankful. We also try to extend a helping hand to visitors to Japan which shall eventually be a token of our appreciation for their kindness.

I once was not interested in overseas tourism at all. My two years’ experience in South African Republic where my husband was transferred to apparently altered me to an overseas tourism lover. As the racist doctrine prevailed in the country then, I encountered with various electrifying occasions far beyond my knowledge previously acquired in my schooldays. I realized how big a difference between the reality and the book knowledge. There were some occasions when I sensed the discrimination befell to me. Such experiences became the catalyst for me to be much more interested in the international exchange. As per the saying which goes “seeing is believing”, I really value the real-life experience. I have had various experiences during my travels abroad. Hospitalities extended to me still stay deep in my mind. I will enjoy my foreign travel making “seeing, feeling and finding” my motto.

(Translated by Y. Suda, The PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

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 Kokuri 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.

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. 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)

No. 144: September 1, 2016

Inaugural Address

Hiroshi Nagano, President

I was elected at the last general meeting as the new president of Minato UNESCO Association (MUA) succeeding Dr. Kenzo Tange, the first president, Dr. Kimitada Miwa, the second, and Ms. Mitsuko Takai, the third and immediate past president. I am determined to contribute to the further advancement of MUA, building upon the groundwork laid by these past respectable presidents.



I have long been involved with science and technology-related issues of the government, but have not had as much association with UNESCO activities. I happened, though, to have assumed the office of secretary-general of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO after the merger of the two ministries, which established the current Ministry of Education, Culture,

Sports, Science and Technology. Upon assuming that role, I at once recognized the importance of the grass-roots activities of UNESCO societies all over Japan, and made it my urgent mission to connect these movements with the Japanese National Commission and with UNESCO's headquarters in Paris. As part of my efforts, I had the pleasure of directly communicating with the front-line staff of this grass-roots movement, although such interactions were rather unusual in the government where the top-down system still prevailed. In those days, I had an opportunity to participate in the Kantō-Block UNESCO Study Forum in Tochigi where I met Ms. Yoshiko Nagato, Director of MUA. Such experiences influenced my interest to take part in MUA.

I am sure that the UNESCO Constitution, which begins with the well-known phrase - "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed", moved the hearts of exhausted Japanese people right after the war. The fact that Japan acceded to UNESCO in June of 1951, 5 years before entering the United Nations, and even prior to signing the San Francisco Peace Treaty, clearly demonstrated the firm will of the Japanese people, who were encouraged by the UNESCO Constitution, to build a new country in peace.

However, the times have changed. Contrary to the original expectation of the people about the peace dividend after the end of the cold war, we are now facing emerging uncertainties all over the world, not to mention the terrorist attacks caused by people influenced by IS. Meanwhile, Minato City should play a critical role in supporting the international city of Metropolitan Tokyo as it prepares to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games in the year 2020. Minato City should also strive to build a pleasant environment for the people, where they can live and work comfortably and vivaciously.

It appears that we at MUA face various challenges, one of which is to encourage greater involvement of young people in activities related to "peace." As I commit myself to take on such challenging issues, I sincerely expect to receive your utmost cooperation and assistance.

(Translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

No. 143 : June 1, 2016

My Attachment to Minato City

Emiko Miwa, Director, Minato UNESCO Association

The World War II came to an end 70 years ago. I'm now almost halfway in my 80's. I have spent a major portion of my life in Minato City where I was born and raised. During the last war, I also grew up in the city. I still have a clear memory of whereabouts concerning the streets, households and people of the neighboring communities in those days. Indeed even today I can draw a detailed map of the communities around my house during the prewar years.

The community had been a peaceful town but one day, all of a sudden, the community council circulated an urgent notice, commanding those families, who lived in thickly settled areas, to tear down their houses immediately to avoid the risk of spreading fires caused by the expected enemy air raids.

Because most young men had been drafted to war, there were not enough working hands in those years. My alma mater was already burned down by air raids and most schools had been closed. I was a brand new first-grader at a junior high school at the time. Still I was ordered to join the house-tearing work. Day after day I wore a



“Mompe” working pants and a mask, and with a fire pick in hand I joined adults in tearing down wooden houses as well as ferroconcrete Western-style ones, covered with dust from morning till night.

It was not easy to tear down houses. For example, lavatory rooms, which were usually surrounded by four pillars, were sturdy and difficult to break down. Even in my inexperienced mindset, I lamented the wasteful act of destroying fine, ferroconcrete houses.

The community where I engaged in the house-breaking work was very close to the house where I was born and raised for many years. During the preceding half a century, the community residents had regularly planted cherry trees at the suggestion of the council leader who was a pharmacist during his lifetime. Today these trees are very old but still maintain their established indispensable presence in the community park.

The trees look as if they have not seen the tumultuous wartime years the local people underwent. Season after season, they offer a restful atmosphere in the park, symbolic of the peace shared by the people in the neighborhood. I suspect that majority of the current residents in the community have not heard of the forced relocation which took place at a section of Minato City during the wartime.

Air raids intensified following the relocation and I was forced to leave Minato City to join a group of students for evacuation which lasted for several months. Fortunately our house in Minato City did not suffer fire damages so I could return home after the end of the war. Also, it was a sheer luck that my father, who had departed for the war front, and whose whereabouts had not been known, came back one year after the war without physical damages. To date I have spent my whole life here in Minato City where my grandparents had lived, and where I attended schools and experienced the entire pre-war, wartime and postwar years. After marriage, I have had opportunities to stay several years abroad due to the call of my husband’s profession but my residence in Japan continued to be in Minato City.

Before I became fully aware, our neighborhood was surrounded by rows of high-rise condominiums. Also the address designations of the residential areas were changed. The metropolitan streetcar,

which had been a convenient and popular transportation means, vanished from the daily scene years ago. From time to time, I wonder how my deceased parents, on a time-slip home return, would be able to find clues to locate our current residence.

My parents passed away long before the appearance of metropolitan superhighways. I have lost close friends of my childhood days in the neighborhood. Today we seem to be totally at a loss to predict the future development of the earth and human society. The contemporary youths look indifferent to their future, addicted to clicking on computers and smartphones. I sincerely hope that the future for these youths and the following generations would develop in a peaceful tone.

