

March - 2002
No.28
NEWSLETTER
Kyoto International Cultural Association, Inc.

(財)京都国際文化協会

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会長 西島安則 ・ 理事長 千 宗室



授業風景 ▶

徐 甲申先生

(大連外国語学院)

国際交流講座《日本語を教える人のために》

日本語教師養成講座

1983年秋にスタートしたこの講座は、京阪神で活躍中の教授・専門家を講師に迎えて、理論面・実践面での充実した内容を盛りこみ、当初から高い評価を得てきました。年々変化する日本語教育現場の実態に対応する改善を重ねて今日にいたっていますが、昨年度は次の2点に留意してカリキュラムの改変を行ないました。

国内外で日本語教育の推進を図っている機関や当該部門の担当者による<教師活動の実際>に関する講義を加えたこと。

海外主要地域での教授実態の講義を加えたこと。

この試みは好評で、火曜日の夜は毎週、熱心に講義に聞き入る100名もの受講者の姿が見られました。受講修了者には講義科目を日英両文で記載して受講証明書を発行しています。また、希望者には日本語授業の見学などの場も用意しています。日本語の学習者は、国籍・背景文化・年齢・学習目的・学習歴などがまちまちであることが普通です。このため、教師を目指す人は、日本語をひとつの言語として客観的に学んで、基本的な知識を獲得するとともに、多様な学習者のニーズに対応できる技能を磨くことも求められます。日本語授業を見学したり、時には実習したりすることは貴重な体験と、これも好評を得ています。

2002年度は4月16日から3期41週間にわたって開講します。

次頁の講座カレンダーをご参照ください。

《日本語を学ぶ人のために》

京都市国際交流協会・KICA共催「やさしい日本語」クラス

ステップ（入門）とステップ（初級）の2レベル、3クラスを用意しています。ステップで基本的な文法と会話表現を学習し、ステップではその応用発展をはかります。学習者の事情やニーズは多様でレベル差もありますが、教師はどの人にも授業参加してもらえよう心を配ります。日本語・日本文化に初めて出会う人同志、教えあったり、情報交換したり和気藹々とした雰囲気です。

問合せは京都市国際交流協会(TEL . 075-752-3511)へ
Japanese Classes for Beginners at KICH

Kyoto City International Community House and KICA co-organize Japanese Lessons at KICH on Fridays. First Steps in Japanese (13:00~15:00, 18:00~20:00) welcome the beginning students and provide them with practice of expressions based on basic grammar. In Second Steps in Japanese (15:30~17:30), students are encouraged to acquire well-balanced basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Call the Kyoto City International Community House:
Information and Programming Section (TEL 075-752-3511)
KICA Private/Small Group Japanese Language Lessons

Those who need to study Japanese in private/small group classes are welcome to call our office. Each class is carefully tailored by licensed /experienced teachers to meet personal needs of the students. (See p.3)

2002 (財)京都国際文化協会

国際交流講座 日本語を教える人のために

日本語教師養成講座 / 講座カレンダー

主催：(財)京都国際文化協会

共催：京都市

後援：京都府・国際交流基金

2002 国際交流講座 -- 日本語を教える人のために		
月日	日本語教師養成講座 I	
1	4.16	日本語概説 玉村文郎
2	23	外から見た日本語 玉村文郎
3	4.30	言語のしくみ 吉田和彦
4	5.7	日本語教育と国語教育 玉村禎郎
5	14	日本語の文法(助詞・助動詞) 加藤久雄
6	21	日本語の文法(構文) 加藤久雄
7	28	日本語の語彙 前田富祺
8	6.4	日本語の文字・表記 玉村文郎
9	11	日本語の音声・音韻 壇辻正剛
10	18	日本語の歴史 前田富祺
11	25	日本語の位相 浅野敏彦
12	7.2	教授法と教材 松井嘉和
13	9	異文化理解と言語教育 泉文明
14	16	求められる日本語教師 徐甲申
15	23	日本語教育の内容 玉村文郎
日本語教師養成講座		
1	9.10	音声・音韻の指導 杉藤美代子
2	17	聴解の指導 土岐哲
3	24	日本語の言語行動 金田一秀穂
4	10.1	文法の指導 佐治圭三
5	8	文法の指導 佐治圭三
6	15	語彙の指導 玉村文郎
7	22	語彙の指導 玉村文郎
8	29	文字・表記の指導 泉文明
9	11.5	近・現代語の形成 玉村禎郎
10	12	近・現代語の形成 玉村禎郎
11	19	日本語学と対照研究 玉村文郎
12	26	日本語と中国語 名和又介
13	12.3	日本語と中南米諸語 田辺加恵
14	10	日本語とヨーロッパ諸語 田辺保
15	17	日本語と韓国語 泉文明

2003 日本語教師養成講座		
1	1.7	日本語学と日本語教育 玉村文郎
2	14	社会言語学 真田信治
3	21	音声・音韻総論 壇辻正剛
4	28	韓国語話者に対する日本語教育 泉文明
5	2.4	中南米諸語話者に対する日本語教育 大倉美和子
6	18	中国語話者に対する日本語教育 徐甲申
7	25	ヨーロッパ諸語話者に対する日本語教育 乙政潤
8	3.4	文法総論 糸井通浩
9	11	語彙総論 前田富祺
10	18	海外における日本語教育 特別講師(国際交流基金)
11	25	日本語教育総論 玉村文郎

講座、の各コースにつき、所定時間の受講者に受講証明書を発行します
 受講証明書には、各コースの受講科目が日英両文で記載され、全コースの受講内容が1枚で証明されます
 全コースの修了者には、授業見学などの場を用意しています

会場：京大会館（京都市左京区吉田河原町15-9）

日時：毎回火曜日 6:30~8:30p.m.

費用：協会年会費 5,000円

受講料 講座 30,000円

講座 30,000円

講座 25,000円

お問い合わせは：

(財)京都国際文化協会

日本語個人・小グループレッスン

1992年度「日本語教師養成講座」を受講、現在「やさしい日本語」と「日本語個人・小グループレッスン」の教師をしておられる廣瀬和子さんからレポートを寄せていただきました。

外国から京都を訪れる研究者、留学生、企業の研修生、そして、その家族など、比較的短い期間京都に滞在する人々、あるいは、日本人と結婚して、これから日本に永住という人たち。国籍や文化的な背景は元より日本語の学習歴も様々。「日本語個人・小グループレッスン」は、このような学習者の多様なニーズにきめ細かく応えようというプログラムです。

約1年間レッスンを続けたスロバキアの研究者、チェルティークさんご夫妻に女の子のお子さんが生まれました。出生証明、登録、帰国時の出入国に必要な書類などを書くお手伝いする中で、結婚、出産、女性の地位などをめぐる両国の事情を、ご夫妻とじっくり語り合いました。教科書に沿って進める教室での日本語学習とも一味違う楽しい時間です。最近届いた写真の中のエマちゃんは着物姿でにっこり。

最近、「10日間しか滞在しないのだけれど、その間に日本語を学びたい」という人がユーゴスラビアからやって来ました。日本語に出会うのは初めてとのこと。その上、再来日の予定はないとのことでしたので『ポケット版日本語会話』のような本の携行を勧めましたが、何度も「どうしても」と言われて根負け、ほとんど毎日レッスンをしました。効率よく「役立つ会話表現」を学習できるようにと工夫をこらす中で教師としても新しい体験をしましたが、JRバスで東京へ日帰りの旅をするなど積極的に観光地を回る傍ら、日本のことばを直接知ろうとする彼女の姿勢に感動を覚えました。

あまり質問しないで教師のリードに従う人、納得できるまで質問する人。背景文化によって、ことばに対する姿勢も異なります。個人レッスンの利点を活かし、学習者の姿勢と能力に適した授業をすることは易しいことではありませんが、その中で相互の理解が深まり信頼関係が築かれていくのは教師にとって大きな喜びです。日本語レッスンは人と人との交流です。日本語を勉強したい人達のニーズに応えるよう努めることで、交流の輪を広げていきたいと思えます。

KICA Private/Small Group Japanese Language Lessons

The following report is contributed by Ms. Kazuko Hirose, who attended the class “Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language” in 1992 and now teaches at “KICA Private/Small Group Japanese Language Lessons.”

There are many researchers, students, trainees of companies and their families visiting Kyoto from abroad. There are also many people staying in Kyoto just for a while or people getting married to Japanese citizens and deciding to settle down here. “KICA Private/Small Group Japanese Language Lessons” is a program to address the various needs of these people.

A pretty baby girl was born to a Slovak couple, both of whom are researchers and who had studied Japanese about a year with me. When I helped them fill in some forms like birth certificate, registration card of the baby and the papers for both immigration and emigration at their leaving Japan, we talked about the marriage systems, childbirth and women's situations in both countries. It was a really happy time though it was a little different from ordinary classes using textbooks.

Recently, I met a Yugoslav lady who wanted to study Japanese but would stay here only for 10 days. It was the first time for her to encounter the Japanese language and she might not come back again, so, I recommended she buy a pocket dictionary for daily conversation but she insisted I teach her Japanese anyway, so we had class almost every day. I had a new experience as a teacher through thinking out how to teach “useful expressions” in such a short time but I was moved by her passion not only to visit sight-seeing spots but to study the Japanese language directly as well.

Students' attitudes are different from each other according to their cultural background. While some students follow my lead without asking any questions, others repeat the same questions until they really get it. It is not easy to make a class considering each student's attitude and ability but it is the biggest pleasure to deepen mutual understandings and establish good human relationships

国際文化講座 KICAセミナー

京都国際文化協会では、京都府の後援を得て在洛外国人を招き、専門分野のお話とともに日本や京都との関わりをうかがう講座を続けています。

3月9日にお迎えしたマーク・キーン先生は15年前から京都住まい。庭園の研究に携わる傍ら、寺社や企業や個人の住宅のために、数多くの日本庭園を設計してこられました。古代の日本人は快い気候に恵まれて自然を崇拝し、それをそのまま取り込んで最初の庭園を生み出しました。大陸文化の影響も受けた平安貴族の庭、禅の到来とともに生れた枯山水、茶庭そして坪庭。大名文化の知的な遊び心と闊達な町人文化の結合として生れた回遊式庭園。スライドを見つめる参加者一人一人の質問に応えながらお話が進みます。一夜にして取り壊されて駐車場になる町家の一角。歳月が磨きあげた老舗の店先を占領する自動販売機。京都の現状に鳴らされるキーン先生の警鐘を私たち市民はどのように聞いたらいいのでしょうか。

Prof. Keane talks about the tradition of Japanese gardens.



インディアナ大学リチャード・ルビンジャー先生は教育史がご専門。「徳川初期における庶民の読み書き能力」と題して、5月29日、日本語と英語でお話くださいました。欧米で盛んな読み書き能力の研究は、公的届書の本人署名に基づいて行われます。ルビンジャー先生は、日本で印章使用が普及する以前の1620年頃から約50年間に、戸主や借家人らが公式の届書等に残した花押に注目されました。丹念に資料調査した結果、性別や職分、また住居が村か町かによって、その能力に差が見られるものの、江戸初期には

through the lessons. The classroom is a place for promoting personal exchanges, so I would like to broaden the circle of exchanges by better understanding the needs of people studying Japanese.

