

THE NMUN KOBE TIMES



Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

Autumn Foliage Greets Delegates in Kyoto and Hiroshima



Left: Delegates smiling before Kinkaku-ji in Kyoto.



Right: Delegates listening to Keiko Ogura, *hibakusha* in Hiroshima.

Surrounded by curtains and carpets of crimson leaves of maple trees and yellow leaves of Ginko trees, some 250 delegates and their faculty members immersed themselves in the Japanese autumn in the ancient capital of Kyoto, and also in the resurrected city of Hiroshima and its neighboring Island of Gods across the Seto Inland Sea: Miyajima. About 100 of NMUN visitors participated in a tour of Kyoto and 150 others in a tour of Hiroshima and Miyajima on Monday, which were put together by the students' organizing committee at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies (KCUFS). The participants will switch destinations on Tuesday. Each group is accompanied by some 50 student volunteer guides who have been preparing for this occasion since this summer.

KYOTO

The group of delegates to Kyoto left Port Island where their hotels are located by buses that took them to the old city in two hours. They first visited the Fushimi Inari Shrine in Fushimi Ward, about two kilometers from Kyoto Station. Fushimi Inari is an important Shinto shrine in southern Kyoto that famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates, which stand in two rows behind its main buildings. The delegates walked along the 70-meter paths along the torii, the main landmark of the shrine that was built almost 1300 years ago. The Fushimi Inari Shrine is the grand head shrine of several thousands of shrines around Japan dedicated to Inari, the protector of grains, (to be continued to the next page)

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in particular rice. Inari is enshrined as a god of fertility, prosperous business and peace to the household and has been revered by many people. Foxes are thought to be Inari's messengers; therefore visitors can see many fox statues all over the shrine grounds.

From the Fushimi Inari Shrine the delegates and their guides headed for Kiyomizu-dera temple, about three kilometers to the north. Kiyomizu-dera is an independent Buddhist temple in eastern Kyoto.

Originally constructed in 778, it was burned repeatedly—due to war and incidental fires—and its present buildings were built in 1633, ordered by Tokugawa Iemitsu, the third Shogun of the Tokugawa family. The delegates walked up Kiyomizu-no-Butai, the temple's stage that protrudes from the side of a mountain and is supported by 13-meter-long wooden posts. From the stage, they enjoyed a magnificent view of the city of Kyoto dotted with autumn foliage.



After feasting on a lunch of traditional Japanese cuisine that featured tofu in a pot, the delegates moved on to Kinkaku-ji, or the Golden Pavilion, which was built by Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, a general in Muromachi Era, more than 600 years ago. The delegates viewed the building that is covered by gold foil on lacquered walls, which was rebuilt in 1955 after it was burned down by arson in 1950. Student volunteer guides explained how



some literary works were based on the incident, such as *Kinkaku Temple* by Yukio Mishima which is considered one of the masterpieces of modern Japanese literature.

Kiyomizu-dera and Kinkaku-ji are a part of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto, designated as UNESCO World Heritage in 1994, which encompasses 17 locations in the city and its vicinity, including 13 temples, 3 shrines and one castle.



HIROSHIMA

The group of delegates to Hiroshima left the hotel for Shin-Kobe Station, where they took the Shinkansen (“bullet train”) to Hiroshima. After arriving at Hiroshima Station, they took buses to Hatsukaichi, a neighboring city about one hour’s drive to the west, where they crossed the Seto Inland Sea by ferryboats to Miyajima Island. The real name of Miyajima is “Itsukushima,” named after the daughter of Sun Goddess. This is one of Japan’s three famous sights, along with Matsushima in Miyagi Prefecture and Amanohashidate in Kyoto Prefecture. Over three million people visit Miyajima annually, which is itself only a small town of about 1800.

As the delegates and their guides stepped on the island, they were greeted by deer, which local people have long believed were the God’s messengers. They walked through the corridors of the shrine whose buildings are coated with vermilion lacquer. With the assistance of the student volunteers, the delegates learned how to pray to God at the Itsukushima Shrine. Then they viewed the floating torii gate from the open-air stage extending to the ocean from the main building. The delegates also walked through the shopping arcade where they found some unique Japanese things on the island, such a big wooden rice scoops.

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After lunch on the island, they traveled back to Hiroshima by ferryboats and buses. Arriving at the Peace Park, they walked to the Atomic Bomb Dome, one of the few remaining physical evidences of the tragedy that happened on Aug. 6, 1945. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was built on the former residential area near the site of the ground zero—the point of ground immediately below where the atomic bomb burst—in 1954. They walked around the park, visiting such memorials as the Flame of Peace, the Bell of Peace, and the Children’s Peace Monument.