As a member of the Minato UNESCO Association, I feel truly thankful and happy that I can join MUA friends in various programs and spend happy learning moments during the rest of my life here in Minato City.

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

No. 142: March 1, 2016

Minato UNESCO, a Place for New Encounters

Akemi Suzuki, Director, Minato UNESCO Association

The inauguration ceremony of the Minato UNESCO Association was held on October 17, 1981 at the Geihinkan (presently the Tokyo Garden Museum) in Shirokane, Minato City. I attended the event at the invitation of a friend. During the following 34 years, I wonder how many encounters with new friends I have had through MUA activities, and how much positive influences I have received from them.



At the time of MUA's inception, there was no platform for our activities. Therefore, we started by engaging in different works and interacting with various people to build one. For example, we secured a corner space inside the Minato City office, with their approval, and worked together to publish and mail out the initial issues of MUA bulletins. During the first three years, we organized a committee to introduce to resident foreigners the culture of Japan's New Year practices. We asked the Minato kindergarten management to let us use their facility where we used to demonstrate "Mochi-tsuki" and other New Year special activities to foreigner guests. We also served them "Ozohni" and perhaps it was the start of MUA's World Cooking Workshop.

The New Year event developed into a well-established New Year Party. It was held annually at either Aoi Kaikan or Yayoi Kaika in Shibaura. Many ordinary citizens started to join the event,

including high school student volunteers. We wanted to make the gathering even more enjoyable in a cross-cultural environment. I trust that the pleasure of sharing food is one of the best ways to promote friendship and mutual understanding.

I am currently a member of MUA's World Cooking Workshop Committee. Most of our instructors are natives of selected foreign countries. I take a great pleasure in making close friends with these instructors. Sometimes their mother countries are those which we come to know for the first time when TV broadcasts the marching scenes of athlete delegations from faraway countries in the opening ceremony of Olympic Games.

We are always very excited during the preparations for a few months before the workshop date finally comes. We learn not only the recipe and cooking of foreign home dishes but also unexpected interesting knowledge. I have an unforgettable memory of a particular workshop where the instructor was a Greek young lady studying in Japan. She was expected to teach us home dishes she had inherited from her mother. She was a bit nervous because she was not confident enough and also did not know where in Japan she could obtain necessary food materials. We MUA staff did not know how we could assist her.

There was a pleasant surprise to us on the day of the workshop. The instructor's mother, a school teacher, came to the cooking class with her daughter. She chanced to have a semester break at that time and visited her daughter in Japan. Needless to say, the workshop proceeded quite successfully thanks to the mother's participation. Even after the home return of the Greek student, I stayed in touch with her, remembering the day's excitement.

People seem to be busy all the time these days. So much so that we seldom have chances to make a heart-to-heart communication. I believe that, whether in Japan or elsewhere, the mindset to place more importance on new encounters with other people is the key to enriching our personality.

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

No. 141: December 15, 2015

Those Days, These Days

Gunji Shimizu, Director, Minato UNESCO Association

I met an accordion back in 1952 when I entered a university. I was fascinated by the beautiful sound of the instrument, and started to teach myself until I mastered it. For 60 years since then, I have not been able to be a professional player till today.

In those days, when neon started to glitter, I played popular songs accepting drunken people's request in a small pub in Ginza. I remember a beautiful bar hostess who gave me, in the back stage

of a glamorous cabaret, the gratuity she just received from her customer telling me to buy a cup of ramen noodle for myself. I fell in love with her when I slurped the noodle. I also appeared on stage of “Cachucha” or “Tomoshihi”, coffee shops at which customers could sing in chorus.

After a while, as an electronic organ started to appear, many professional accordion players lost their jobs. Should I have been a professional player, I must have experienced the gutter of life.



In those days, I was requested by the education board of Minato City to join the preparation for establishing Minato UNESCO Association (MUA). Though I participated in the preparation committee, I seriously wondered if it was the right place for me to be in surrounded by such prominent figures as late Mr. Kenzo Tange and Mr. Kimitada Miwa, the former President and current Honorary President of MUA. I have not been able to participate in Diplomats’ Lecture or International Symposium where English was the main language used. On the contrary, I enjoyed myself the World Cooking Workshop, Welcome Party for New Members, Minato City Festival, MUA Salon, UNESCO Youth Forum.

It was my first job as the Vice President of MUA when I was given a responsibility as a chairperson of the planning committee for “Circling the Globe with Songs and Dances” the special event commemorating 30th anniversary of MUA. Eight groups participated in the event. They were International Secondary School, Tokyo International School, Father and Son’s Bagpipe, Temple University, Bulgarian Folklore and Musical Instrument Performance, Korean Traditional Dance, Latin American Songs and Dances, Male Choir of Hakumon Glee Club.

Four years have passed since then. However, I still clearly recall those songs and dances in my mind. I am thankful for those who kindly introduced those groups for the committee or those who participated in the event.

We have long been discussing that it is easier said than done in the Standing Directors Meetings. I think back fondly on those days, but it is getting distant as well.

Among many voluntary organizations and international exchange groups, MUA needs to carry out distinctive activities honoring the UNESCO spirits. I do not think it is easy to do so as the time flies and things change so quickly. I sincerely hope that the President, board members and each individual member would do their best to lead MUA to the right direction.

In these days, I mostly spend my time for visiting aged persons at nursing homes or playing an accordion to the songs at the gatherings called “Utageo Kissa,” where people enjoy songs in chorus.

I still enjoy vigorous health at the age of 80, and am thankful that I can share the joy of playing

accordion and singing out loud together with many people around 70 years of age. I wish to continue this for the rest of my life. “Song is universal language.” Let sing out loud!

(Translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

Bulletin No. 140: September 18, 2015

Foster the Diversification of Values to Promote a Mutually Respectful Coexistence

Shigekatsu Mineo, MUA Director

According to the 2013 summary statistics on longevity, published from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the average life span of Japanese male and female were 80.21 and 86.61, respectively. The expected ratio of those who will record longevity up to age 90 was 23.1% for male and 47.2% for female.