KICA Seminar

Kyoto: Of Gardens and Parking Lots

On the 9th of March, 2001, Prof. Mark P. Keane, a licensed landscape architect who has been building numerous private gardens for companies, temples, and individuals since he came to Japan in 1985, talked about the tradition of Japanese gardens. His interactive lecture covered the history of gardens with beautiful slides of Stones and Ponds of prehistoric years, the Gardens of Heian aristocrats created through active contact with Korea and China, Sand and Stone Gardens of Zen Buddhism, Tea Gardens, Courtyard Gardens, and Edo Stroll Gardens. He praised Kyoto as a “garden city”, a place where nature and culture meet. At the same time he did not hide his deep regrets for lovely gardens being turned into parking lots overnight and gaudy vending machines sitting right next to time-washed charming signs of shops of long standing. Several aspects of Japanese garden designs can be traced back to the Gardens. Prof. Keane's interactive lecture with lots of interesting slides showed the beauty and culture of the Kyoto's gardens, and he openly repeated that the modern-day Kyoto is destroying her garden culture.

Measuring Literacy in the 17th Century

On the 29th of May, Richard Rubinger, History of Education Professor of Indiana University, gave a lecture “Measuring Literacy in the 17th Century: Signature and Cipher.” In Western studies of popular literacy, signatures are used to measure literacy. For a long time this was thought to be impossible in Japan where seals are used to certify documents. Professor Rubinger, however, noticed the ciphers (*kao*) by the heads of household and tenants themselves. Those personal marks were found only for a short period from about 1620 to 1670 before the seals (*hanko*) became popular. Having studied the documents

庶民も読み書きができたとお考えです。国際日本文化研究所での仕事を終え、間もなく帰国して論文発表の予定で、大好きな京都の人たちにと、一足早くそのあらしを聞かせていただきました。

飾り彫りの美しい銀食器に盛るのは、お客をもてなす伝統料理のポーズでしょうか。国技シャガいのサイコロは牛骨細工。6月2日のK I C Aセミナーで将棋盤、馬頭琴などモンゴルの人々の使う什器の数々を見せてくださったのは、外国人招聘学者として京大を来訪中の数学者レンツェン・エンクバド先生。歴史の波に洗われ続けたモンゴルの近代化を先生ご自身も被られたのです。民主的な国造りを始めて10年、母国はようやく、よちよち歩き始めたところと言われます。子供たちの健やかな成長のために、速やかな経済発展と教育制度の整備が望まれています。青い空、黄金色の砂丘、果てしなく広がる大草原、そしてそこに生息する多くの動植物との共生を忘れてはいけなないと、先生はお話を締めくくられました。

参加者が少ないことをお詫びすると、「学問は自分のためにするものですから」と爽やかに言い切られたライデン大学日本学教授ポート先生。漢文がお好きで、ヨーロッパと東アジア文化圏のギャップを埋める思想として『礼』は面白いと直観し、研究者の道に進まれたそうです。10月26日は、「江戸時代の儒教知識人について」と題して、日本語で次のようにお話しくださいました。江戸時代、上級武士の生まれではないが、「文」(学問)を好み、熱心に儒教を学ぶ若者が現れました。京都にはその儒学を始め、漢学、医学、蘭学、剣道、蹴鞠などを教える塾が多数あり、諸国からこうした若者が集まる中、京学の北海はその著書に、「儒者を目指すなら、漢文の下勉強をしてから入洛し、良い師に学び、欲張らず、一日一科目の授業に限り、残り多くの時間を復習と読書にあて、師に不明を尋ね、3～5年の精進をせよ」と説きました。「武より文。国民に四書五経に基づく教育をし、礼で国を治めよう」と主張する儒教運動は、儒者に冷淡な幕藩体制側とぶつかって、フラストレーションが高まり、やがて明治維新の原動力となったということでした。

哲学を勉強していた若い日に「お茶を飲む習慣」に興味を覚えたビスゴーさんは、故郷のデンマークから、ギリシャ、トルコ、アフガニスタンへとお茶を尋ねる巡礼の旅。

carefully, he suggested that the commoners in the early Edo Period could read and write somehow, although their abilities varied according to their gender, social classes, and living areas.



Prof. Enkhbat talks about his culture.

Life and People in Mongolia

On the 2nd of June, we invited Prof. Lenzen Enkhbat, Visiting Researcher at Kyoto University from Ulan Bator who kindly brought interesting utensils with him including silverware, ox-bone dice for *Shagai*, a chessboard and a horse-head fiddle. The mathematician said that he had been tossed back and forth by the political instabilities of the nation until very recently. He hoped that the nation's economy would grow and its educational system be improved so that children would be better off without spoiling its clear sky, golden sands and boundlessly expansive steppe lands and numerous rare animal species on it.

Confucian Intellectuals in Edo Period

When Leiden University Professor B. J. Boot was young, he loved reading Chinese classics and thought that “*Rei*”, a principle of Confucian ethics, may possibly bridge the gaps between European and East Asian cultures. That was why he chose Asian Studies as his lifelong research theme. On the 26th of October, he talked about “Confucian intellectuals in Edo Period.” With an increasing number of

辿りついた京都で「茶道」を知り、1年の予定が25年になったと言われるビスゴ - さんのお宅は北白川。建て替えの進んだ家並の中でただ一軒、生垣の中に静かな佇まいを残しています。茶道研鑽の合間を縫って古材を集め、70年を経た家屋と庭を、自ら補修されたとか。1月8日、春を迎えるしつらえの茶道具は日本はじめアジアの各地から集められたもの。イギリス、スウェーデン、アメリカ、ロシアからのお客様と一緒に、懐かしい日本の家で一碗のお茶をいただき、平和な世界の到来を祈りました。

Friends from Russia Appreciating Utensils



外国人留学生交流プログラム

留学生や研究者、そのご家族との日本語個人・グループレッスン（3頁参照）は交流プログラムの一の大きな柱ですが、出会いはさまざまな活動に繋がっていきます。今年度の活動のあらましをご紹介します。このプログラムは当協会理事長千宗室氏の支援を受けています。

《留学生と作る世界の家庭料理》

毎回好評を得ているこのクラスですが、今年度も関西電力ミュージアムのキッチンをお借りして、また回によってはスタッフ宅で開かれました。

まず、6月には是非日本料理をという留学生の皆さんの希望で、スタッフが講師役を務め、鯉のたたきなどを作り、賑やかに初夏の家庭料理を楽しみました。

the young low-ranking samurai and the commoners who left their hometowns for learning, Kyoto became inundated with many schools for them. Schools provided those ambitious people with classes of Confucianism, Chinese classics, Medicine, Western learning, *kendo*, etc. “The pen is mightier than the sword. People should be taught on the basis of the Confucian texts. Courtesy (*Rei*) is a useful philosophy to unify the nation,” the Confucian intellectuals insisted. While fighting against the indifferent Tokugawa shogunate, the Confucian campaign survived, eventually developing into a motive for the Meiji Restoration.

My Way of Tea

It was when Mr. Bisgaard was studying philosophy in his homeland, Denmark, that he got interested in the habit of drinking tea, and he went on a pilgrimage to Greece, Turkey, Afghanistan, and then to Japan. He extended his stay from one year to twenty-five years just because he came to know “the Way of Tea” here in Kyoto. He has devoted his time and energy in searching for the quintessence of drinking tea, and as a part of it, has renovated a 70 year-old house and garden in Kitashirakawa using used materials all by himself. On January 8, 2002, we were sitting in his tea-room exquisitely furnished with beautiful utensils from Asian countries. We all sipped bowls of tea with friends from Britain, Sweden, America and Russia and prayed for the peace to come to this world and to our minds as well.

KICA Program for Foreign Students and Families

Our Private/Small Group Japanese Language Lessons (please see p.3) plays more roles than just teaching Japanese. The following activities were somehow made possible by meeting friends old and new and exchanging ideas with them through this program. We are very grateful to Dr. Soshitsu Sen for his generously and continuously supporting this program.

また、アンコールに応じて、10月にはモンゴルからの外国人招聘学者夫人アルタンツェツェグさんを再び講師にお迎えして、おもてなしや特別なお祝いに一般家庭で作られるブーツを教わりました。小ぶりな中華まんじゅう風のあつあつのブーツをほおばると、おいしい肉汁が口いっぱいになり、幸せな気分になります。ちょうどモンゴルを旅行してきたスタッフから、スティック状に固められたチーズと小袋に入った岩塩が配られました。岩塩には様々な効能があるとのこと。現地で味わった「モンゴルの味」パオで過ごした夜の満天の星。ブーツをいただきながら聞くおみやげ話に参加者の心はモンゴルの草原へと誘われていくのでした。

《アフマディジャンさん 嵯峨野高校へ》

夏休みを目の前にした7月14日、中国ウイグル自治区からの留学生アフマディジャンさんは京都府立嵯峨野高校に招かれました。1年生約300人が総合学習の時間に「シルクロードの国の暮らし」について学ぶこととなったからです。万年雪をいただく天山山脈、砂漠に咲く花々、美しい民族服を着てぶどうの収穫を祝う人々。スライドが映し出す西域の情景。たためば一枚の布、磁針の代わりにもなるという四角形の帽子をかぶったアフマディさんの語るウイグルのことばと生活文化は、シルクロードの要衝として栄えた昔から今に受け継がれてきたものとのことでした。

《ウイグルへ衣類のプレゼント》

中国ウイグル自治区南部に学校を建てて贈るなど、草の根交流を続けている「天山文化交流協会」の事業に協力して、協会スタッフがタンスの中に眠っていた衣類を送りました。現地の協力者から、一点一点必要な人々に贈られ喜ばれたということです。

《日本文化を学ぶ》

留学生やその家族と楽しむ南座での歌舞伎鑑賞教室と文楽鑑賞教室はすっかり恒例になりました。いけばなインターナショナルのご好意で参加する毎月の生け花デモンストラクションも定番プログラムです。加えて本年は日本の伝統演劇と西洋演劇との融合を試みつづけて20の能法劇団公演 "Still Moves" を鑑賞しました。秋色濃い府立植物園の

The Joy of Cooking with Students from Abroad

At the request of some students from abroad, "Early Summer Japanese Luncheon" was prepared by one of our staff members in her lovely kitchen and cheerfully appreciated with pleasant chats. Ms. Altantseg, the wife of a visiting researcher from Mongolia, introduced steamed meatballs, which she often serves on happy occasions. Mongolian stick-shaped cheese and rock salt in small packs were presented to every participant by one of staff members who had recently returned from Mongolia. With piping hot meatballs in their mouth, participants were all tempted to spend a night on the Mongolian expansive steppe under innumerable stars in the sky.



Making Mongolian Meatballs

A Visit to Sagano High School

Mr. Afmadijan was invited to Sagano Prefectural High School in a hot afternoon in July to introduce the people and culture of Xinjiang Uygur where he is from. Three-hundred first-graders were to study about the Silk Road in the newly started General Studies course. Showing slides and photos of the snow-covered Tian-Shan mountains, wild flowers on vast deserts, people picking grapes in colorful ethnic gowns, Mr. Afmadijan, doctorate course student at Kyoto

散策にも来日中の研究者や留学生が参加。「杉本家住宅」見学には、スタンフォード大学日本センターの学生たちも加わって、大切に守られてきた京町家の奥座敷、客を迎える仕来たりや迎春準備の一端を見せていただきました。

KAHF (カーフ・京都ホストファミリー協会)

外国人留学生の数が大幅に増加し始め、市内の大学がその対応に追われていた1984年春、これを側面から応援する市民のグループが生まれました。京都で生活を始めた学生を会員に紹介してお茶の間交流をしようというものでした。住まい、奨学金、健康、恋愛、結婚、家族。若い人たちの悩みは、時に深刻で、簡単に解決できるものばかりではありませんでしたが、一緒に作った食事を囲む中で彼らもほっと緊張の糸を解くのではと考え50人の会員でスタートしたのです。これまでに1100人の留学生を350余軒の a home away from home に招いてきたKAHFは、昨年11月2日、全国51の個人・団体と共に遠山文部科学大臣から表彰されました。国として外国人留学生を受け容れて100年になるのを記念してのことでした。留学生支援のネットワークは整備されて来ていますが、学生一人ひとりの不安を来洛当初から受け止めるなど、これからのKAHFは、担うべき役割を見定めての活動を求められるでしょう。

KICAはKAHF設立時から全面的に協力をしてきました。

KAHFの会



University, introduced language and tradition of Uygur which had been passed down from the time when the area boasted of being a prosperous trading points on the Silk Road.

