

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Newsletter No.7

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At the opening of the meeting on April 1st 2012, 12 people were appointed as members of Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy. The term of the office for the council shall be two years. During this period which will last until March 31, 2014, the council will hold sessions to discuss on the theme “The promotion of communities with multicultural symbiosis” which is deeply rooted in the communities.



The first council meeting of FY2012

<Time and Date>

9:30A.M. to 11:30A.M. Tue. June 19th, 2012

<Venue>

Kyoto International Community House

<Agenda>

Interaction between foreign residents and community residents ~Community activities~

At the beginning, Ms. Shoko Nishioka was elected chairperson.

One of the members presented a report on the community activities related to multicultural symbiosis involving the interaction between the Chinese returnees and local residents of Mukaijima, Fushimi Ward. Kyoto Bunkyo University also reported their multicultural activities carried out in Mukaijima area. The members then discussed about the reports.

List of members of the Second Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Designated members

Name	Position
Shoko NISHIOKA (chairperson)	Director, Gender Equality Promotion Center Professor at Education Department, Bukkyo University
Michiyo ARITA	Board member, Kansai NPO Alliance Board member, Kyoto International Foundation
Yukio KATAYAMA	Director of Youth Hostel Department, Kyoto Youth Hostel Association Director, Kyoto Utano Youth Hostel
Yoko KAWATA	Kyoto Chapter of Mothers and Students' Association Director, Center for Women International Students
Shigenori SHIBATA	Director, Kyoto International Community House Board member, Kyoto International Foundation

Publicly recruited members

Name	Nationality
Naoko KAN	Japan
Juman KIM	Korea
Sigal OLENA	Ukraine
Jorge PRIMAVERA	Philippine
ZHANG Jian	China
Yoshisada FUKUI	Japan
Pongkijvorasin PRACH	Thailand

Report

Activities in Mukajima area, Fushimi Ward

~Foreign residents and those who have their roots in foreign countries in Mukaijima New Town~

About 15,000 people reside in Mukaijima New Town. Since 20 years ago, the Chinese returnees *, their spouses and relatives have settled in the public apartments of Mukaijima. At present, about 1000 returnees live in the area and the number has been increasing. Problems such as the difference in language and customs often hinder communication between the returnees and local residents.



Report by Mr. Sadayoshi FUKUI



Report by Prof. Seiko SUGIMOTO, Kyoto Bunkyo University

***Returnees from China**

When World War II ended, many Japanese who were in China could not return to Japan. Some Japanese entrusted their small children to the Chinese families. Others married Chinese citizens. After the reestablishment of diplomatic relation between Japan and China in 1972, many Japanese who had been left behind in China returned to Japan. Although these returnees are Japanese nationals, since they had been living in China under Chinese culture and using Chinese language for a long time, they have difficulty in living in Japan. There are many obstacles such as language barrier, cultural difference, and difficulty in finding jobs that stops them from leading an independent life here.

~How did we start communicating with the returnees from China?~

Several years ago, Mukaijima *Ekimae Machizukuri Kyogikai* (Mukaijima Station Front Promotion Council) invited Chinese returnees to the community festivals. This was the beginning of communication between our local autonomy society and the returnees. Later, other local autonomy societies also started interacting with them. Many returnees also wanted to have the opportunity to interact with local people and take part in community activities. The local autonomy councils also wanted them to participate in the local activities.

~Activities after the first encounter ~

Today, some seminars in Chinese regarding garbage disposal rules, other regulations, and Japanese language classes are held for the returnees. These activities helped us to promote multicultural symbiosis in our communities. At present, the returnees have the opportunity to join our community activities such as local annual event called “Mukaijima *Ekimae Aki-no-Saiten*” or “Mukaijima Station Front- Autumn Festival”. In the festival, they perform Chinese dance, erect stalls and sell *jiao-zi* (*gyoza*) and steamed meat buns (*Niku man*) there. Kyoto Bunkyo University which is located in our neighbourhood collaborates with local communities in organizing exchange programs with the returnees. Thus we have various programs for multicultural symbiosis. Nowadays, Mukaijima New Town which was built more than 30 years ago, faces sharp decrease of birth-rate and the increase of aging population. The first generation of the returnees is also getting older. We expect the second and third gene

rations to join us in revitalizing the communities.



The returnees performing Chinese dances at “Mukaijima station front- Autumn Festival”

~ Reporter’s Opinion ~

- There are many ways of multicultural communication. One is abolishing the difference between languages, cultures and generations. In Mukaijima, local university students freely participate in the multicultural symbiotic programs and play a very important role there. Participation of students in the community helps promoting friendly relations between local residents and the returnees. This is similar to the influence of grand children on elders. In spite of the language and cultural difference between Japanese and Chinese, both have some problems in common in their daily life such as aging, relation between parents and children and relation between normal people and the handicapped ones.
- It is important for the returnees to join the activities of their communities. They also wish to communicate with and contribute to the local community. It is necessary to increase the opportunities for them to participate in community activities.
- In order to implement multicultural exchange programs and expand it as a network, we need some coordinators. It is also important to train these coordinators and to secure fund for the continuation of such activities.

Kyoto Bunkyo University holds symposiums on multicultural symbiosis and collaborates with local communities in holding local festivals and events for the promotion of interactions between local residents and Chinese returnees. We are also working on the revitalization of local shopping area. Such activities will give our students and local residents an opportunity to learn about multicultural symbiosis which faces serious problems such as the difference of nationality, culture and generation; and the issue of handicapped people.



The booth at “Mukaijima Hokkori Festa” by the returnees

- Our university collaborates with Mukaijima New Town Shopping Association to hold “Mukaijima Hokkori Festa” every year. In order to revitalize the area, we hold stage performance, workshops, flea market and exhibition.
- At the “Third Asia and Africa *Tobikkiri Eigasai* in Uji” which was held in February 2011, various events such as foreign movie show, ethnic cooking show and wearing ethnic clothes were held. Speeches by the returnees, international students, foreign workers and Japanese citizens, and a party for the participants were also held.
- In Nishi-okubo, Uji City, we conducted an educational program “Panda Class” for the returnees’ children and reported the results at a session called “Support program for the returnees’ children and liaison program between our university and communities” in January 2010.

Notice

If you have any opinion regarding the newsletters and the council, please contact us at the following address. Anyone can take part in the meetings as an observer.
For the back numbers, please contact us below.

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Back numbers in English: <http://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/sogo/page/0000087864.html>