The 2014 white paper on aged society, published from the cabinet office, reported that Japan’s population as of October 1, 2013 was 127.3 million. Of this total, the relative share of those aged at 65 or over accounted for 25.1% (generally termed the elderly population ratio), one percent increase over the previous year. The aforementioned two statistics clearly show that Japan is a full-fledged aged society.



On the other hand, the 2010 national census, published from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, reported that the age cohort-specific singles ratio for male was 71.8% at ages 25 – 29, 47.3% at ages 30 – 34, and 35.6% at ages 35 – 39. The corresponding figures for female showed 60.3%, 34.5% and 23.1%, respectively. The data shows a clear increasing trend in the singles ratio in the 25 – 39 age cohort of both male and female.

We have a shared concern from the above data, concerning the declining birthrate, the future of our pension system which is based on the cross-generational family support, and the shrinkage of working age cohort, among others. These issues are well known as critical challenges Japan faces today.

From the viewpoint of diversification in values, Japan is expected to enter an era where it will have to face more difference in values and more changes in life style across generations. It is characteristic of an extremely aged society.

I think that the prevalence of diversified values and our tolerance of such diversity have much in common with international exchanges. Tolerance of other people’s values is by no means a yes-man attitude. It is possible only after you have established your own identity or values. In other words,

it is an attitude to foster a mutually respectful coexistence.

In Japan we have good traditions and culture which have been inherited over generations. However, I have concern that these precious assets have been diluted recently, under the influence of value diversification and societal changes. I am also concerned about the decline in human interactions. In 2020, Japan will host the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is reported that, thanks to the depreciation of yen, the number of inbound tourists has been increasing.

Time flies indeed. Almost a quarter century has passed since the days when I was actively engaged in the Youth Activities Committee at MUA. Looking to the future, I must ask myself whether I will be able to explain to visitors from overseas the good traditions and culture of Japan, in the true meaning of the words.

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

Bulletin No. 139: June 1, 2015

Unforgettable Evening in Saudi Arabia

Mamoru Tomogane, Director, Minato UNESCO Association

“Companion in travel, companion in life.” This cliché is still good not only in Japan but in other part of the world as well. When you travel around, you may meet a new person or may find a new thing. You may experience a bunch of “once-in-a-lifetime encounters” when you travel.

The mind-blowing TV report on Japanese caught in a hostage situation by the Islamic State, an extremist organization, reminded me clearly of what happened at a night in Saudi Arabia 40 years ago. Under the current severe circumstances happened in the Middle East, I have to be hesitant to write about my distant memory. Having said this, I would like to explain my experience hereunder as it was one of the most precious and memorable experience in my life.

It happened in Saudi Arabia in May of 1976 when I was a young and active business person. I flew out to many foreign countries in an effort to expand business and bring in abundance to Japan.

My plan at that time was to fly into Jeddah, the capitol city of Saudi Arabia, via Dhahran. I safely arrived in Dhahran myself, but my luggage did not. Time to take a transfer flight was getting very close. I was only to find out at the service desk that my luggage was left out. It was after the final transfer flight of the day took off when my luggage finally arrived.



I put my head in my hands on a bench in the blacked-out airport being able to do nothing but wait until next morning when the office opens. That was when a man talked to me. I explained what happened. He was kind enough to offer me to go find out a hotel to stay in by his car. We totally lost our bearings when we found that there was no room available after visiting as many as five hotels. After a while, he asked me if I was scared of him. I immediately responded that I totally believed in him. Then, he visibly relaxed his expression and invited me to his house. Upon arriving at his house, he kindly prepared something like fried rice for me. His wife did not show up in accord with the religious observance. He then offered me to use the couch as the sleeping bed as well as the brand new blanket.

Thanks to him, I was able to reserve a seat in the next morning flight. He drove me to the airport, shook my hand tightly and saw me off with a smile. I eventually arrived at Jeddah with a very happy feeling, and was received by the president of my business partner. I flew back to Japan 3 weeks later, and wired a thank-you message to him and sent some Japanese goods to show my heartfelt appreciation to him.

I cannot forget his kindness to have taken care of a complete stranger even now after 40 years have passed. If I am asked whether I would offer the same level of help to a stranger having a hard time in Narita Airport, I would have to answer “no”. I have to ask myself if I would be ready to practice the “Japanese Omotenashi”.

(Translated by Y. Suda, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee, and MUA secretary general)

Bulletin No. 138: March 1, 2015

UNESCO Spirit and the Establishment of a Sustainable Society

Isao Kiso, Counselor, Minato UNESCO Association

The UNESCO mission is first and foremost the preservation of world peace, along with the promotion of education, culture and science on which world peace rests. In this connection, let me express my opinion on how to establish a sustainable society.

I was elected to the position of secretary-general of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO seven years ago. At that time, heated discussions were underway concerning how to work out effective measures to vitalize UNESCO activities in Japan. The bottom line was how to cope with the reality of greying of membership throughout regional UNESCO organizations and the decline in the



participation of young members.

If you talk with elementary or junior high school students in Japan, you will notice with disappointment that they take peace for granted. It seems that, to their mindset, the preciousness of peace is only an abstract and remote concept. In reality there still exist conflicts in different places internationally. Japanese students seem to be detached from reality and to perceive peace or conflicts as issues occurring in faraway spheres which they only watch on TV or other media. On the other hand, I can tell that they are keenly interested in the deterioration of the global environment, as highlighted by the climate warming.

From the said finding, I felt that the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), a flagship of UNESCO's endeavors, might be a solution if successfully introduced and promoted throughout the classes of Japanese schools. I thought that this approach might help to penetrate and activate the UNESCO spirit and its activities among Japanese schools. Thus I proposed that we designate qualified schools to be counted into the 500 UNESCO School Project and let those schools undertake the role of the regional centers for the ESD. Today the number of UNESCO schools in Japan top 800 and is still growing.

I think that world peace can be preserved only after we have successfully turned the whole globe into a sustainable society. What these two objectives address, from my viewpoint, are in the same direction. Therefore I earnestly hope that the ESD will grow into a major pillar of new UNESCO activities.