Used Clothing for Uygur People

Tian-Shan Cultural Association in Osaka has promoted grass-root exchange programs for six years. As one of their activities, they gave a school building to the people of Southern Uygur as a gift two years ago. KICA staff members sent out boxes of used clothing, and each piece was carefully handed to the people who really needed them.



Mrs. Sugimoto explains four seasons in her household.

Meeting with Kyoto's Tradition

Visits to Minami-za for Kabuki and Bunraku performances, or demonstrations by Ikebana International are now our annual events. This fall, we were especially blessed to see the 20th anniversary performance, "Still Moves" by the Noho Theatre Group, and to be showed into the quiet rooms of the Sugimoto House, one of the divinely preserved Kyoto houses in the city together with scholars from Britain, Australia and students from Stanford University Kyoto Center.

京都の週末（茶会とコンテスト）

ビビアン・ケンリック

2001年10月の土曜日、京都の秋の気配は、銀杏並木の黄葉を縫い、老樹が影を映す寺院の壁を漂い、国際茶会の開かれた裏千家センターを包んでいます。

最初は明るいホールで点心を賞味。つづいて小グループに分かれて茶室へ導かれると雰囲気が一変します。ざわめきは静まり、目に写るのは竹のそよぎ、楓の紅葉、刈り込まれた灌木をめぐる飛石。鐘の音。薫香の匂い。あくまでも簡素に。ここには心を癒す何かがあるのでしょうか。

茶室での点前は裏千家の外国人茶道留学生たち。優雅な着物姿と流暢な日本語。留学の成果を示す自然で美しい動作。一つずつ趣の異なる茶碗、素朴な壺に挿された一輪の花、掛軸の書、そして清澄な茶室のしつらえ。様々な日本の伝統芸術が茶道の和敬静寂の中に生きています。

翌日は京大会館で京都国際文化協会（KICA）のエッセイ・コンテストの発表会。私は、イギリスから移り住んで以来50年の東京の変貌を回顧したエッセイによって、4人の発表者の1人に選ばれて会場にいました。日本を訪れる外国人と京都市民との理解と交流を深めるために、主として女性ボランティアによって運営されているこの協会の真摯な仕事ぶりに心から感謝したいと思います。ありがとうございました。

第22回国際茶会（国際茶道文化協会共催、裏千家後援）には400余名が集いました。右はジャパン・タイムズのコラムニスト、V・ケンリックさんの寄稿で、上はその抄訳です。



Annual International Tea Gathering

Kyoto Weekend

by Vivienne Kenrick

Finalist for 2001 KICA Essay Contest

Columnist, The Japan Times

On an October weekend in 2001, a special, old-time Kyoto atmosphere drifted over the neighborhood around the Urasenke Headquarters. Autumn trees, an ancient temple, and glimpses of traditional architecture set the tone for the annual international tea gathering.

At first there was an air of vivacity as guests entered the Center Hall to enjoy a light meal and to talk with each other. Then as in small groups we followed our guides to the Chado Kaikan, the mood changed. A hush settled. We noticed the bamboos and coloured leaves, the stepping stones and trimmed bushes, the sound of the temple bell and the fragrance of incense. Japanese tea in an authentic setting has such a soothing power to heighten awareness of enduring simplicities.

Several non-Japanese men and women assisted with the arrangements. They wore Japanese dress, and spoke fluent Japanese. They behaved naturally, quietly and easily, showing the grace and elegance that the study of the Way of Tea induces. In the serenity of the tea room the guests admired kimono and controlled movement, tea bowls and a flower in a jar, calligraphy, and the room itself. The Way of Tea brings together many different Japanese arts, blending them and paring them down into a single expression of restraint and tranquillity.

The next day, the Kyoto International Cultural Association assembled essay finalists, judges, and an audience, for the 2001 KICA Essay Contest. This contest, a very fine venture organized by women volunteers, highlights the thoughts of non-Japanese participants on Japan. KICA is an admirable body that works for better international understanding, tolerance, and appreciation of the worth around us. Thank you, KICA. The world needs more initiatives like yours.

エッセイ・コンテストあれこれ（抄訳）

ベルトラン・ジロー

その日、私は秋色深まる京都で、前日の茶会の余韻覚めやらぬまま、エッセイ・コンテストの発表に耳を傾けていた。最初の発表者は京都大学大学院で情報システム科学を学ぶペル - 人学生だった。アメリカ先住民の後裔としての彼は、西欧の侵略者によって破壊された故国の伝統への自覚が、近代化の中でも伝統を大切に日本へ来て甦ったと語った。私は感銘を受けたが、自らも多くの日本人科学者の友人をもつ科学者として、未来への夢にこそ期待したいと発言したのだった。私は楽観主義者なのだ。

終戦直後に来日して、半世紀に渡って日本の移り変わりを見てきたイギリスの女性の回想も感動的だった。私は黙して、自分が幼少期を過ごしたヴェトナムの変貌を想い、私の青春期には、黄金色に波打つ小麦畑を彩っていたブルーエットとコクリコの花が、農薬のせいで、パリの南西百キロの地から姿を消してしまったことを想っていた。

3番目の発表は面白かった。日常生活の対極にある非日常の様相、外国旅行者の比較。西洋の旅行者と東洋の旅行者。自国の外に見いだす「美」の条件。「異国趣味」とは誰にとつての異国なのか。私自身は西洋の庭も日本の庭も好きだ。北斎も印象派も、それから、石庭の苔も夕映えにそよぐ楓も。池に架かる橋から繊細な和食の「お箸」も。STOP! こんな脱線の時間も紙面もないはずだ。

最後の発表者のことを、私はもう少しで書き忘れるところだった。16歳の女子高校生、インド国籍で在日11年の彼女のエッセイが最優秀賞を獲得したというのに。英文で書かれたエッセイだったが、その発表があまりにも流暢な日本語で始まったので、私の耳には音楽のように聞こえたのだ。注意力が散漫になったのはそのせいだっただろうか。「蓮の葉の露」とは詩的な題だったのに残念。言いたいことは無限。時間と紙面は有限。またの機会に書くことにしよう。

右は京都大学を訪問中の物理学者ベルトラン・ジロー先生の寄稿、上はその抄訳です。

Impressions about impressions

by Bertrand Giraud

Kyoto University Invited Researcher

Here I was, in this auditorium of beautiful Kyoto, still under the charm of a tea ceremony which I had seen two days before. I was listening to the Peruvian scientist of Amerindian descent. He explained how the Japanese respect for tradition helped him in recovering his identity demolished by colonialism. He was bright and sincere, but, as a scientist myself, I had to react. The twenty-first century is facing such horrendous problems, whether over-population or climate changes. It allows such extreme dreams, such as genetic engineering and expansion of mankind into space. Thus I asked the speaker whether he wanted to expand his thinking into future issues. I believe that modern Japanese culture is much more than tradition. I have many Japanese friends, who are scientists and extremely knowledgeable in history and arts as well. We share advanced dreams. I hope that, in future years, this contest about Japanese culture will also contain contributions about dreams. I am an optimist...

I said nothing after the talk of the English lady who had seen half a century changing Japan. The poetry of her recollection was moving. I am slightly younger than she is, but I could easily identify with her. The Indochina of my early childhood has changed so much. A mix of blue and red flowers (bleuets and coquelicots) is not found any more among the bright yellow wheat fields of my youth, in the plain one hundred kilometers southwest of Paris. The blue ones were poisoned by fertilizers...

The third talk was very amusing. It was so funny to compare Western and Eastern tourists, and even different Westerners, and different Easterners in their ways of enjoying the beauties of another country. There is a famous text "Lettres Persanes" by Montesquieu, about what is exotic, and for whom. Einstein did not invent relativity, after all... There was a slight debate, after that talk, about Eastern gardens versus Western ones. I love both, I love painting,

KICA論文コンテスト「日本 私の視点から」報告



発表風景

第24回論文コンテスト（国際交流基金京都支部・KICA共催、京都府後援）の発表会が10月21日(日)に行われ、予備審査で選ばれた4編の作者が各自その内容を発表しました。審査の結果は次の通りです。

Prize for Effort / 奨励賞	(副賞 ¥50,000)
“How I found Peru when I came to Japan”	David Aliaga (Peru)
“A Fifty -Year Retrospective”	Vivienne Kenrick (UK)
“Holiday Culture”	Mylene Oishi (UK)
KICA Prize / 京都国際文化協会賞	(副賞 ¥100,000)
“A Dewdrop On A Lotus Leaf”	Niharika Rao (India)

先進技術と伝統文化が共生する日本に学びたいとアリアガさん。戦後間もない日本を知るケンリックさんは、繁栄とともに失われてゆく日本の美しさを惜しみます。バック旅行中の体験からユーモア溢れる比較行動論を展開する大石さん。京都国際文化協会賞受賞のラオさんは高校生。日本に住む外国人はお客様扱いで、その存在を蓮の葉の露のようと言います。小学校では日本人になりきろうとして、仲間外れを経験。高校で本来の自分を出したら、意外に周りから受け入れられたとか。二つの文化背景を持つ自分はそのことをエネルギーにしたいと話しました。

Hokusai and impressionists, and the shade of every piece of moss, and sand, and stone, and the lace of the maples in the sunset, and the slightly twisted image of the bridge in the lake when a golden fish climbs above the image of the hashi, which becomes bashi in so many city names... and drifts back into o-hashii when I think of subtle Japanese food...Stop! Speaking time is limited, number of lines limited, too...

And I almost missed the last talk, the winner of the contest. Attention relaxed? Too many images of gardens still floating? Still a bit of jet lag? Loss of interest because a good part of the talk became almost a debate in this musical Japanese language, which I do not master?

Too bad, the title “A dewdrop on a lotus leaf” was so poetic.

So many more things to say! But...time...lines...limited, you know.

Of course I'll come again! Who can doubt it?



Finalists, Judges and Staff Members at the Reception

A Dewdrop On A Lotus Leaf



Niharika Rao

Have you ever seen a dew drop on a Lotus Leaf. It is so fresh, so clean, so tranquil, yet so fragile. A strong gust of wind or severely shaking the leaf would cause the dewdrop to fall off the leaf. Standing at the cross road of two cultures I have been compared to such a dew drop by my parents... a dew drop which needs constant motivation and force to remain on the leaf. I often wonder what is the best way to live as a foreigner in another country. Adopt the culture of the country where you live whole-heartedly or just adopt it in bits and pieces trying to maintain your own culture? Entering my 11th year in Japan, this kind of wholehearted adoption of Japanese culture would have made me more Japanese than I am today. Probably this adoption would have been easy in case I was half-Japanese (if one of my parents were Japanese). I have met a few other kids of bilingual parents who have adopted Japanese culture completely and feel alien to their own. However, this was not the case with me, because the more I fought to get into the Japanese system, the more I was thrown out of it.

This struggle, to be accepted as a Japanese continued throughout my six years at elementary school, and if it was not for the support my teachers and parents, I probably would have given up. The most difficult part of making friends in Japan as a child was the groups that existed from that young an age. Once a group is formed it is rather difficult to enter or leave that specified group. I then learned to say *irete*, which means please let me in your group. Of course this is not the only way to join a group, but at many times in my elementary school years, I had come across this word.

