

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Newsletter No. 21



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February 2017

The 3rd meeting in FY 2016 was held

Time and Date: Wed. November 1, 2016 10am to 12pm

Location: Kyoto City Hall - Meeting Room E

Topic: Education for Advancing Multicultural Understanding

Agenda: Report 1 - Human Rights Education for Multicultural Coexistence
Report 2 - Education for Advancing Multicultural Understanding

The 3rd meeting for FY 2016 was conducted under the theme of promoting awareness in order to develop multicultural understanding. First, Council Member Yuko Watanabe, Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Education, and Faculty of Education at Kyoto University, reported on human rights education for multicultural coexistence. Then Council Member Hwang Kim who is a third generation Zainichi Korean, picture book author, operator of a café, and also employed doing various other jobs, gave a report on education in order to advance multicultural understanding.

Report 1 - Human Rights Education for Multicultural Coexistence

By Council Member Yuko Watanabe

● People with a background in a foreign culture, living right next to us

Children, when they were elementary school students, went back and forth to a shogi hall, where there was one helpful older man. This older man, before the war, came to Japan from Korea following his parents, and afterwards faced great hardships in Japan for being known as a Zainichi Korean. The children had no idea because the man used a Japanese name.



We might not realize it, but there are foreign residents who continue to face hardships and encounter various problems while living right next to us.

● Concerning the Understanding of Oldcomers and Newcomers

In order to gain the understanding of oldcomers, it is necessary to accurately know about their lives and their backgrounds, such as under what circumstances they came to Japan. For newcomers, it is important to know concrete details about each other's societies, lifestyles, as well as common points and differences in value systems.

What do you mean by Oldcomers and Newcomers?

Oldcomers are people who came to Japan before the WWII when Korea was a Japanese colony, and had to stay in Japan for various reasons even after the decolonization. 70 years have passed since the decolonization, and the number of the first generation of oldcomers who have experienced colonial rule is decreasing. At present the 3rd & 4th generations play a central role in Korean communities in Japan.

Newcomers are those who moved to Japan after the war during times of economic growth in order to find jobs, etc.

Excerpt taken from "21st Century Human Rights" edited and published by the Kanagawa Human Rights Center (2011, Nippon Hyoron Sha)

● **For real understanding it is important to discover the truth of an issue and think about it yourself.**

In my classroom I do not give answers to students but make them read handouts, discuss issues with other students after collecting their thoughts, and through these experiences I hope they learn how to think over problems themselves. For example, on issues of hate speech and prejudice, I try to give chances for students to discuss frankly and learn the difference between what they think and others think after reading newspaper articles. Thinking over the essence of the problem leads students to be interested and understand people with different backgrounds from overseas.

● **Enjoying the differences, and holding on to this concept**

It is enjoyable to have different languages and cultures, and we should be aware that it is stimulating and exciting to live with people who are different from ourselves.

Enjoying the differences widens our horizons. We should not take these differences in a negative way and should deal with issues with a positive attitude, because we will enjoy our differences more after we overcome the problem.

Report 2 - Education for Advancing Multicultural Understanding

By Council Member Hwang Kim

● **The human rights education is the base of the education on multicultural understanding**

Foreign residents in Japan mainly come from or have come from other Asian countries, such as Korea and China. However, Japanese people tend to think of people from Australia and Europe, not from Asia or from South America when it comes to multicultural coexistence. This is based on prejudice; thus human rights education is essential in order to deepen multicultural understanding.



● **Learning through Experience, Activities by Kyoto City**

In Kyoto City, there is specialized learning, particularly for human rights education, and it is called Learning Through Experience (*Fureai gakushu*). There are many Zainichi Koreans living in Kyoto, many living using Japanese names, and students learn about the historic circumstances surrounding this through formal education. There are not many places in the country, putting forth effort to provide a human rights education like this program.

● **A Guide to Books Exploring Multiculturalism (*Tabunka ni deau book guide*)**



There are many picture books that give one the opportunity to consider multiculturalism!

“Everyone is different - internationalization does not mean the same as becoming friends with every single person, but it does mean learning the history, value systems, and living patiently together with people whom you are unable to immediately understand because they are different from you.”
Quote (translated) by Shin Su-gok from
[A Guide to Books Exploring Multiculturalism](#)

● Multilingual libraries with plenty of books in non-Japanese languages

We carry different language versions of children's books, a Japanese version, and a Korean version, at the café I run, so that people who understand different languages are able to gather in one place and share books with the same context. At Tokyo Kodomo Toshokan (Tokyo Children's Library), there are a great number of multilingual books in order to give children living in two languages pride in both of their cultures and the ability to mature through gaining the understanding of the people around them concerning their cultures. These types of multilingual libraries could be a place for cultural exchanges between Japanese and non-Japanese people.