(Mr. Kiso is a special advisor to the cabinet and formerly ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the permanent delegation of Japan to UNESCO)

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

Bulletin No. 137: December 12, 2014

Seeing is Believing

Yuki Nakamae, Director of MUA

For the New Year's wish in 2014, I picked the saying "Seeing is believing." It may belong to cliché but I decided to act with a renewed awareness of what this maxim means.

During my professional activities as a member of the Minato City Assembly, I became keenly aware of the importance to visit and observe, using all five senses, the reality at the places where different issues have emerged. Because my work has been always close to the local community, the scope of my attention & movement tends to be confined to limited regions. Therefore, I take caution not to fall into a way of thinking based only on my parochial town-watching and common sense. In other

words, I feel that it's necessary for me to visit outside communities, including foreign cities, and observe with my own eyes differences in life styles, values & cultures, and town rules.

Up until last year, however, I seldom had a chance to visit any foreign country. This is partly because I was just too busy to work out enough time and partly because I felt some hesitation in making private overseas trips. On the other hand, my workplace is Minato City where we accommodate many foreign residents and visitors, and where it's necessary to further enrich our public services addressed to foreigner citizens. Based on this awareness, I made a decision to visit a foreign country this year, and visited London in April.



It was quite a challenge to include an overseas trip into my busy schedule since unexpected requirements for my attendance may abruptly emerge for the city assembly committees or community programs, just before my departure for the trip. However, once the schedule adjustment was finalized, I could spend rewarding time in finishing pending issues and making preparatory research on London. As I was neither accustomed to making trips nor capable in English communication, it was a bit nervous yet very fulfilling experience to work out schedule, make trip arrangements and start on an overseas trip all by myself.

Why did I choose London as the place of my visit? Well, I wanted to study the current status of the matured European city which hosted the 2012 Olympiad, from the context of the Tokyo Olympic Games we will host in six years.

The British Olympic Committee decided to build the main stadium in Stratford, a worn out community, with an intention to revive the area by the Olympic effect. In two years after the Olympiad, Stratford has turned into a vibrant developing community, symbolized by the “Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park,” one of the largest parks in the U. K., as the center piece at the site where the main stadium once stood.

By 2030 when the development plan for the community revival will be completed, Stratford will evolve into a multiple-clustered community, based on eco-centric policies, which will accommodate sports facilities, universities, housing areas, shopping malls as well as medical, media and technology centers. This will bring about the revival of the east London community which had been a long-time pending agenda.

While in London I was impressed most with the beauty of its buildings and parks. I could see strings of beautiful harmonized brick architectures, not just in the central area but also in the suburbs. I learned that a major factor which enabled this development is the fact that people opted to renovate and use old houses rather than pay high tax which will be imposed if they build new buildings. In

the central area of London where tourists see the famous red double-decker buses, those who drive private cars have to pay tax. This must be an effective transportation policy which will mitigate the urban traffic congestion. I took a good lesson from these observations.

On the other hand, I became keenly aware of the high standard of living which we enjoy in our daily life in Japan. For example, we can be proud of the cleanliness of subways and punctual operation of trains, healthy and delicious food culture, and reasonable commodity prices. It was a most rewarding and pleasant trip with lots of discoveries. Of course, it was a totally private trip on my own expenses.

The Minato UNESCO Association routinely offers programs which will help you to expand your viewpoints, domestically and internationally. As the saying goes, "Seeing is believing." Let us go on a trip for new discoveries. (Ms. Nakamae is a Minato City Assembly member)

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

Bulletin No. 136: September 29, 2014

**The Zeitgeist that Moves History can be Learned
from the Contemporary Novels.**

**Kimitada Miwa, President Emeritus of MUA and
Professor Emeritus of Sophia University**

"Please rest in peace as we shall not repeat the same mistake," the words inscribed in the slab to memorialize the atomic bomb victims of Hiroshima, drew critical comments. The official understanding holds that the subject of the sentence is the whole humanity who, convinced of the demonic futility of war, aspires for the annihilation of war, and who thus declared their determination. However, is it not the general understanding that the inscribed message is a committed expression by the Japanese, as being the single responsible party for the war, of their self-criticism and their determination to stand by the indefatigable absolute pacifism?



The severest comment came from a highly regarded common sense publicist. She argued that, because it was the United States of America that detonated the nuclear weapon, the most appropriate signature for the determination should be the American President's.

However no American will buy the idea. As a matter of fact, the retired president Harry S. Truman responded to the Hiroshima mayor's letter that it was an act of chastisement to the Japanese who

forgot about their indebtedness to Perry's kind opening of their country to the world that enabled their catching up with the advanced nations of the West. In addition to that, there was the tradition of the veterans of the Enola Gay who, on the anniversary of the Hiroshima day, got together at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York to celebrate the success of their mission. In the year when the hydrogen bomb was successfully tested, they declared in unison that if the command were given to do it again, they would surely do so. "Only," they said, "it would make a greater noise." "Why? After all it was the war they had started." In other words, the indiscriminate man slaughter by the atomic bomb was simply a form of retaliation to the infamous Japanese surprise attack at Pearl Harbor.

But was not there racist prejudice? The question is warranted because a Yale University Japanologist John Hall once asked himself, "Was it possible against the Germans? We could do it simply because it was against the Japanese?" Professor Hall was disturbed with self-doubt and self-criticism as if representing the conscience of the American nation.

American mistrust of the Japanese can be supported historiographically. For historical investigation, the official documents are important. But for their analytical appreciation, it is indispensable for the historian to be versed with the intellectual milieu. One effective way to get to know it is through reading contemporary novels. For example, around the 1910's, there arose in the U.S.A. a hysteria toward the disturbing issue of the hordes of Japanese immigrants. The spirit of this age can be gained simply by reading works of Scott Fitzgerald. In those masterful novels which now stand as classics of American literature, leading characters are elitist young gentlemen from Harvard, Yale and Princeton. Seriously they are concerned with what they see as impending Japanese invasion, and their conquest of U.S. territory. In their mind Pearl Harbor attack was its proof, and an inevitable passing event in history. No matter how this sense of inevitability may appear vile, it is never acceptable for the Americans to critically reflect about the atomic destruction and hold themselves guilty of crime against humanity. (May 19, 2014)

Bulletin No. 135: June 12, 2014

About the United Nations University

Michiko Nagai, Auditor, the Minato UNESCO Association

I am always thankful and proud of my membership with the Minato UNESCO Association (MUA), which has lasted for over a decade. It's because the membership has enabled me to cooperate with new and old MUA friends in organizing various programs, including bazars and lecture events. During our joint activities, we could express different opinions, engage in candid discussions and deepen our UNESCan solidarity.