I am from India and making friends in India is a very natural

process. During one of my trips to India during the 4th grade, I made a total of 5 new friends and that too so naturally. I was so thrilled when one of them asked me the next day to come over to lunch. In India there is one thing very different from Japan, and that is that people just come over without any prior appointment. And therefore, the friendship created stays and becomes solid. However in Japan, the more I tried to be part of the Japanese group and merge in, the more I noticed the differences in thinking wavelengths even as a child. For example, I would watch TV programs which I have no interest in only so that I could find common topics with my other classmates and not be left out of the group (avoid being a *nakama hazure*).

This together with the contradiction between a Japanese style lunch at school and a pure vegetarian style Indian food at home, and Japanese studies at school and English studies at home prevented my complete Japanese assimilation...In spite of my best efforts to become Japanese I remained non-Japanese. Why I could not become a complete Japanese may come from the factor that I was carrying a bit of India in me when I came here. The atmosphere in my elementary school in Japan and India varied largely. Indian schools are more disciplined and are mostly focused on studies, while Japanese schools have much more liberty and in the beginning I was shocked at the very lively shouts of my then classmates! Indian education may be good at certain points of starting earlier and studying more seriously from a young age because students then do not face the problem of not covering the portion for higher studies, a dilemma Japanese students are heard to be facing in recent years. At many points after I entered high school, I felt that I was studying only for the

entrance exams and that the sole pleasure of studies was completely ignored.

However, I must say I greatly appreciate the physical education classes, for it would be greatly difficult to learn about sports and other extra-curricular activities, so thoroughly in any other place.

Ijime and Me

I did not realize the full meaning of *Ijime*(teasing) until I reached the 6th grade. When I was in the 5th grade I had a wonderful teacher who made us think for ourselves, and our class was very cooperative within. It was a time when I enjoyed going to school. However the next year everything had changed quite drastically for me. I was never welcomed into any group unless it was obligatory (a group made by the teacher). My classmates at school tried to avoid contact with me (as if I was something dirty), but this kind of *ijime* did not affect me. Maybe because I found studies so interesting I could kind of immerse myself in studies removing these kind of issues to the background. In Japan, *ijime* has become a popular excuse for people to avoid interacting with each other. I hear of children stopping school due to *ijime*. I find this a form of over-protection from parents and society and children use this excuse to avoid interacting with each other. In Japan one often hears the word *Meiwaku*. We do not want to make any *meiwaku* to others (not cause any trouble to others). Life is built upon the interdependencies and contact between people, and yet we deprive them of the chance to grow, mature and take responsibility for their decision by excessively sheltering children. In spite of being ignored by my classmates, I never once absented myself from school. Being absent from school, I felt would only mean, running away and not facing the music. This has only made me stronger in dealing and interacting with people.

Within the group but not yet part of the group.

I feel to be perpetually standing on the periphery of a soccer ground. Only when the ball is about to go out of the periphery

do I need to run or help. I can only do things which cannot be done by the group and get applauded for doing so. For example, being good at English is natural to me since I have been using it from when I was in India at the age of six. And when I get applauded for my knowledge I feel weird, although this probably cannot be helped. Since nobody is interested in the periphery my position at the periphery of the group is totally secure. I think most foreigners living in Japan are at the periphery of the soccer ground or are like the dew drops on a lotus leaf. They provide the cosmetic flavour to Japan's *kokusaika* and irrespective of the differences in individuals' capability, all foreigners are grouped into one and made to stand at the periphery. Of course they are distributed over the different grounds in different parts of the country to provide the cosmetic flavour uniformly all over Japan. The Japanese government and public think that by sometimes inviting these foreigners standing at the periphery and teach them Japanese cooking, calligraphy or vice versa learn French toast or Indian curry, it is an attempt at internationalization. But as long as these foreigners are kept at the periphery and cannot enter the core or as long as the Japanese cannot move out of the core to the periphery, true internationalization cannot take place. Internationalization or Globalization cannot be made into reality if one doesn't try to understand his or her own culture first. I feel strongly that, becoming an international person depends upon how well you understand the other person...as an individual as well as a national of a certain country.

This feeling of being within the group but not part of the group continued as I progressed to Japanese junior high and senior high school. For the first time here I seriously realized the existence of Japanese groupings. It was a very strong bond between friends and at times also a blockage for people to enter in and become friends. I learnt that acceptance into any group is not automatic, but one has to request for entry into the group, like using the word *irete*. I later used this technique to play a game of card with some boys at school, which gave me further confidence to enter other groups as

well. I now feel that my trying to be a Japanese actually hindered my being accepted by the group. I was not being my natural self and the moment I accepted the fact that I was not Japanese, could never become one and tried to show my individuality, it became more easier to enter and remain in the Japanese group. English came to my rescue at this point and in spite of my earlier reluctance to English for which my mother insisted I found it like a feather in a cap. I became the center of attention for helping of the exchange student to communicate with Japanese. This also made me realize the advantage I had of knowing two languages with such fluency. Having one more foreigner in my school for one year also helped me to come closer with other Japanese classmates because I finally gave up on being Japanese and could just be myself. My classmates were both surprised and happy to see the change in me. I realized that they were concerned about my not having friends and eating lunch alone. They were at times later surprised by my observation, intelligence and wit (qualities which I possessed all along, but never dared to show). I finally felt at peace with myself in Japan. I now have a small group of loyal friends who I consider the best in the world. I have also regained part of my confidence from them. Although even now I still feel pangs of doubt when a person does not speak to me correctly or I do not get a reply on my cell phone, I now have the confidence to deal with the situation. I am confident of putting the best part of myself forward and at the same time being sympathetic to the needs of others.

Language and Culture

Language and culture are directly and indirectly linked closely. Some words bring out the correct meaning only when used in contextual situation. I feel privileged at learning Japanese so naturally for which people in other parts of the world may struggle. I have tried to learn other languages mainly by searching through culture, though it has only half succeeded so far. I understand Hindi, which I tried to catch on by watching Hindi movies, although I cannot speak it very well. As for my mother tongue Telugu, talks

with my grandfather have helped a lot. My mother so far has been my best teacher of English. Even though I had resisted, she forced me to study Indian textbooks, which have also enriched my vocabulary and for this I have no words to thank her. I also have a profound interest in reading and this too has kept me in touch with English. In Japan, English is taught mainly based on grammar and this could be one of the reasons why people lose their interest in a language. Each student should be motivated in a way that she or he is suited to, although this is very difficult in a class of large number of students. English should go beyond the borders of conversation and to communication. My interest in Japanese is quite deep. It is true that literature (*koten*) is totally Greek and Latin to me, but when I do understand once in a blue moon, I find their descriptions and their way of expressing their feelings very deep and absorbing. This is the same with contemporary writing. Often Japanese words come to mind faster than English ones and many of the expressions in contemporary writing too are fascinating!

Japanization versus Indianization

To what extent am I Japanized or have retained my Indian qualities? In spite of all these hurdles, living in Japan for 11 years has made me more Japanized than what I would like to believe. Loyalty to the group is of paramount importance and avoiding doing something out of the group norms. I became acutely aware of this tendency of mine only when I went to New Zealand on a school trip. I remained loyal to my group during the three-week stay in New Zealand and only after my group left did I leave my Japanism behind.

New Zealand was very different compared to Japan of course! The largest difference I saw and felt was how people feel free and confident to speak out their opinions. In Japan at many times people hesitate to express their thoughts frankly, in order not to hurt anyone's feelings. I too somehow had acquired the habit, and although warned to be clear in conveying anything, I had initially hesitated in doing so. Another thing that stimulated me in New Zealand was the open

atmosphere. Everybody was quite free in talking with one another. People used to discuss their ideas frequently and the English class I took there engrossed me, because the style of writing, teaching and learning was something that I had never experienced before, even when I studied English at home.

In Japan one may not see many cases in which juniors address seniors friendlyly. I used to feel strange about using words like “*senpai*” and more polite words when talking to the seniors at school but this happened to melt into me too soon. However, in New Zealand this was not the case. It could be from the help of the large mix of people from different nations, and thanks to this I for once did not have any trouble in making friends! There were many people who had migrated from Fiji and were originally from India. I had a jovial time talking to them about Indian films and who their favorite actors and actresses were. The latter part of my stay there with an Indian family was most exhilarating. I was invited into a culture of my own which I had dearly wished to know yet didn't. I was an Indian in New Zealand and it was yet another new adventure for me after being an Indian in Japan.

Their mother tongue of Tamil was spoken at home, which made it tremendously difficult for me to interpret and take in what they spoke among themselves. Fortunately they spoke in English to me or I would have been totally lost! This whole situation however, gave me the urge to take to learning my own mother tongue, Telugu. They also knew all about Indian culture: singing, dance, food, clothes and also myths. It was all that many a time I had longed for, yet somewhat for various reasons I hadn't the chance to discover. I finally met someone my own age who understood what I was going through living in a foreign country and trying to sustain my own heritage. She was in a similar position as me, having faced the same complications as I had. The difference was that she knew more about India and she explained Indian philosophy to me, once staying up until as late as 3:00am. That is one of the things I remember vividly about my days in New Zealand. However, one of the most astonishing and

delightful episodes of when I went there was that I received no strange or alien looks that I used to encounter in Japan.

Out the outside I look like an Indian, but with each year in Japan I feel that the Indian characteristics within me is slowly getting depleted replaced by Japanization. By Japanization I do not mean dying your hair brown or wearing loose socks and mini-skirts. If Japanization means only these things, I probably would never be a Japanese. By Japanization, I mean my thinking is so much influenced by Japanese ideologies or way of doing things, that I find other ideologies out of harmony and out of place. In Japan there is a great deal of emphasis on rules and methods of doing certain things. For example, there are so many rules to be followed in a game of tennis that one actually loses the actual charm of playing the game. Not everyone wants to become a professional player at Wimbledon; some just want to play for the fun of it. But excessive dependence on rules does not permit this. The same is the case of English. With the rigid emphasis on grammar, Japanese children are unable to speak English even after studying for 6 consecutive years.

On the other hand, I learnt English without any rules and grammar and have been consistently scoring high on all the tests, but the Japanization within me compelled me to follow rigid rules while playing tennis and I feel inadequate at playing tennis even after practising for over 3 years. This kind of Japanization has seeped into me without my knowledge and I can only notice it at times I am thrown into an international environment.

Although there is more of the Japanese in me, I cling to my Indian-self within only because it allows me the potential of being recognized totally as an Indian without any barriers of any kind. Irrespective of how proficient I be in Japanese, inspite of the fact that I could compete the state exams and probably get into public service in Japan, I would never be totally identified as a Japanese from society as a general, simply because I do not have a Japanese face. But on the

other hand inspite of being rather alien to the Indian culture and practices, I would be completely identified as an Indian simply because I have an Indian face.

Coming to my earlier question: to what extent must foreigners living in a foreign country assimilate into local cultures? I often noticed Japanese people very keen on teaching my mother to cook Japanese food using fish and seaweed completely oblivious of the fact that my mother is a pure vegetarian. Learning the language and local cultures are needed for day to day survival in a foreign country. But at the same time, it is necessary to keep some of your original identity and culture. Within India there is considerably large amount of cross border migration. People from south would have migrated to the extreme north, but we still find them following their own cultures. This was one of the things which my mother taught me as I grew up. This helped me look at things in more objective framework and not just simply compare two countries without looking into them further.

Each country has its own charm and taking the best of what each offers depends on the ingenuity of the person... and that is almost always a journey of discovery! I have had a strong attachment towards India, other than because of my parents' influences. It is almost as strong as the attachment and patriotism I have to Japan, the country I grew up in. I am not sure what the cause of this is. It could be the friends that I have had since my childhood or the differences between India and Japan. Although Japan is a wonderful nation and is very systematic and has a complete system for various happenings, I somehow feel that we are not capable of getting what we want all the time. Japan has so many "things" that it is hard to know what it is to strive without having something. Life in

India on the other hand is not so easy and to get what you want one has to be tough. This makes people confident and mentally strong as well. India however has a poor education percentage, which I really do not think is good, and even though Indian people may become mentally strong from difficulties they face, the society and environment right now is not one that makes it easy to contribute to society. There are many villages in which people would be much better off with just a little bit of education and if I have a chance I would definitely like to help in using the education and experience I have had here for less fortunate children all over the world.