● Activities at the Neutinamu Library in Korea

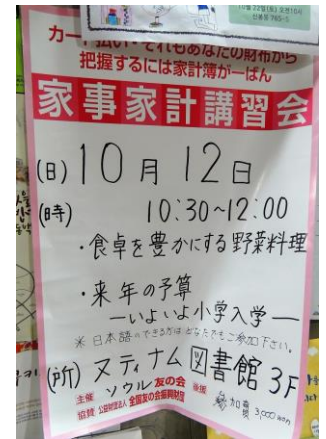
In the case of Japan, libraries are often not used for any purposes other than borrowing books; however, in Korea at the Neutinamu Library, the library offers a place for foreigners living in Korea to exchange information. In Korea, forward thinking events for foreign residents to come to the library are hosted, and if foreign residents attend they can discuss the problems that are troubling them. Also Koreans can learn about cooking from foreign residents at the library, as well as different languages. In that way they can form a kind of backup for the local administration.

Having public libraries where you can discuss your problems is an advantage; then employees are able to report directly to the local administration and it is easier for the administration to improve conditions based on the ability of the administration to quickly understand what things are troubling residents.

● Necessity of Social Education

Amongst people who advocate hate speech, some think that it is privilege for Koreans to use Japanese names. However, schools in Japan teach students reasons why Korean residents in Japan have to use Japanese names. However, it is thought that the reason why we still have hate speech even though there are educational programs in schools, is that there is not enough social education.

In South Korea, the whole society is changing towards having good relations with other Asian countries and the thoughts of living with people in the whole Asia. The media in South Korea actively deals with initiatives related to multicultural coexistence, and South Korea is conducting indirect social education through the media.



↑Sign posted at the Neutinamu Library, aimed at the Japanese community advertising a Family Finance Class.

Comments from Committee Members (Extract)

- It is important to know people's backgrounds, such as the reasons why a foreigner resident is living in Japan. Things we take to be the norm can have a completely different meaning. It is vital to realize these differences.
- People from overseas may have a different language and culture, but if we are able to put a positive value on differences, we can start to enjoy them. It is not a good thing to only value things that are the same as what you are used to. To enhance your sensitivity to others, you should get involved doing activities with different people, including foreigners.
- I think it is important to use familiar places, like libraries and youth centers, as a base for multicultural exchange. Also the Higashi Kujo Network Salon, as it is important to have a space where people can conduct exchanges and be at ease.
- It is important to enhance the function of multicultural libraries which have foreign books, and it is valuable to use libraries to realize multicultural coexistence. Libraries could have consultation counters inside the facilities.

Comments from Committee Members (Extract) (continued)

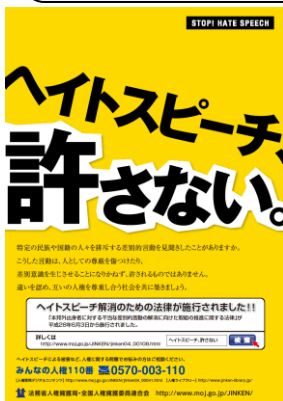
- There are many people who think that advance multiculturalism is the job of the Kyoto City International Foundation alone, and that they have no connection with this. It is important to give training to workers and encourage them to accept the responsibility of becoming leaders of promoting multicultural coexistence.
- Foreigners that speak Japanese are often asked, “Why are you so good at Japanese?” being asked this and other similar questions become a form of great stress. Also, there are many Japanese people who say things like, “Kimono don’t look good on foreigners”, and other ill-intentioned things. In order to stop prejudice against foreigners, it is necessary to use the media. There are foreigners who speak Japanese and wear kimono, and I think that if this could be better known through the use of the media, then it would stop some of the prejudices against foreigners.

Notification① A Kyoto Prefectural Human Rights Education & Awareness Policy Promotion Council Advisory Board has been formed

On October 25, 2016 the first meeting of the Kyoto Prefectural Human Rights Education & Awareness Policy Promotion Council Advisory Board was held, and members of the Kyoto municipal government was/were in attendance.

This council came into effect in June of 2016 to end hate speech by developing a consultation system, improving education, implementing public awareness activities, established to discuss arguments based on the duties of the municipal government and what activities the municipal government can conduct. It will be held henceforth in order to create policy.

←Poster for public awareness focusing on hate speech (issued by the Ministry of Justice)



Notification② Panel Exhibition held on Human Rights Awareness

From December 7- 13, 2016, a panel exhibition on Kyoto City’s activities for multicultural coexistence and ending hate speech was held in Zest Oike.

[↑Panel Exhibition](#)

Many people viewed the exhibition.



Notice from the Secretariat:

If you have any opinion regarding the newsletters or the council, please contact us at the following address. (Anyone can attend the meetings as an observer.)

For back numbers of the newsletter in English, please contact us below.

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