Please allow me to utilize this front-page essay to brief our readers on the short history and current

status of the United Nations University (UNU). My late husband, Michio Nagai, was directly engaged in the creation of UNU and, throughout his involvement, held a committed vision of what UNU can do in the future. I presume that, among our readers, there are those who are more knowledgeable and qualified to talk about UNU but I'll do my best

During the 24th United Nations General Assembly held in 1969, then Secretary-General U Thant proposed the creation of a "United Nations University." That's the time when my husband started his tireless long-term efforts to locate UNU's headquarters in Japan, to promote thereby Japan's educational reform and demonstrate its contribution to world peace.



There were many candidate nations which wanted to host UNU and the competition was intensified. Under the leadership of then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, Japan exerted utmost efforts, involving government, ministries, business sectors and academia. Finally Japan could win the race and a tentative office of UNU headquarters was established in Shibuya in 1975. After many twists and turns, the official UNU HQ building was completed in Aoyama, Tokyo in 1992.

Today UNU operates a total of 15 research and training centers throughout the world. It also maintains cooperative relationships with many research institutes, capitalizing on these extensive networks. As a think tank, UNU continues to promote its research functions to support UN in fulfilling the mission to maintain security and peace in the world.

During the UN General Assembly held in 2009, a proposal to establish a graduate school in UNU was approved. In 2012 the first students, who had enrolled in the graduate school and completed the sustainability and peace research course, received their master degrees. Each year the school accommodates master-degree candidate students from around the world who have won a challenging competition as severe as "one out of 50 to 60 applicants." Among those successful entrants, we can find one or two Japanese students each year. In 2012, a doctor's degree course was added to accommodate a few students.

It won't be long before we will see those, who graduated from the UNU graduate school, engaged in various borderless UN missions in every corner of the world. I trust that they will demonstrate their specialized and advanced knowledge, trained skills as well as their strong commitment to ideals.

In the spring of 2013, Dr. David Malone became the sixth UNU Rector. In his inaugural address, he emphasized that he would strengthen research activities at UNU, as expected in its original think tank mission, along with the fostering of competent human resources. To achieve these objectives, he stated that he would make all-out efforts to win understanding and cooperation from the entire Japanese society. Although what Dr. Malone expressed may sound only natural, it seems to me that

I have not heard such a clear message in any of the inaugural speeches made by former UNU Rectors.

I was reminded of the days when my husband had great difficulty to work out financial solutions in the face of cutbacks in annual governmental subsidies. From this experience, I'm sympathetic about what Dr. Malone might go through, including the shrinkage in governmental subsidies as well as the challenge to secure scholarship fund for graduate school researchers.

In its publicity effort to promote more visibility of what UNU does, the Aoyama-based headquarters offer a variety of open and free lectures to the local community. I hope that MUA bulletin readers will look into UNU's website and find interesting events which they want to attend. Their participation in UNU activities will be a great support for the Rector and his staff.

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

No. 134: February 20, 2014

How I interpret the "San-mu Shugi" in Japan

Yoshiya Mikami, Advisor, MUA

It is said that we Japanese are undergoing an age of "San-mu Shugi" or a mindset characterized by the lack in three important virtues – responsibility, consideration for others, and proactive concern. I experience an accelerating and very visible spread of this mindset in the behavior of young people as well as elderly citizens in their sixties or so. They seem to act upon their egoistic desires only.

Recently I saw Audrey Hepburn, after many years, in a TV program – an old movie titled "Charade." The character she acted took interest in everything around her, maintained strong curiosity, and took quick actions in facing & solving problems. Her attractive facial expression changed flexibly, depending on different emotions. My interest in her role grew all the more because the character was a simultaneous English & French interpreter who belonged to the Paris-based UNESCO headquarters.



For many years I have been professionally engaged in fostering people whose job is to express. Whether it's stage plays, movies, TV or radio programs, these activities cannot be performed without the support by acoustic art. In whichever genre of performance, it is the expression by actors/actresses that infuses life into the story. To foster the performers, it is indispensable to teach them the history of theatrical plays on top of acting theories of the East and the West.

Starting with King Oedipus which was allegedly created by Sophokles in BC400 – 500 adapted

from a real story, we teach major plays of Shakespeare, Racine, Moliere, Ibsen, as well as traditional Japanese plays in Noh, Kyogen and Kabuki. Based on the acquisition of such basic knowledge, we teach acting theories. In acoustic art, we offer advanced techniques for expression for concerts, stage plays and visual presentations.

Renowned classic plays have been created in all times and in different places, presenting complicated human relations as well as different phases in politics, economy and society. We can perceive in such plays the eternal human dramas which are valid today or in the past.

I was a 5th grader of an elementary school when Tokyo was bombarded by the massive U. S. air force raids. The war left an unforgettable memory in me as a survivor of the cruel attack. Thus I cannot turn my eyes off from the persisting war scenes in the Middle East.

I once read a paper titled “Various issues in the past which are yet to be settled,” which was written by Mr. Tatsuji Iwabuchi, an expert in German theatricals plays. I’d like to discuss Japan’s war responsibility in the light of the “San-mu Shugi” mentality of Japanese today. German people held war trials by themselves, separate from the war tribunal staged against Germany by the Allied Forces.

In Japan, however, people did not take action to seek and identify where the war responsibility resided. The society even accepted the case where a renowned figure, who was once put into prison as a Class A war criminal by the Allied Forces, became Prime Minister later. If my understanding is correct, Japan is yet to ratify the treaty titled “Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, “ which was adopted by United Nations General Assembly resolution and put into effect in 1970.