My attempts at Indianization allowed me to interact with my Indian friends which proved to be culturally stimulating experience. Kids of my age in India are mentally more matured as compared to Japan and this kind of comparison facilitated me to excel beyond the capabilities defined in Japan. I have had a lot of experiences on my trips to India, such as visiting my friends' school and discussing future plans with my childhood friends. Those experiences made me miss India as well as miss my friends in Japan, to whom I talk the same things in a different way. And then I finally realized that each place has its own atmosphere that was peculiar to the place and even though that atmosphere may not always be welcoming, it's definitely worth giving it a try to get in and challenge for a new goal!

Allowing me to stay on the leaf has proved to be beneficial for me as I could be enriched by two cultures. Although the pressure remains to keep myself afloat on the leaf, the enrichment gives me the motivation to move forward. As I get more Indian and more Japanese I would have to supplement one with the other and remain afloat on the leaf.

How I found Peru when I came to Japan



David C. Aliaga

I have lived in Kyoto, the old imperial capital the last four years studying at Kyoto University. During this time and even before that I have heard some Peruvians, and Japanese people as well, comment that Japan and Peru are such dissimilar countries that everybody is worried about how this new environment would affect the foreign students i.e. *ryugakusei*.

However, when I hear those worries I can not help feeling myself a little bit strange, because although sometimes I miss Peruvian food –and in Kyoto it is almost impossible to get it– and I miss my family and friends back in Peru, generally I feel fine. No cultural shock. I can see the differences of course but I don't feel like an earthling in an alien world. Some people tell me that this is so because I have been preparing for ten years before coming. That is true to some degree but it is not *all* the true. The fact is that I have found Peru here in Japan at least in spirit, and strange as it sounds I would like to explain why. But before that, I feel I should do an introduction into the affairs of my own country.

Japanese and Peruvian societies are very different, although they share a common basis. Both were, and Peru still is to a great degree, agricultural societies. Some scholars who study them say that this fact helps to explain a lot of the characteristics of Japan, including even its business and politics. Peru, unlike Japan is not an integrated society and within its borders there are several different sub-groups sometimes referred as nations. Several nations inside one country.

Historical development is quite different too, if we compare Japan and Peru; being someone who enjoys learning about Japanese history, I usually reflect about their differences.

Japanese history, I believe, is pretty linear, with several distinctive but logically related stages: Jomon, Yayoi, Kofun, Nara, Heian, Kamakura, Muromachi, Azuchi-Momoyama, Edo, Meiji and the 20th century. In the past, Japan was greatly influenced by China but I find the last part of the *Sengoku Jidai* (Period of Warring States) and the *Azuchi-Momoyama* period particularly interesting. It was in this time that the first contacts with Portuguese and other European countries occurred. Thanks to the three great leaders of that time: Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu and their ability to deal with this new situation, Japan could continue a normal advance into the future without what some of us, Peruvians, call *Pachakuti*.

In ancient Peruvian philosophy a "*Pachakuti*" is defined as a time when the world (*pacha*) is completely transformed for better or for worst. Peruvian history before the XV century was linear too. The first civilization was called *Chavin of Huantar* and it appeared in the X century b.c. After that, several other states, some regional and some of larger influence, appeared in the Peruvian territory. Some of them were militaristic states and some others were based on commerce and each of them displayed remarkable cultural manifestations like ceramics, metallurgy or fabrics. Finally, in the XIV century, a little kingdom situated in the city of *Qosqo*-"the center of the world"- became an empire thanks to the work of the man who is called the Alexander of the American race: Emperor Pachakutec. (We can notice that he took his imperial name from the philosophical concept that we mentioned before: the one who changes the world). This empire was called *Tawantinsuyo*-"the four regions"- although it is now better known as the Inka Empire. It included

territories from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and the north of Argentina. Its three moral principles were *Ama Sua, Ama Llulla, Ama Quella* : Honesty, veracity and hard work.

After *Pachakutek*, another two great emperors continued the expansion and consolidation of the empire: *Tupak Inka* and *Huayna Capac*. But just as in the case of Alexander, the Great Macedonian, it was a young and fragile empire built over military conquest and product of a very fast expansion without time to settle into a stable state. Inside its borders, and although many of the privileges of the conquered were respected, there were still some with desires of revenge. After *Huayna Capac*, a civil war started and that was the time when the first foreigners appeared in its coast. Soon the empire was crumbling in the hands of warring lords, some with the help of the recently arrived foreigners. There existed a warrior of imperial blood called *Manko Inka* who realized the true intentions of them and who understood the necessity of the use of foreign technology to obtain the victory and save the empire- like Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and Ieyasu would realize in Japan- but it was too late. After a bloody struggle in which many of the imperial family died or were assassinated, the Spaniards established a new state with a viceroy subordinated to the King of Spain and that was when a great *Pachakuti* took place. All the values and traditions of the Inka State were forbidden and put in shame and new values, traditions, language and religion were imposed. The society that was based on agriculture and therefore with an emphasis on group responsibility instead of individual freedom, was replaced by a society based on mineral and human exploitation. The history ceased to be linear because a great rupture occurred with the sudden and violent introduction of foreign culture into the until then isolated Andean society.

It is said that sometimes in order to understand the evolution of societies, we have to look not at the complicated and scholarly theories but at the simple, almost non-transcendent details. Today if we compare Japan and Peru we are going to notice some remarkable differences. In Japan sometimes

being a foreigner makes renting an apartment complicated. In Peru, it is an advantage. Here the wealthy people spend time in the best places to see a Sumo tournament or are the ones that can afford the refined art of a Geisha. There, the wealthy people prefer to spend time in Miami (Florida), and reject everything peruvian. Here, the national culture is being preserved by rich and poor; there, the culture has resisted an assault of 500 years to erase it.

To explain this strange state of affairs, I should point that inside Peru there are two -if not more- Peru's. The Official one is the one that has lived facing the ocean, always eager to embrace anything foreign and deny its own culture, and the Unofficial one, which has resisted.

Fortunately this is changing for the better since the 70's. It is remarkable that this year the new president inaugurated office in a ceremony of ancient origin: Paying respect and gratitude to the earth-*Pachamama*. This is something that 30 years ago would have been unthinkable- too peruvian to be performed officially.

When I think of this ceremony that many Peruvians have been doing through the centuries, despite the *idolatry extirpation* performed by Christian priests, I also think about *Shintoism*. I remember the time when a japanese friend explained to me the ceremonies that are held when a newhouse is build or a new company building is inaugurated. Their meanings are so similar! It is curious to notice for example that there is not an exact translation for the word *kami* in English or Spanish. "gods or spirits" is said but to grasp the exact meaning of *kami* we have to say *kami*, just like that in Japanese...Well, unless we use *Runa Simi* the ancient language of Peru still widely used not only there but in Bolivia, Argentina and Ecuador. There you can find a word for kami that have almost the same meaning: "*apu*". So when I first went to a Jinja or shrine, and I saw the people paying their respects to the enshrined kami, I could understand it very easily and almost feel like when some peruvians in a

remote Andean village pay their respects to the apus or the Mother Earth *Pachamama*. Curiously, I could feel more peruvian here in the middle of a Jinja than in a city in Peru where everything tries to be so cosmopolitan.

Perhaps the similarity can be traced to the same agrarian society that I mentioned before. The belief or acceptance of *kami* or *apus* can be understood as the feeling of closeness that people who cultivate the land have with their environment. In the western world this belief has been regarded as "*shamanism*", not without some trace of contempt. But, in an age in which the resources of the Earth are seriously deteriorated, the idea of respect toward the planet in which we live on and toward the environment from which we receive the means to exist, seems completely valid. And it also can be regarded as more meaningful than the concept of the earth as a place to conquer.

Some people in Japan complain about the so-called "loss of japanese values" in nowadays society and walking through a street of Tokyo perhaps can apparently confirm it. It seems that Mishima Yukio was so worried about it that he even committed suicide-*seppuku*. But in my opinion, Japan is strong enough to preserve its identity. Let me tell you, dear reader a story:

I really like visiting temples, shrines and castles, due to my interest in Japanese history. Before a visit, I usually read the story behind them, and since I live in Kyoto, I can say that I am fortunate enough to imagine the silhouette of Taira Kiyomori doing his own affairs on Rokuhara; or the warrior monks of Enryaku-Ji temple that had so much influence in the very same city I now live.

One day I went to a Jinja near the sides of mount Hiei-zan. I was there contemplating the beautiful scenery when suddenly there appeared a couple of young people with a characteristic look: dyed hair into a shining yellow, tanned skin and clothes of not-matching colors. The appearance that anyone expects to find in Shibuya, and not precisely something that transmit

to the casual observer the "traditional values of Japan." This couple came with a little child completely dressed in a beautiful kimono. I assumed that she was their daughter. Then I realized that a ceremony was going on in the Jinja, the *Shichi-Go-San* in which little kids are presented to the shrine. This couple, that prejudice can say that is alienated toward non-japanese values, actually was continuing a tradition and at the same time, without putting much thinking into it, preserving and transmitting to the child a part of the essence of "being japanese."

Another experience I have had while living in Japan happened to me during one of my favorite times of the year: August, the month of Obon. This is the time when tradition says the ancestors visit their descendants' home. The atmosphere is completely different to the pain and sorrow that is associated with the dead in western societies. Finally, on the night of the 16th, we have in Kyoto the night of the *Okuribi Daimonji* in which large signs of fire are lit in the hills that surround Kyoto to guide the ancestors in their way back. Two *kanjis* of "*Dai*"(great), *Myoho* (the Buddhist Law), a ship, and a *torii*(sacred portal). Near the Kamo river, (and I suppose in other places too) we can find a place where people are performing the Obon Odori- the dance for Obon. These are not specially trained but the common people, men and women, japanese and non-japanese, old and young, sharing a little bit of Japan. I consider this can seem natural to many people but to a peruvian who has lived in a society where modernity means the killing of traditional values this is quite remarkable. Obon is not, as I said, sad but on the contrary completely cheerful. This reminded me of the way the unofficial Peru remember their passed ones. This is not understood by many that call it "primitive." That was the case of a peruvian journalist who happens to be a politician too, that condemned it in an article of a peruvian newspaper. I wrote a letter pointing that the western view of sorrow and pain was not necessarily the unique and correct one and as an example I cited Obon. As a response the same politician answered me by saying that Japan-with its robots, its

shinkansen, and its marvelous culture- was primitive. This is the case of still some people in Peru that despite the time, are not different than the zealots that burned and destroy the shrines of the people in order to destroy too their faith in nature and their confidence in their own culture.

On the contrary, Japan provides us with an opportunity to accept that modernity and tradition are not two conflicting ideals. It gives us the chance to understand that to really appreciate the value of foreign cultures we should first be in peace with our own culture.

I have had the opportunity to attend a *Noh* representation in *Heian Jingu* shrine and to see and read the stories of *Kabuki* full of heroes and dramas. I truly enjoy them. But at the same time I can not help remembering the most famous drama of my country: the story of *Ollantay* a warrior who rebelled against the emperor because of love. This is a beautiful story that, if settled in China (where some of the kabuki stories take place), I am sure would have been produced in Kabuki or maybe in a movie already. We peruvians need a Kurosawa to make our ancient stories fashionable for modern audiences.