Joaquin Miguel Silva Alcantara, a 20-year-old student at the University of Asia and the Pacific in the Philippines, who represents Vietnam (ECOSOC), said he was fascinated by the temples and shrines in Kyoto. They reminded him of Hakone, near Tokyo, another tourist destination in Japan he visited last year. “I like the way they were built beside mountains. We can enjoy watching the changing colors of autumn leaves, too,” he said.

On Tuesday, the faculty and delegates will switch destinations; those who traveled to Hiroshima will go to Kyoto, and vice versa.



For example, last year the NMUN was held in Olomouc, Czech Republic, and delegates toured Auschwitz-Birkenau, a former site of the Holocaust during World War II.



Then they entered the Peace Museum, where they viewed such artifacts as a lunch box with charred rice and the tricycle of a three-year old boy who was killed by the bomb while riding it. They also listened to the story of Keiko Ogura, a 79-year-old peace activist, who was exposed to the bomb when she was eight years old.



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NMUN has a tradition of visiting some cultural places in the host country before the conference begins. The places to visit are often places of important historic value for the country or the international community.





Photos: The delegates going to Hiroshima by *Shinkansen* bullet train.



Proud of Japanese Hospitality

As a volunteer for the cultural visit to Kyoto, Mei Nishio hopes that guides will share with the delegates about the aspects of Japanese goodness, especially “hospitality.” At first she didn’t know the Japanese culture well. After she studied it and then went to Kyoto, she discovered it is more interesting to visit temples having the knowledge of history and meaning of the structure, which she couldn’t realize when she had visited previously. That’s one reason she wants to share the knowledge with the delegates. She also said it is very important to help visitors become aware of the manner and etiquette involved in visiting shrines and temples, e.g. like *omairi* (paying homage) because she thinks that it’s important for guides to tell not only the facts and history of the place, but also to share Japanese values from the viewpoint of culture. A freshman at the Chinese Studies Department, Nishio feels some anxiety about her ability to communicate in English with delegates, yet she knows what is important: “The priority is to enjoy. Of course, I am responsible for it. But if I were a visitor, I would want the guide to be happy, too. So I want to enjoy this opportunity.”



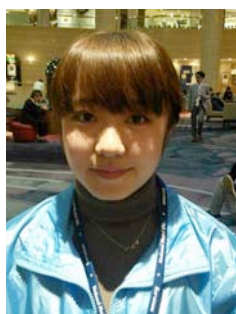
Reflecting on War Through Hiroshima

Asami Suzuki, junior of English Studies Department, who is one of the assistant leaders of cultural visit to Hiroshima, wanted to get involved in the NMUN in some way, but she did not have a special interest in Hiroshima at first. When she was invited to be an assistant leader, it was hard for her to accept the opportunity right away. Since she anticipated no other big prospects coming to her, though, she accepted “I have been nervous, but looking forward to it,” she said. Suzuki was born in Utsunomiya, Tochigi Prefecture, which was burned out by air-raids by the US Air Force in World War II. Because of this historical background, her elementary school emphasized the tragedy of war in a peace studies class, which made her fearful of war. Since then, she could not face war. After becoming an assistant leader, she has come to think of the people who suffered from bombings. “So far, I have not been able to face war squarely enough, but through learning about Hiroshima, I have gradually formed my own ideas about war,” she said.



Unexpected Opportunity Brings Satisfaction

Yuka Omichi, junior at KCUFS’s English Studies Department, likes to meet and talk to people, and that’s applied to be a student volunteer. However, it was not until about a week ago that she was asked to handle the task of Kobe tour guide to fill the staff shortage. She had already been assigned to work as a volunteer for the Delegate Dance after the conference, so being a tour guide was an unexpected request and she had to prepare to conduct the tour on the very day. During the tour, she realized how difficult and important it is to convey ideas to others, much more so in English. She is at least satisfied that she could share the attractions of Kobe with the participants. She was impressed by what one of them told her: that she was happy to just see the sea because she lives in a place where there is no sea and she felt relaxed to be here.



Japanese Castle

By Nanami Takano

There are hundreds of castles around Japan, from Hokkaido to Okinawa. Many of them were built in the 15th and 16th centuries, when the country was ruled by generals such as Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu. Some have been reconstructed after World War II, while others are the original, historic buildings.

Twelve original castles are still standing in the country; *Hirosaki Castle* in Aomori prefecture, *Matsumoto Castle* in Nagano prefecture, *Inuyama Castle* in Aich prefecture, *Maruoka Castle* in Hukui prefecture, *Hikone Castle* in Shiga prefecture, *Himeji Castle* in Hyogo prefecture, *Matsue Castle* in Shimane prefecture, *Bitchu-Matsuyama Castle* in Okayama prefecture, *Marugame Castle* in Kagawa prefecture, *Kochi Castle* in Kochi prefecture, *Iyo-Matsuyama Castle* and *Uwajima Castle* in Ehime prefecture.

