

Special Lecture #01

Historical and Cultural Aspects of the World Heritage Remains of Bamiyan Valley: Description of its Past, Present and Future

Date : Saturday, November 2, 2013, 13:00~16:40

Place : West Hall, the Koshien Hall

Lecturer : Dr. Kosaku Maeda (Professor Emeritus at Wako University, Japan)

A lecture entitled “Historical and Cultural Aspects of the World Heritage Remains of Bamiyan Valley—Description of its Past, Present and Future” invited professor emeritus Kosaku Maeda of Wako University as a lecturer.

Prof. Maeda first gave a brief history since the foundation of Afghanistan from the period of principality, republic, Soviet invasion and withdrawal, Taliban rule and vandalism (destruction of Great Buddha) to the end of war and postwar. And we could recognize the importance of Japan’s efforts being made in cooperation with UNESCO to restore the culture of Afghanistan.

Prof. Maeda also introduced the ancient history of Afghanistan as cultural crossroads, which was influenced by the cultures of Greece, Persia and other neighboring countries showing a lot of pictures of excavations. Then, Prof. Maeda, based on the precious materials, commented on the caves, murals and Buddhist statues of Bamiyan Valley including their conditions before and after the Taliban-led vandalism, which he has been studying over half a century. It was a valuable opportunity to understand how important it is for Japan to take the initiative in the cooperative effort to revitalize the culture of Afghanistan hereafter.

(Reported by Toshitomo Suzuki)



Lecture by Professor Emeritus Kosaku Maeda

Special Lecture #02

Caves and Murals in Bamiyan: As Compared with the Cave Temples in India and Kucha

Date : Saturday, November 9, 2013, 13:00~17:00

Place : AS-120, the Architecture Studio

Lecturer : Dr. Akira Miyaji (Professor Emeritus at Nagoya University, and Director Emeritus at Ryukoku Museum, Japan)

MWU held a lecture inviting Professor Emeritus Akira Miyaji of Nagoya University as lecturer titled “Caves and Murals in Bamiyan - As Compared with the Cave Temples in India and Kucha -

The lecture began with tracing the flow of the history of ancient cities of Afghanistan that had changed themselves under the influence of the countries of east and west or south and north. And, religion of each period before the present status of the remains was introduced. Prof. Miyaji also commented on the prosperity of the city after the introduction of Buddhism, Buddhist art, which developed amalgamating the Hellenism and Gandhara culture, and the shift in object of worship from Buddhist *stupa* to statue.

Then Prof. Miyaji introduced cave temples of Buddhism, as well as that of Hinduism and Jainism in India with especial detailed commentary of the structure and way of use, decorative art and murals of the Buddhist cave temples in Ajanta, India. And making reference to the outline and history of the Bamiyan site, Afghanistan, Prof. Miyaji picked up on the structure of caves and the murals of Bamiyan and illustrated the influence of India, Persia or Gandhara as seen on the iconographies as well as the differences of murals between that of Bamiyan and Ajanta. Iconography and coloration of murals of the Caves of Kizil and Dun Huang in China were also introduced in comparison with the Bamiyan counterpart. Prof. Miyaji’s detailed commentary on the subjects from wide-ranging regions from Europe to west, central and south Asia was copious and enlightening. It was a precious opportunity for us to look at the architecture from the different viewpoint of art history.



(Reported by Tomoko Uno)



Prof. Miyaji as giving the lecture