Japan, "the land of Wa" as it was called by the ancient Chinese, is the only land japanese have as theirs and it is remarkable how so many people manage to live in harmony in so little territory. Peruvians have lived for so much time facing the sea in an attempt to spiritually escape from our own identity. Even the change of capital, from the city of *Qosqo* in the "middle of the world" to Lima, right next to the ocean symbolized this attitude. But we can not escape from our shadow, because it is always right next to us. We should also learn to live in harmony with it.

I think I am really fortunate to live in Kyoto. Living in this ancient city is like living inside a book of history. *Everything* is so full of meanings and stories. I remember when I was reading about *Heike Monogatari* sometimes called the "Iliad of

orient." I almost could feel the Tairas and Minamotos walking by the very same path I was walking. The temples and shrines are not merely buildings that someone made in order to show its might and power. They are made of stone and wood but also contain the hopes and prayers of many people from the great generals to the obscure commoners.

I am impressed not only by the great ceremonies or celebrations but especially for the common man and woman and their devotion to their traditions. Usually this is something that is so natural that is not taken into account. They don't think that they are doing something special or patriotic. They are just doing things the way they are. That is the marvelous thing. We can always think about the *Noh* actors and the *shamisen* players but let's take a look at more common events: a *Obaa-chan* walking her way to the temple, a young lady clad in *yukata* on her way to the *Matsuri* festival, the little kid asking for a *dango* to eat. They are all signs that Japan is alive and well.

Some people talk about the internationalization of Japan. And I think they are also right. Japan has been a country that learned from outside and adapted this knowledge to its own needs. Maybe because of almost 300 years of seclusion it is not so confident in its role in the international affairs. Of course Japan has still things to do and the presence of foreign people that admire the country and are ready to help can be thought as a good thing.

I should say that I don't consider that Japan is a perfect land; thinking that way would only challenge the validity of my observations. There is no perfect land in the world because we, humans are not perfect. Everywhere we can find good and bad things, and Japan is no exception. There are things that should be corrected and it is the task of Japanese people to do it. I hold the hope that somehow I can help. But I am confident, because Japan has already won over so many obstacles, that these will be also overcome.

When I took the entrance examination for Master course in Kyoto University, I was asked why I have had chosen Japan as a country to study. My area of research is robotics, a complete technical one and one that almost represents a bet into the future. As a consequence I answered pointing out the great development of Japan in the area of technology and the large presence of robots in its industries. But I did not come here only to learn techniques. I came here also to find how these techniques could be applied while treasuring our own heritage and identity. I have been always eager to learn about Japanese

history and culture; it is an area I find spiritually and intellectually enriching. But finally I could also learn more about myself and my own country and culture. I will always be grateful to this land-the place of the origin of the Sun i.e. *Nippon*-for showing me how we, Peruvians, also children of a land of Sun, should reconcile our past and our present in order to build a better future for our children and in this way, contribute to the development of a better world where everybody can share their own values and respect their fellow humans.

Holiday Culture

The word culture is such a broad word, that it can encompass practically anything and everything pertaining to a particular country or community. From style of dress to style of housing. From food to fetishes. Music, art, humor, way of thinking. The list is endless.

Usually a culture is observed in its place of origin. For example, if we want to know about Japanese culture, we look at Japan. If we want to know about British culture, we look at Britain. This makes sense. But, for me, we can also understand the culture of a people by the way they behave away from home.

Go to any European beach. Ask a native to point out an English man, nine times out of ten, he will indicate rightly. It could be the very white, never-seen-the-sun pallor of his skin. Or, he could be the only one out in the midday sun with the

mad dogs, his body turning a fluorescent lobster red. Whatever. Somehow, we all manage to betray signs of our cultural identity even when we are not at home.

Culture is usually a very serious subject. After all, it is an inherent part of our identity. It is the 'outsiders' engine to understand the mind set of a people and a nation. We are all proud of our culture. Therefore it is no laughing matter. Scholars and pundits don their scholastic cap, dissecting and analyzing their own and other peoples culture. Using long words and lofty sentences to try to find the quintessential, the element that differentiates one community in the world, from another. I believe there is another way of looking at culture. If we take a culture out of its place of birth, transport it to another country, suddenly it is amusing, perplexing, totally out of place, even incomprehensible.

As a well seasoned traveler, I have observed culture away



Mylene Oishi

from its home. This is what I call 'holiday culture'. It seems no matter who we are, when we are in a different country, we strive to maintain our identity, our culture, by behaving exactly the same as we would in our own country, leaving the natives somewhat amused. To laugh at our own culture at home is not only painful, but would lead to serious self-questioning. If others laugh at our culture, we would find this downright offensive and rude. I feel though, when it comes to 'holiday culture', observing a culture away from its natural environment, we can afford to lighten up. We can afford to laugh at ourselves and others. Because some aspects of a culture, does not export well. Of course, what we laugh at, what we find funny, betrays our culture. Sense of humor has cultural boundaries.

Open the suitcase of an English man going on holiday for the first time. You will find tea bags (because foreign tea is rubbish), cans of baked beans (just in case he can't eat the foreign muck) and toilet paper (because only his country has proper water closet facilities). He will choose a holiday away from home, but as familiar to home as possible. Benidorm, in Spain, is now known as "Little London". It has English pubs, fish and chip shops. You will not hear a word of Spanish. It has become a home away from home for the unadventurous English man.

The Frenchman looks at this scenerio, and says: "Ah, typically English. They don't know how to blend in, or eat real food". The Germans look and say: "I'm keeping as far away from those football hooligans as possible."

The Spanish look and shake their head in dismay.

Culture it seems, really does not export well.

The English man though, returns home elated. "Spain is a great country. I had a lovely holiday."

It does not matter in the least that the only contact he had with the real Spain and the Spanish was the custom official at the airport.

What would scholars make of that, I wonder?

I had occasion to go on a Japanese package tour to Thailand several years ago. What I discovered was that even tours has cultural boundaries. They are tailored to cater to different cultures. Even though I have lived in Japan for some years, travelling abroad in a group totally made up of Japanese people was a real eye-opener. I would like to share this very 'cultural' experience with you, warts and all.

"This is your 5.30 wake up call," came a chirpy voice down the telephone.

"Eh?"

I'm not at my best, first thing in the morning.

"It's Su Lee your tour guide. Please finish breakfast by 6.00 a.m. and ready to board the bus by 6.15. Bye!!!"

"Eh?"

I rubbed my eyes awake. I looked around. I was in the most gorgeous room imaginable, at the divine, take-your-breath-away Oriental Hotel, in Bangkok.

I had arrived late the evening before, for my six day tour of the kingdom of Thailand, a country, which like Japan, has never been a European colony.

I had fallen asleep with the splendid view of the Chao Phraya river impressed on my mind, and the lyrics of "The King and I", playing on my brain.

This is the kind of hotel people dream of. A place that film stars frequent. The average person, would place the 'do not disturb sign' on the door, to be able to fully savor the first morning in such a luxurious setting. Probably they would have a lie-in to shake off the tiredness of the journey. Order room service for breakfast. Then leisurely, at an unhurried pace, make their way downstairs to explore the magnificence of the foyer.

"Wonder why we have to wake up at 5.30?" I griped to Ms. A, a college graduate travelling with her three friends.

"Well, it is our holiday. We don't want to be wasting time lying in bed, do we?" She answered cheerfully.

"Eh?"

I really am not at my best first thing in the morning.

For starters, Su Lee, apologized about the tour bus. It seems our luxurious, fully air-conditioned bus with WC, had unexpectedly broken down. But, she had no doubt that either today or tomorrow it would be at our service.

The other eleven tour members let out a groan of alarm and dismay. But, no one voiced a word of complaint. No one refused to set foot in this vehicle that seemed more than ready for the scrap heap. Had it been a group of British tourists, they would have flatly refused to ride in the bus. Within minutes, the tour guide would have had a riot on her hands.

It was not only the fact that the once indigo velour upholstery of this bus had turned into shiny sticky patches where bum and back rested, and if you were to stand up in a hurry there would be the sound of skin tearing from its grip. Not only that. It was the incredulous open-mouthed stares that greeted us wherever we alighted from the bus. Stares that seemed to ask: what are well-off tourists doing in a jalopy that we would refuse to ride in, even if we were bone tired and our feet had swollen as big as a juicy water melon.

"We are now in what's known as, Old Bangkok, where most of the older temples and palaces are found." Su Lee's Voice cackled over the microphone.

"Temple-monasteries are called Wats. There are 400 wats in Bangkok. We'll be stopping here for a while to get a feel of what the religious and cultural life was like."

Although Su Lee was a bit on the plump side (read fat), she had us sprinting in and out of Wats and what-d'you-call-its so hard and fast even Carl Lewis would have been impressed. I hadn't broken out in that kind of a sweat since I (lazybones) had been made to take part in the relay race at junior school.

No sooner back in the bus, then back out again for a walk round a typical Thai market.

"Pickpockets operate here," Su Lee said in dark tones, as she

quickly weaved her way through the throng, with us following close behind, clutching our bags as if our life depended on it.

There was no time to look at the stalls. As we half walked, half ran to keep up with Su Lee's sprinting pace, all I can honestly say I saw was the back of the person in front of me.

"It's all going a little fast for me," I confided.

"Isn't it fun!" replied Ms A from the hade-na-obasan trio, (3 lively middle-aged ladies) wiping the perspiration from her forehead.

For lunch we were served rice with hot and sour fish ragout, typical Thai fare. Hungrily I tucked in. Then I noticed eleven faces looking at me with a kind of amused-cum-disgust expression.

"Eh? Something wrong," I asked.

"Can you eat that?" Ms. K from the hade-na-obasan trio asked, wrinkling her nose, "It smells."

"Smells? What smells?"

"The rice. It smells. We can't eat it." They kind of moved their spoon disconcertingly round the plate.

"Wat Phra Kaew, otherwise known as the Emerald Temple, and the grand palace, you have 40 minutes!"

"Wat Pho, 20 minutes!"

"Wat Traimit, Temple of the Golden Buddha. The Buddha here is 3m tall and made of solid gold. 25 minutes! "

Bangkok, this exciting Asian city, which in the Thai language means, 'City of Angels' (Krung Thep). This great metropolis which in the 19th Century was known as the Venice of the East, because of it many canals, flitted before my eyes as fast and forgettable as bill boards, houses and people flit past the eyes of a passenger of a high speed train. I was beginning to panic, was this the holiday?

"Su Lee, is everyday going to be as hectic as yesterday?" I asked, as we drifted along the Chao Phraya river, taking in the exotic atmosphere of the Wat Sai floating market in Thonburi. Delicate as paper, the vending boats carry their pyramids of fruits and vegetables as gracefully as an acrobat balancing

crystal glasses on her body.

"Yeah, this is a Japanese tour," she has never answered me in Japanese and likes to splatter her English with 'yeah'. I think she thinks this is hip.

"They want to see as much as they can in as short a time as they can, yeah."

As we traversed another extensive network of canals, known as Klongs, I continued.

"Are all Japanese tours like this?"

"Well, the Okinawa tours are different, yeah."

"Why?"

"Because that's full of American soldiers, and they want to do their own thing. Yeah."

I started to envy the soldiers.

"Su Lee, I want to do what the American soldiers do...I."

"I can't help you with that" she was looking at me from under her eyes. "For that, you need a male guide."

"Eh? I want to do my own thing..."

"Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah," she said flippantly, as she passed round a tray of fresh slices of the dorian fruit she had just bought from a boat vendor.

The whole group wrinkled their nose in unison.

"It stinks."

"No thank you," as they waved the tray away.

I couldn't smell a thing, so was quite happy to polish off nearly the whole fruit.