Himeji Castle, one of the World Heritage sites, is the most visited castle on Japan tours. It is nicknamed the White Heron Castle because of its beautiful exterior of white stones. The building and its surrounding beauty fascinate visitors in all seasons. Amazingly the castle has never experienced serious damage from either natural disasters or wars, which is pretty unusual for a construction of this age. Himeji was an important military site during World War II; therefore, it



was one of the bombing targets. Though a bomb was dropped on the tower, miraculously it did not explode and the castle had no serious damage.

Getting into the castle requires passing many defensive tricks like twists and turns designed to stop trespassers from reaching the main tower. The entrances are very small, so only one person can pass through at a time. These clever defenses may make it difficult for tourists to arrive there, too!

The city of Himeji, with half a million inhabitants, is the second largest city in Hyogo Prefecture. In addition to the castle, there are many tourist attractions including other historical places and local food. It takes about one hour from Osaka or Kyoto and about 40 minutes from Sannomiya. If you ride a bullet train, *Shinkansen*, it takes about 30 minutes from Shin-Osaka, about 20 minutes from Okayama, so it is very convenient to reach there from major cities around Kobe.



68 Honmach, Himeji City
TEL: 079-285-1149 (Himeji Castle Management Office)
FAX: 079-222-6050



9:00-16:00(gate close at 17:00)
• April 27th-August 31st 9:00-17:00(gate close at 18:00)

ENTRY FEE

Adults(18 years old and over): 1000 yen
Students(Elementary, Junior High, Senior High school): 300 yen
• Himeji Castle and Koko-en Garden combination ticket Adults: 1040 yen, Students: 360 yen

Reference: <http://www.tabian.com/tiikibetu/kinki/hyogo/himejijyo/mame.html>



photo from www.pakutaso.com

By Atami Tomae

Coffee! Japanese people love coffee, and Kobe has many cafés for people who work, study, or want to have a good time with friends. Ueshima Coffee House (medium cup: 400yen), Nishimura Coffee (530), Starbucks (tall: 320), Tully's Coffee (tall: 370), Doutor Coffee (medium: 270) and so on. These cafés stay open until around 23:00. They also have good meals. If you want a cup of coffee at a budget price, try McDonald's, which offers 100yen coffee (small: 100yen, medium: 150yen), or, how about trying one of Japan's amazing convenience stores? Most *konbini* have coffee makers and make fresh coffee (small: 100yen, medium: 150yen). If you don't have a minute to spare while the fresh coffee brews, just ask the clerk for a chilled coffee drink in a can. You'll find various rich types of coffee (about 140-250yen). The aroma and taste are good. When it's lunchtime, please stop by one of the bakeries in Kobe. Most of them have space to enjoy bread with coffee. They offer bread, pastries and sandwiches from morning with *the warmest, most pleasant aromas*. These days, the kinds of café are increasing. Thus, we are offered various choices. Japan has a long history of cafés.

References:

The 100 wisdoms to enjoy your coffee
(Asahi newspaper),

Breakfast (John Steinbeck)

Coffee is brewed in various ways; Japan has a long cultural history of coffee.

Coffee arrived in Japan during the Edo period. The first coffee was introduced in Nagasaki at Dejima, a Dutch trading house. The first Japanese café is 可否茶館 (kahityakann) in Tokyo.

In the Meiji era, many cafés opened which were called カフェー (kafee) and Japanese intellectuals spent time there. Café Pulista was opened in 1913 by Ryo Mizuno and offered real Brazilian coffee not only for intellectuals like Kenji Miyazawa and Hakusyuu Kitahara (famous Japanese poets) but also for the common Japanese. This café still offers good coffee in Ginza, Tokyo. Coffee's popularity grew quickly. However, the Japanese government banned coffee in 1944 because it was regarded as a luxury; the government forced the people to live thriftily. After the war, coffee reappeared in 1950. During the 1950s, various kinds of cafés were established. Jazz cafés with live or recorded jazz; tea-rooms with classical music; sing-along coffee shops where customers sing along with the piano or accordion; Go-Go cafés that are like a kind of club. In the 1960s and 1970s, Jyunn-kissa (coffee house) became popular. Each master offered the best coffee for customers, and coffee lovers had their own *ikituke* (a shop which the customer regularly patronizes). In the 1970s and 1980s, almost all cafés had free matchboxes, featuring original designs (with a map) as an advertisement. Japanese people collected the matchboxes. If the design was rare or interesting, they were especially prized.