I think we Japanese are known for faithfulness and diligence. However, we seem to have a weakness to be negligent of coping with important issues. This weakness may not apply to all Japanese but I’d like to call for your reflection on whether or not you have had any tendency to avoid facing challenging issues. When a problem arises, we should face it squarely and seek a valid solution. I’d like to propose strongly that we respond likewise to the current international conflicts Japan is experiencing with neighbor countries. We should proactively talk with them and take appropriate actions.

All in all, I suspect that the “San-mu Shugi” has its origin in the aforementioned weakness of our people.

(November 29, 2013)

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

Words to Remember

Hiroshi Nagano, Vice President, Minato UNESCO Association

When I am asked to identify a favorite proverb, I find it difficult to answer because I am not familiar with very many sayings of that kind. However, I am fond of quotations from prominent people. Here is an example which struck me: *“Anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present.”* In the original German, it is as follows: *“Wer vor der Vergangenheit die Augen verschliesst, der wird am Ende blind für die Gegenwart.”*



This phrase appears in the speech of the then West German president Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker at the German Parliament, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war, on 8 May 1985. This speech was delivered while I was serving in the Japanese Embassy in West Germany.

To begin with, questions had been raised about the appropriateness of having a commemoration at that particular time, rather than waiting until a full half-century had elapsed since the end of the war. In replying to these questions, Dr. von Weizsäcker cited a story in the Old Testament, as follows:

“The Israelites were to remain in the desert for forty years before a new stage in their history began with their arrival in the promised land. Forty years were required for a complete transfer of responsibility from the generation of the fathers. Elsewhere, too (in the Book of Judges), it is described how often the memory of deliverance and rescue lasted only for forty years. When that memory faded, tranquility was at an end.”

The president, who had served as a member of the Synod and the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, also stated in his speech that *“Remembrance is experience of the work of God in history and it is the source of faith in redemption, and whoever forgets this experience loses his faith.”* He then added that *“All of us, whether guilty or not, whether old or young, must accept the past, we are all affected by its consequences and liable for it, and whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection.”*

He finally concluded his speech, saying that *“Our young people are not responsible for what happened over forty years ago. But they are responsible for the historical consequences. We in the older generation owe to young people not the fulfilment of dreams but honesty. We must help younger people to understand why it is vital to keep memories alive.”*

It is at this point that I recognize the link between the words of President von Weizsäcker and the famous phrase in the preamble of the UNESCO Charter *“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.”* And this is probably one of the critical reasons why I am interested in participating in UNESCO activities.

Having got back to MUA activities

Setsuko Yamada, MUA Director

A Minato city magazine informed me of the establishment of Minato UNESCO Association (MUA) soon after my married life started in Minato city. I had felt short of relations with people in the local neighborhood since I had focused mainly on my business. I wasted no time in joining MUA as an individual member, and participated in holiday events like Co (operative) Action of supporting literacy education in developing countries and cultural exchange of folding color papers. But, since I moved to other area in my family rearing period, I became a dormant member of only receiving Bulletins periodically and remitting annual member fees. It lasted a rather long time.



It was quite by chance that I attended an MUA annual meeting a few years ago after 20 plus year interval. On that occasion, I was encouraged and comfortably induced to resume activities by registering myself in some committee. Since then, I have been feeling such energies and powers of a variety of members with different career and experiences that had accumulated over 30 years, which have resulted in leading to success of many events.

I am sure MUA has not shown any sign of being immobilized by founding members which is rather common in volunteer organizations. I have been enjoying both MUA activities and communication with MUA members, new and old, with silent apologize for my irregular participation.

The MUA statute stipulates in Article 3, the Association aims, based on the spirit of UNESCO Constitution, at contributing to progress of the society, world peace and improvement of human welfare through international mutual understanding and friendly cooperation. In Article 4, for achievement of the above purposes, the Association will perform the following activities, except for any activities of supporting any religion or political parties:

- (1) Such activities of promoting understanding and spreading of UNESCO spirit,
- (2) Such activities of advancing international cultural exchange and friendship,
- (3) Such activities of facilitating educational, scientific, and cultural progresses in the area,
- (4) Other activities required to realize the purposes of the Association.

The statute also states clearly that anyone who agrees to the purposes of the Association can be a member (Article 5, Section 1), and such members are supposed to act positively and to pay membership fees (Article 5, Section 2.) The expression of 'To act positively' sounds a difficult hurdle to overcome, but as I suggested above, your optional participation can be welcome. If you cannot leave your place freely for your housework or business, you can participate in some activities like helping Mindanao Children's Library or Co-Action for literacy development.

I hope this message encourages some members to be involved more positively in MUA activities and non-members to think of registration to MUA.

(Translated by T. Tomita, Secretary-General)

No. 131: June 28, 2013

Japanese Arts & Culture Still Preserved in Graz, Austria

Kensuke Kikuchi, Auditor, the Minato UNESCO Association

I had an opportunity last fall to stay in Graz, a city located in the state of Steiermark, Austria. It is the second largest city in the country, following Vienna. Graz, once a capital city for the Habsburg Dynasty in the 14th century, has a population of 240,000. It has many hot springs, a variety of beautiful scenery, and a countryside atmosphere. It also produces internationally reputed wine. The older part of the city has been registered as a UNESCO world heritage.



I enjoyed walking through the old city area where I noticed the presence of many cultural heritages, including the Eggenberg Castle. I was impressed with the charm of cultural variety. The Eggenberg Castle, built 380 years ago, is characterized by the internal design which the owner wished would represent the atmosphere of the universe. The castle has a total of 365 windows, including 52 on the third floor. Housed in the castle are a church for daily services, a large hall, and 24 luxurious rooms. Among the rooms is a Japanese room which looks like a treasure box, accommodating a whole range of Japanese arts and cultural pieces.

It is estimated that the exhibited Japanese art pieces were purchased by the castle owner from the East India Company or other sources. There are quite a few ceramic ware which were colored just like the old Imari pieces, and which still maintain the original shape several centuries ago. Judging from their appearance through the glass showcases, I felt that these ceramic ware are similar to the Imari works which Franz Joseph I and Empress Elisabeth often used on the frequent occasions of their formal dinner at Schonbruun Palace. I also noticed other art pieces from the Orient, including those of chinoiserie or Chinese tastes which were fashionable in those days. It was a most rewarding cultural visit.