Let me tell you, a high fibre breakfast of fresh fruit, cereal, yogurt, followed by nearly a whole dorian is not recommended river faring diet. Without warning my stomach lunged into violent, aggressive punches that would have made Mohammed Ali's 'sting like a bee jab' seem like slow motion mime. From there on in, the splendour of Nakhon Pathom, the oldest city in Thailand, that contains the tallest Buddhist monument in the World—the 127m orange-tiled Phra Pathom Chedi—had to compete against my numerous visits to the bog.

Desperation is not a fussy master. I frequented public toilets

like they were going out of fashion. Then toilets in shops, in hotels. I even went to the lav in the home of a kind stranger, who let me use his door-less loo facing the sitting room where his family sat, and ashamed to say I sank as low as to squat behind a tree, in full view of the congested motor way traffic. I had got the runs, real bad. Having the runs is one of the hazards of travelling. Usually one can relax in one's hotel room with freedom to use the WC at leisure. But, in this case, the whole tour had to share in my embarrassing condition and discomfort. We were always together. We were always on the move. We did everything together. Ate the same food, slept at the same hotel. We moved around like a school of fish. I was beginning to forget that I was an individual with individual likes and dislikes. I simply went along with the flow, or more apt, the rapids.

That night I did something I hadn't done for years. I started to pray. Fortunately for me, by the next day my stomach had settled, and I looked forward to the 'scenic drive to Pattaya, a beach resort' where we were to spend the night and following day.

Unfortunately for the rest of the group, one by one, each person fell to the dreaded 'runs'. What had been billed as a scenic drive turned out to be a seven hour toilet stop. It was day three of the trip, already it felt like three thousand years.

So, for over 72hours, I and thirteen strangers (counting Su Lee and the driver) had lived out of each others pockets. It had got so, that our bowel movements were beginning to synchronize. We had been through embarrassment, humiliation and joy together. I began to ease up a little, to feel a little more comfortable with my fellow members and with the military precision of our schedule.

Su Lee had looked hurt when I told her I would not be joining her and the others on the 'island hopping, water sports extravaganza, 'planned for today. I wanted a few hours to myself.

In those few hours, I surmised that aside from the apoplectic-

inducing traffic jams and pollution, of Bangkok. Thailand is truly a noble country, where houses on stilts stand side by side with modern skyscrapers. Where virgin beaches with silver-white sands can still be found. And the people still possess that fresh beauty and radiant smile that makes you feel as if angels' wings strum the strings of their heart.

For the first time I had a chance to sit still with my thoughts and absorb the atmosphere of the country. It felt good to simply be. Not to have to rush here and there to an almost army style itinerary, with Su Lee, our guide as the Sergeant General. To be able to look around at one's own pace. To forget that I was wearing a wristwatch and that time was mine to use at my own unhurried pace. Before I knew it though, we were again in the tin can heading back to Bangkok.

"You missed a great day!" Ms A, said to me.

"I had a great day. I was able to relax, think and take in the atmosphere of this country."

"Ah?", she said surprised, "why would you want to relax and think, you're on holiday."

That evening we had Thai curry with Japanese rice.

"This rice doesn't smell, does it?" I asked smilingly.

"No, but they've used coconut in the curry. We can't eat coconut," Ms.K, a university student said, and the others nodded in agreement.

"You lot had better watch out you don't go down the plug hole when you let the bath water out."

"Eh?" Eleven pairs of uncomprehending eyes looked at me.

"You've got to eat something," I said in exasperation.

"We do. We've all brought instant noodles from Japan which we have every evening in our room."

Ayuthaya, a World Heritage Site. Again we whizzed round its scattered temple ruins as if we were on speed. These ruins with such exotic names as: Wat Phra Si Sanphet, were impressive.

But, when seen in a hurry and under pressure to remember to return to the tour bus promptly, as being late would ruin

the whole day's schedule. I found I spent more time looking at my watch than at the attraction.

"I like my holiday to be a bit more leisurely, a bit more unhurried." I said to the group at dinner.

"Yes, but we Japanese only have a few days holiday, so we want to see as much as possible in the time we have."

"I understand that," I said, "But, I feel taking in two or three wonderful spots. Taking the time to absorb the atmosphere. Allowing the scene to be imprinted on one's memory, together with the feeling that the place inspires is so important. It's far better than trying to see everything in such a short time, because then everything ends up all being a blur."

"Yes, but we've taken lots of photos, so we have a good memory of the place."

"Ummm" I said.

Our final day.

10am found us at the Duty free shop. Crystal chandeliers, plush carpet, elegant décor and a profusion of efficient staff ready to help in any way, to make parting with our money painless.

In exactly three minutes flat I had seen all I wanted to see.

"What did you buy?" Su Lee asked.

"Nothing. When do we get outta here."

"We're here for two and a half hours, yeah."

"Two and a half hours! In a shop!"

"The Japanese like shopping, yeah. Anyway, what did you think of the tour?"

"Do you want the truth?"

"Yeah, yeah, yeah."

"One more day on this tour and I'll be in therapy for the rest of my life."

At the airport Su Lee said.

"I didn't understand what you meant about that therapy business?"

"Well, it's the same as saying, if that plane doesn't leave at 3pm for Kansai Airport as scheduled, just find a gun and shoot

me in the head."

"You're joking, right?"

As I walked away, I smiled and said: "Yeah, yeah, yeah."

It has to be pointed out that within a culture exists sub-cultures. I mean, not all Englishmen go to Benidorm for a holiday, some would shy away in horror at the thought. They would not associate themselves even closely with such a person. Just as not all Japanese going on holiday would take pot noodle with them.

Because culture does not travel well, no matter how hard we try to blend into a new country while on holiday, most natives

tend to get a warped idea about our culture by observing the actions and reactions of its carrier. Without being conscious of it, we become ambassadors for our country and culture while we are away. When we react or behave in an unfamiliar manner, the natives shrug and say, "They're British, that's why," or whatever country the tourists stem from.

What I wish to say is. Out of its natural environment, our cultural behavior can be perplexing and incomprehensible. As serious an issue as culture is, there are certain times, in certain places, we need a good sense of humor to survive our own culture, and that of another.

Japanese Culture: My View A Fifty-Year Retrospective



Vivienne Kenrick

Around the world, Japan is known for having a centuries' old, highly advanced civilization, and a rich, diverse and unique culture. When I first came from England, more than 50 years ago, to live here, I realized very quickly what a lot I had to learn if I wanted to understand anything beneath the superficial about Japan. It has been stimulating ever since to compare and contrast, to see the changes that have sometimes crept in, and at other times raced in, and to speculate on what may happen.

I arrived here with my husband and two small children. We went to live in a Tokyo suburb that in those days verged on countryside. On clear mornings, with nothing in the way to block it out, Mount Fuji showed herself beyond the end of our lane. Horses and oxen pulled carts along the main roads

crossing the city. Our neighborhood people lived in little, single-storied, wooden houses in little, stony, narrow lanes surrounded by paddy fields. Men wore wide hats and foot coverings of straw as they worked in the fields. They used hand tools and hand barrows, and carried sacks on their backs. Frogs croaked in the rains, and gossamer dragonflies hovered in the sun. People and nature were a single entity, sometimes pleased with each other, sometimes at odds, but always together. My introduction to Japan placed me in a living woodblock print.

Deeply embedded cultures have evolved from life patterns, and have flourished in their own contexts. These were clear truths to me as my neighborhood observed the seasons, which were regular in sequence and behavior. My first

springtime blossomed with the cherry flowers, that were followed by azaleas and hydrangeas. Local people took me with them to admire the flowers and to visit the local shrines at festival time. I attended my first tea ceremony. In the heat of summer, neighbors scooped the sludge out of their open ditches, sprinkled water over the dusty lanes outside their houses, and set wind bells on their verandahs to sway and tinkle in breezes. My little girls, by then wearing yukata and geta, ran out with neighborhood children to watch kami-shibai shows. They prayed for fine weather on the night of tanabata, so that the star lovers could meet. We joined in the O'Bon dances under the light of bobbing pink lanterns.

Autumn brought changing colors, and human warmth, after typhoon flooding and damage, from people who had nothing to spare beyond their feelings. On winter nights watchmen with wooden clappers patrolled the lanes, making sure there was no outbreak of fire. New Year showed us the customs of setting pine, bamboo and fern decorations at front doors, and of paying family visits. I saw life as simple, unhurried and honest, geared to nature and its bounty. I liked what I saw. It had charm.

In the aftermath of war, Japanese people were still poorly fed and poorly dressed. Relief supplies of food and charcoal for domestic heating and cooking used to be left on street corners for later, fair distribution. No one, whatever his sense of need, ever stole from those piles. Men looking for work used to come to the door and offer their labor for repair jobs. Without effective tools or materials, there was little they could do. Yet they had pride in work, in doing well whatever they could. They had character and honor. Those qualities were fashioned indelibly by their background culture.

We began to travel outside Tokyo, at first to Kamakura, Hakone and Nikko where, in dramatic scenery, we empathized with ancient people's reverence and awe for other-worldly spirits and the majesty of nature. We learned of purification rites in salt, by fire, and under waterfalls. We

respected white paper prayers tied to trees and devotees striking temple bells, and responded to the pervasiveness of an air of melancholy. Such cultural concepts in their contexts seemed to us completely correct. We wondered at the attention paid to every detail of life, more details than we could count. Politeness, and concern not to give offence, were much more pronounced than the levels I was used to. I could learn.

Cultures steeped in centuries of tradition consolidate their strengths, modifying as they meet the changes that time brings, but keeping their ingrained patterns. They weather clashes with inevitable domestic modernization, and measure up to the import of immigrant cultures that are sure to arrive. Peace brought to Japan a gradual redevelopment of industry. The population grew as families reassembled and resettled. Pressure mounted on the land and its products. Daily life began to go faster. After wartime deprivation, people yearned for greater comfort and acquisition.

At the end of the war, Japan had the abnormal experience of the threat of a rushing, incoming tide of western cultures when Occupation forces and families arrived to live here. As the economy picked up, the country visibly changed. I watched it happen. Modernization plus westernization replaced low, wooden structures with high-rise concrete buildings. Horses and carts vanished as automobiles and vans filled streets that were widened, straightened, and paved. Kami-shibai was no match for television. Nationwide, modernization and westernization were enthusiastically welcomed and fervently embraced.

Yet with accustomed vigor and confidence, Japan's basic culture withstood both challenges, and perhaps acquired a new awareness of itself, and was even strengthened by the stresses and strains that it confronted. Japanese culture had done it before, in recent times at the beginning of the Meiji era when the country opened up to influences of other styles and attitudes that might have engulfed it. It received, considered, and overall withstood the influx of the new. Japan

shows a characteristic facility to receive from others, adapt what it receives to make it suitable for adding on to its own, and at the same time to keep the old in place.

This facility has had centuries of testing. The sixth century gives us the example of the arrival of Buddhism here, not to drive out the earlier faith but, after some skirmishing, to co-exist happily with it. Skipping over the ages and their myriad examples, we come up-to-date with the innovations of Christmas and Valentine's Day, and witness how these celebrations from overseas have been given a Japanese look and fitted into the Japanese calendar. A modern prospective bride will often have the credentials of qualifications in flower arranging and the tea ceremony-- and will also proudly proclaim that she has a driving licence. In my view, Japanese culture is a receptive, accommodating and practical culture, capable of infinite expansion.

I have often listened to discussions on what non-Japanese people consider to be a downside of Japanese culture. It has given rise, they say, to conformity in the people. It has knocked down the sticking-up nail. In the society I come from, dissent is considered healthy. Independent thought and action are encouraged, and conscientious rebellion applauded. I point out that, in the circumstances of Japan, obeying the rules and imposing discipline smooth daily relationships. Because of cultural restraints, Japanese people have learned how to get along with each other even though living and working closely together. Courtesy and respect lubricate the machinery of daily encounters. That cannot be a downside. Japanese culture teaches the avoidance of turmoil. It builds group consciousness. People who feel they belong to a unit bigger than themselves take strength from it.

Japanese culture developed the method of employing go-betweens to resolve difficulties. This system has the value of negotiating solutions whilst saving face to everyone's comfort. In avoiding direct confrontations, it works for peaceful outcomes. Dr. Edward De Bono's work on what he called

"lateral thinking" caused a sensation when his books were published. Western people acclaimed the approach it suggested of deliberately stepping around problems instead of clashing over them head-on. Japanese people, surprised, rightfully said, "But that's what we have always done. Lateral thinking has been our principle all along." It just needed recognition.

Japanese culture works for agreement by consensus. International businessmen chafe at the time it takes to talk and reach consensus, when at home someone responsible will make decisions instantly. For the Japanese, consensus agreements are expected to lay the ground work for harmony. We can all learn the virtue of taking longer in order eventually to operate serenely.

The Japanese principle of compromise in order to avoid conflict is still very evident. Prime Minister Koizumi attempts it in his role of mediator between the U.S.A and Europe over the Kyoto protocol impasse. The trouble with compromise lies in the risk of the real issue getting lost. Compromise should not be regarded as more important than the fate of the environment.

Something commonly unthought of 50 years ago were the possibilities of climate change and its effects. As seasons from which so much of Japanese culture derive become less clear-cut, what will happen to regular seasonal practices? Cherry blossoms and picnics and songs go together. Fireflies and fans and fireworks link with summer. Chrysanthemums, coloring maples, and paintings of mushrooms and prickly chestnuts belong to autumn. Winter -- well already, and without climate changes, the family feeling for yearend communion has weakened. Young people prefer to go skiing in the mountains or surfing in Hawaii. The wearing of kimono has become less popular even on special occasions. The flying of kites and the playing of battledore and shuttlecock have dwindled. Time was when my Japanese friend next door made sure that her home paid respect to each season in turn.

She changed the scroll in the alcove, the containers for her flower arrangements, and the cushions for her tatami mats. Will her grand-daughter feel the same compulsion if the elements around her are no longer the same - and if the changes combine with even more social pressures and speeding up of daily life? If climate change and its repercussions join forces with the attraction of other contemporary and imported habits, how much can Japan's basic culture still survive?

It can adjust, of course. As with everything, a culture has to live, grow and change, or risk becoming petrified. In many circumstances in any case, people often want to experiment and break free of what they see as constraints. The cult of littleness is challenged every time a huge daruma doll is produced. The cult of restrained adornment was abandoned in the exuberance of the Nikko shrines. Vermilion bridges, the brilliance of brocades, the magnificence of screen paintings in the flamboyant Momoyama Period point up the flexible ability of Japanese culture to deliver the lavish as well as the modest. Even a cultural expression as cherished as the arranging of flowers has opened up to allow the inclusion of wire, tin and metal object in displays. Years ago I used to buy eggs that were tied together with strands of straw. Now they are sold in plastic trays. I used to have the pleasure of a real bamboo leaf in my box of sushi. Now we have plastic leaves. At least a glossy plastic bamboo leaf mimics the real thing, and echoes what used to be possible and expected.

I have heard it said that the Japanese people are not really lovers of nature, not of nature as it is. They are lovers of taming, controlling and ordering nature. So the bonsai fancier trims and fashions his dwarfed trees, seeking to improve upon the real thing. The flower arranger controls the setting of a flower to show it to better advantage than nature could achieve. The bonseki specialist orders the layout of landscapes that are without flaws. In my view, if Japanese were not lovers of nature, it would never have occurred to them to admire, study in order to understand it better, and try to reproduce nature's masterpieces. Reducing to manageable

dimensions is only a practical necessity for people who, with limited space, still want in daily life to gaze at natural beauty.

It is easy to sentimentalize the past. Reason tells me that it cannot be true that everyman used to be an artist with the soul of a poet. In Japan it is easy to believe he was. It seems to be true that everyman in Japan has a higher degree of taste, innate sensibility, and appreciation than the everymen of many other countries. His culture bestowed these traits on him. Therefore I am dismayed at every instance I see of Japanese people moving away from the foundations that bred and nurtured their culture. Seashores and riverbanks should not be concreted, separating people from real rocks and honest earth. Children especially should be able to jump in and out of clean, naturally-flowing water, and go out with cicada nets in natural, unpolluted environments. Trees should not be cut down to make way for even more new developments. No more mountains should be tunneled through for new roads. Wildlife should not be shot, nor its habitat destroyed. If cultural roots are killed, so will be culture itself.

With distance increasing between everyman and the soil, traditional cultural practices are in danger of becoming exclusive, elitist, and matters of form that lack fundamental emotion. Because of prohibitive costs and the disappearance of materials to work with, everyman is no longer able to afford to follow his old bent. Yesterday's old folk craftsman, with his profound respect for his natural materials, and his polishing his own soul as he whittled away, is hard to find. He can hardly continue in competition with machine production, nor with what are becoming the monopolies of huge, rich and famous centers, schools and organizations.

What, though, of the export of aspects of Japanese culture that people love and promote? Interchanges move in both directions, though tofu may travel less happily than hamburgers. Some Japanese arts are easy for non-Japanese people not only to admire, but also to study and adopt for

themselves. Thousands of non-Japanese women have been captivated by Japanese ways of arranging flowers. Many who have lived for a while in Japan have taken qualifications in flower arranging, and have carried the skills they have mastered back to their own countries, and passed them on to students of their own who may never visit Japan. It is not easy for western people fully to grasp essential, underlying Japanese philosophies, but Japanese flower arrangers are kind enough to praise what we manage to achieve as far as we can go.

I have many friends who are beneficiaries of cultural export whilst they are resident in Japan. Each looks for the spirit, and tries to follow the etiquette of the study that appeals to him. Some in Kyoto produce woodblock prints. Some in Mashiko fashion clay and fire kilns. One, who has been in Tokyo for several years, is a big American man who lives alone in a small, old-style Japanese house. He has a collection of bamboo baskets for his flower arrangements, and a collection of brushes for his ink painting. His plates, dishes and bowls are exclusively folk crafted. This big American man, who somehow fits in very well, studies bonseki, and with his big hands and infinite patience painstakingly creates complete miniature landscapes in trays. I see in him an informed, reverential appreciation of many Japanese cultural pursuits. He will eventually become a one-man channel for the export of Japanese culture. In a small way, he will help keep it alive.

Another friend, an Englishman, remembers his visit to the hills of Kamakura one day in the rainy season. The hydrangeas were in deep blue flower, and mosquitoes whined around him as he walked along quiet, wet lanes. As he passed a corner house, he smelled incense, listened to the tinkle of a windbell, and above its slight sound heard the strings of a koto. He was entranced. He determined that he would learn to play the Japanese instrument, and now does it so well that he is included in concerts, and takes instrumentalists to play in other countries. He, too, is

personally enriched for having come within the embrace of Japanese culture, and is taking an informed part in its wider export.

The way of tea wins its adherents in other countries. The way of tea, however, calls for an array of equipment that makes it difficult to achieve a widespread following elsewhere. Conversely, where a Japanese tea room has been recreated somewhere overseas, interested students are able to glimpse more than just an example of Japanese architecture and the tea-making process. They also see kimono, calligraphy, flowers, bowls, and are soothed by the scent of incense. The way of tea is an export package, offering a combination of Japanese arts. Yet as an export it has its physical limitations. Only in Japan can the way of tea present itself in full authenticity, in a simple, dimly-lit, thatched hut at the end of a pathway of stepping stones in a Japanese garden. Only in Japan.

The Japanese dance, the Japanese theater, Japanese music -- each cultural movement attracts interest that is deep when it is aroused, but which still has only a limited following. These pursuits are unlikely to achieve the mass appeal of flower arranging, that has the advantage of finding its materials everywhere, and that offers an instant, sufficiently pleasing visual reward. Japanese arts and crafts characteristically require years of dedication. These apprenticeships are difficult to serve outside Japan. Some Japanese art belongs so firmly to Japan that it is difficult to see its moving elsewhere at all. Non-Japanese have taken up writing haiku and tanka, but has anyone else shown great enthusiasm for carving poetry in stone? Is there anyone else anywhere, or likely to be, skilled in distinguishing different incense by scent?

Japan festivals celebrated in other countries have demonstrated abroad many Japanese cultural activities, from Noh to sumo. Japan 2001, presented in Britain this year, put on time-honored matsuri revelries with all the trappings of traditional robes and a mikoshi parade. Taiko drummers

showed how drums should be belabored and sake barrels smashed open. The theater, the garden and martial arts were all there to help represent Japan 2001, but the organizers said they wanted to avoid perpetuating only the "outdated" stereotypes of Japan. Contemporary culture in street fashions and pop music clamored for its own recognition. Photographers, graphics artists and karaoke demanded their own scenes in the expositions. Japanese culture, they said, was both the way it was, and the way it is, both then and now having validity.

A difference, as I see it, lies in life expectancies. Young men with yellow hair and earrings, and young women with platform boots and mobile phones claim to be icons of contemporary culture. Is the culture they represent here to stay, or is it a passing fancy? Perhaps this question no longer matters as the world spins faster and faster. Whether long-lived or short-lived, I see an interesting sidelight here: contemporary culture will no longer be the inheritance of any one nation. It will be universal. In our shrinking world of instant communication, youngsters of both east and west try to look alike and behave alike. The age-old modesty of the young Japanese woman will be swallowed up in global, uni-sex culture. So Japanese traditional culture, "outdated," will be separate from contemporary culture. The first is only Japan's. The second is the world's.

Fifty years ago in my neighborhood, it was unthought of that elderly parents should live apart from their families. Now that the extended family is becoming the nuclear, the care of older people, and their happiness, are pressing social problems. Fifty years ago, young Japanese women expected to marry after suitable introductions, and take care of their families which included parents-in-law. Now many a young woman prefers a career, and if later on she marries she will

have found her own husband, and will live with only him and their children. Progress has given her purposeful education, status, and freedom to decide.

We expect progress to bring benefits. Unless we have such expectations, striving is pointless. At the same time, we have to realise that progress brings pain too. It has been painful to see small Mom and Pop shops fade away as supermarkets and minimarkets advance. It has been painful that public bathhouses closed as private homes installed their own bathroom units, and neighborhoods lost their jolly evening centers of conviviality. It has been painful when wayside stalls have been cleared away from the streets, robbing our cities of vivacity and human chaos. In a previous age it must have been painful when jinricksha left the streets to become museum relics.

In the past, culture in many countries was not so fragile as it seems increasingly to have become. People lived and died without ever coming under the influence of ideas and beliefs from elsewhere, and so rarely deviated from their accustomed ways. Life was slow, and change came slowly. Today's pace is fast. Japan, self-contained perhaps more than most, has a very ancient culture that still shows unusual resilience. I hope, as Japanese culture continues to change at whatever pace, it will always keep the endearing charm I saw in it 50 years ago. I hope Japanese people will hang on to the best of what has made them what they are, and turn back to it more for their sense of worth. I hope Japanese culture in all its aspects covering life styles, behavior and artistic expressions will stay buoyant and optimistic. I think it will, as it is full-bodied and robust, as well as delicate and elegant. It has a hard core that will prevail even as outer layers are pared away. Priceless, it is what gives Japan its individuality, and that is precious.

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編集後記

水鳥が日ごとに北へ飛び去って、岸辺の道に春の気配が
 と思う間もなく、桜の花便りが相次いだ3月。ニューズレ
 ターのお届けは今年も4月になってしまいました。本誌に
 掲載の入賞エッセイは4編とも英文ですが、今年度からは、
 英語の部と日本語の部に分けて選考することになりました。
 次号をご期待ください。ご意見もお待ちしています。

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