In the Japanese room, a part of the wall was decorated with an inlet large picture, called “Osakazu Byobu-e,” which depicts extensive scenery, spanning the streets at the foot of the Osaka Castle and the Byodo-in in Uji, Kyoto, during the Azuchi-Momoyama period in the 16th century. The combination of Byobu-e pictures vividly reproduce the busy street scenes and the thriving atmosphere in ordinary people’s life during the Toyotomi Dynasty period which lasted almost ten years.

The combination pictures have been preserved as extremely important assets of archival value and have become a recent topic in Japan. I became newly aware and proud that the exhibited Japanese arts & cultural pieces continue to attract with their charm many people from around the world who visit the Eggenberg Castle.

My visit to Austria provided a good opportunity for me to observe the significance of the UNESCO world heritage. It also provided a chance to become still more aware of the importance to preserve valuable heritages. They include traditional culture, architectural/engineering models, cultural ruins, etc. which have been handed down to us from our ancestors, and which may be registered as UNESCO world heritages. I look forward to working with Minato UNESCans to hand over our cultural heritages to our next generation, including our own children and grandchildren, who will undertake the future of Japan.

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

No. 130: March 18, 2013

For Dreams Come True

Ms. Takako Imamura, Vice President, MUA

It is my honor and pleasure to write this opening page, though with a strain on the nerves, and to think back my involvement with MUA. In the fast growing era of Japanese economy, I had no other choice than dedicating my daily life to working for my husband, a corporate warrior, and three sons. Spending several years in both living abroad and medical treatment for unexpected disease, I looked searching what my family life should be like.



The establishment of MUA in 1982 moved such a forward-looking woman as well as the youth and their parents who needed international mind and sociality most. An international symposium entitled how women seize the days in the international community of 80's which was held in the following year by MUA was an attractive pioneer-like event, and three panelists of Ms. Wakako Hironaka, commentator, Ms. Ann Murase, assistant professor of Sophia University, and Ms. Yan Minja, public relations attaché, UN High Commissioner for Refugees showed an epoch-making discussion. I remember I joined MUA by accepting at once a member's request and wanted to be reborn as a fresh woman by being blown with the international wind. I felt strongly I had to strengthen objective thinking, and nurture personality of self-determination.

MUA has continued to hold over three decades a variety of events for promoting international exchange and mutual understanding among countries, such as international symposiums, seminars,

friendship parties for YFU students or students from the Philippines, and so forth. One of them is world cooking classes for which I am responsible, and Peruvian family dishes scheduled for this March is 100th one. Also Co-action activity and literacy education aid through National Federation UNESCO association in JAPAN have been performed throughout the year for a long period. I have been involved in various voluntary activities. My three year service in the MUA secretary office was an unforgettable experience.

The 30 year anniversary commemorative publication which our president edited described every event and I was easily overwhelmed by those weighty letters. I believe it is a pride and a treasure of MUA. One person cannot make it, but if we can collect power and wisdom of various kinds of people, despite of differences by gender, age, nationality, academic career, or profession, we can accomplish anything. I hope such a precious experience is handed over to the next generation.

I believe the spirit of the first sentence in the UNESCO Constitution, 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed' should spread among more people, and also better communication would be sure to overcome any conflicts, small or big. I hope we continue such activities to promote the world peace with such a pride as the Japanese resilient character which proved through the East Japan Big Earthquake.

(Translated by H. Shimada, the Secretary General of MUA)

No. 129: December 25, 2012

Encounter with the Minato UNESCO Association

- The birthplace of my leadership -

Yoshiko Nagato Director of MUA,

President of Inter-cultural Community Life Association,

and President of the Utsunomiya UNESCO Association

Meeting with wonderful people enriches our life several fold. I lived in a company's house in 3chome, Mita, Minato City for over 7 years since the end of December, 1974 due to my husband's transfer. I was absorbed in activities of PTA of my son's school, Meiji Gakuin High School, and a variety of seminars held in Asahi Culture Center, or hosted by the Minato City Education Committee. It was the time when I woke up to commitment to the society. A then global new wave, 'UN decade for women' served as a tail wind for the housewife, and as a member of a steering committee for Minato City Women's Academy, I worked with wonderful friends to plan and hold events, which gave me a lot of precious opportunities for my



growth.

I attended 1st Meeting of Promoters for Establishment of Minato UNESCO Association at International House of Japan on May 22, 1981, in accordance with a request from City Education Committee. The majority of the attendance was well-known celebrities, and I felt nervous since I was a housewife. But, it was soon after my father who had been actively working as General Secretary of Ashikaga UNESCO Association suddenly passed away due to a traffic accident, and I decided to contribute to the Association believing in the amazing coincidence.

The Inaugural Meeting was actively held on October 17, 1981 at Shirogane Guest Palace. Under Dr. Kenzo Tange, the First President, and Dr. Kimitada Miwa, the second President, I as Standing Director and Chair of the Ladies Activities Committee, helped leading the infant organization by working for the following events, Charity Party for introducing Japan's New Year Events to foreign residents in January 1983, One-day Camping on the Children' Land for refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in August 1983, International symposium in June 1982 on 'How should women live in the international era of '80s?' The success of these events would not have obtained without support by the whole executive committee and without cooperation of Minato Junior Chamber Inc. and friends in the above-mentioned Academy, and leaders in the camping. Mass media passed on them.

It is the driving force of my activities in Utsunomiya that I learned in MUA the gist of organizing a private entity and volunteer activities. On June 6, 1983, I succeeded in establishing Iccla, Intercultural Community Life Association with setting the mission of UNESCO after seeking volunteers through mass media. President Miwa kindly named it as such. Our interaction beyond the borders in 30 years to promote bonding of global families has reached that with over 130 countries, thanks to dedication of friends, helpers, and cheer-squads.

The number of trainees on the Invitation Program of Young Foreign People by Ministry of Foreign Affairs reached 180 in 14 years. They came from 13 countries of North-east and Central Asia. Ulan Bator Iccla established by some Mongolian trainees cooperated with Iccla to carry out a 30 year anniversary event of Iccla, by which Mongolian mission visited Utsunomiya on June 16-25. MUA invited them to one-day Tokyo tour, which was a nice present for them. Youth group of Utsunomiya UNESCO Association and Utsunomiya University UNESCO Group provided a UNESCO Youth Forum in Utsunomiya 2012 on July 27. I have been enjoying and appreciating such precious experiences in such a local area.

(Translated by T. Tomita, Secretary-General of MUA)

Child Education Starts with Everyday Home Life

Ikuko-Newell Tsuboya

Director, Minato UNESCO Association

Human society has evolved from the hunting, to the agricultural, to the industrialized period. Then computers changed our way of life and ushered in the information age. Yet our society is still in the process of evolving, and we find ourselves becoming a knowledge-intensive economy that relies on a new set of core skills.

I feel that each individual must acquire the following seven skills to excel in our ever-diversifying human society; (1) problem-solving, (2) proactive self-education, (3) understanding of information and communications technology, (4) global and civil awareness and responsibility, (5) financial and economic awareness, (6) understanding of mathematics, science, engineering and the arts, and (7) creativity.



Time flies. 27 years have already passed since I started a school for child education in hopes of enabling them to acquire the aforementioned skills and become individuals with integrity. The mission of our school has always been to raise students with both a sense of individualism and an ability to co-exist in harmony along side others with different values. We strive to raise children who can make meaningful contributions to society, and who can pursue a sustainable, happy life. In short, I have been engaged in the creation, implementation, and management of an educational system that can meet the needs of the 21st century.

Currently our international school offers education to children from 60 different countries. In addition, we are working with Japanese educational institutions to promote and encourage models of 21st century learning and collaborative education. I take it as a sheer blessing that I have been engaged in the education of children.

Human society has always been characterized by change. However, I believe that there is one thing that should never be changed regardless of societal transformation; the life lessons children learn at home. The smallest unit in any society is the individual. Individuals combine to create homes, and it's here where each individual receives the basic education needed to grow into a decent human being. For children, everyday home life offers opportunities to receive important life-long educational lessons.

The very foundation of society rests in the home, not just for children but for all of us. The pillars of home education are the parents and guardians who live with children every day. It is regrettable to notice that, in recent years, more and more guardians have become increasingly self-centered. The causes for this trend seem to include mental immaturity, as well as pressure from an accelerating

pace of life. It seems as if some parents and guardians always place higher priority on their own gains, on their own pursuit of momentary pleasure, over anything else. Parents and guardians seem to interpret such behavior as appropriate and justifiable for the sake of attaining independence or to pursue their own happiness first of all.

As a result, I feel home education, or even the presence of the home itself, seems to be on the brink of collapse. The foundation of child education rests in everyday home life, where family members express care, thankfulness and compassion to one another. Children learn to respect and care for their parents at home. At the same time, parents share a mutual trust and love while undertaking the joint responsibility of raising their children in a tender, loving environment. In the home, siblings learn the importance of helping one another.

I believe that no matter how our society transforms from one period to another, these basic human values that children learn at home should stay unchanged. None of us can exist completely alone. Human experiences are supported by cooperative interactions. At the root of human life we are all linked.

Note. Ms. Tsuboya is Chairperson, NPO International Secondary School; CEO, Tokyo

International School; and CEO, International Education Center.

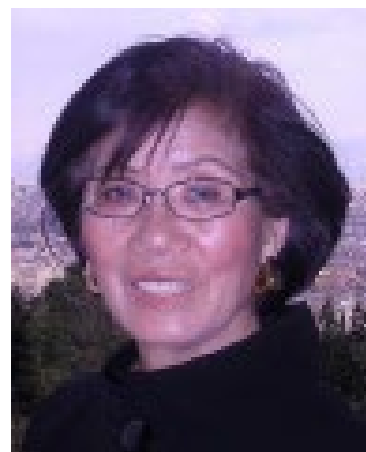
(Translated by S. Tanahashi, VP, the PR, Bulletin & Internet Committee)

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A Voice

**Fujiko Hara, President, Diplomatt Inc.
Managing Director, Ozaki Yukio Foundation
Director, Minato UNESCO Association**

It is difficult not to think of the mothers with small children in Fukushima. I am all the more frustrated knowing that there is so little I can do to help them. We say 'children are our treasures' and that 'their needs must be met.' However, we do very little to protect them, the bearers of our future. When the governor of Fukushima, where the nuclear reactor accidents took place, asked the prime minister in person to provide children under 18 years of age free medical services to protect them from the adverse effects of radiation exposure, the governor did not get his wish. The prefecture decided to cover the expenses the government refused to pay.



What are we teaching children we call the bearers of our future? Certainly, we want them to carry on with their lives, learn useful skills and be positive members of our society. It must be asked if it is not more important to teach by example, not to tell lies, not to put cost and economic performance above people's lives, and that above all we must live by certain moral values. I am afraid what we have done is to create a nuclear power safety commission whose members, tied to the interests of the nuclear and electric power industries, are more committed to securing their economic interests rather than the safety of the citizens. Are we not guilty of failing to prepare ourselves for the worst scenarios? This has resulted in serious accidents that threaten our lives and livelihood, polluting not just our hometowns and our country with radiation but the world's air and ocean.

No one takes responsibility for this gross failure. This applies to the previous regime that created the system and sat on it over decades, as well as to the present government that appears at a loss to cope with the tragic reality whose effects reach far beyond our shores. Even amidst this tragedy politicians are too involved in shameful power play. What is the government there for? First and foremost it exists to protect the lives and property of citizens. Herbert Spencer (1820 – 1903), a British philosopher, was clear that governments exist to implement the law that all people have an equal right to happiness. And that the rights of citizens are above governments, just as purpose outweighs means.

To save their children from the danger of radiation, many mothers have reluctantly chosen to leave their husbands, fathers of their children, and their homes in polluted areas. Brave mothers say what they fear most is the cold and critical reception they will receive from those who remained if and when they can return. A deep wedge is being driven within communities most affected by the accident.

Let me share with courageous mothers dedicated to protecting their children these lines from a poem by Teruyo Takeuchi (1904 - 2001) that Empress Michiko translated and read in English poetry circles in 1982 and 2001:

On the cheeks

Of your innocent newly born, Mothers

Do not drop tears

Of your own despair