

ITCS Seminar # 01

Iranian Architecture and Culture

Date : June 4 (Thursday), 2015, 16:30~19:00

Venue : K-222, Koshien Hall

Lecturers : **Mr. Kazuya Yamauchi (Head, Regional Environment Section, Japan Center for International Cooperation in Conservation, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo)**
Mr. Hiroki Yamada (Associate Fellow, Japan Center for International Cooperation in Conservation, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo)

The first seminar of Institute of Turkish Culture Studies 2015 was held at the Koshien Hall on Thursday, June 4th. We invited Mr. Kazuya Yamauchi and Mr. Hiroki Yamada of the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, to speak at this first lecture entitled “Iranian Architecture and Culture.”

Mr. Yamauchi first explained the basic features of Iran, such as population, geography, ethnic groups, and religion, and its world cultural heritages. Mr. Yamada then spoke about Persian architecture and history. He started his lecture at Ziggurat and the adobe architecture of the Elam period, and described various structures and gardens, such as the Pasargadae and Persepolis capitals of the Achaemenid Empire, squinch domes of the Seleucid and Parthian Empires, the Fahraj Mosque in the early Islamic period, the Jameh Mosque of Isfahan from the Seljuq dynasty, architecture in Samarkand during the Timurid dynasty, and Naqsh-e Jahan Square of the Safavid dynasty, with many illustrative photos and figures. He also presented conservation works of several structures on site and provided informative explanations of the types of Islamic architecture grouped regionally. In conclusion, he provided a presentation of the vernacular architecture in Iran.

During the discussion following the lecture, many questions were posed from the floor about Iranian and Islamic architecture and culture. The lecture ended on a high note.

(Reported by Kazuhiko Yanagisawa and Tomoko Uno)



Mr. Kazuya Yamauchi



Mr. Hiroki Yamada

ITCS Seminar # 02

Ancient Dome Architecture of Western Asia

Date : January 8 (Friday), 2016, 17:30~20:00

Venue : K-222, Koshien Hall

Lecturer : Dr. Yasuyoshi Okada (Professor, Kokushikan University, Japan)

The Institute of Turkish Culture Studies' second seminar of the 2015-16 academic year was held on January 8, 2016 (Friday) at Koshien Kaikan. For this meeting, Professor Yasuyoshi Okada of Kokushikan University was invited to give a lecture entitled "Ancient Dome Architecture of Western Asia."

Professor Okada introduced a historical survey of the subject. Beginning with the circular remains of Tell Gubba in Iraq, he discussed many examples of dome structures found in temples, residences, gravesites, palaces, and churches in countries such as Greece, Iran, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. While commenting on materials, techniques, and dome styles, Professor Okada also educated the seminar participants on the origins of dome architecture, its development, and historical changes that led to Islamic architecture. At the same time, he discussed regional characteristics of dome architecture in regions such as Turkey and Iran and Central Asia. His lectures provided the audience with a glimpse of human hardships, ingenuity, and enthusiasm in dealing with questions such as how to place a round dome on a circular or square plane.

During the Q&A period, participants engaged in spirited discussions on related topics such as dome structure and China and Southeast Asia. This seminar was extremely stimulating and fascinating, provoking participants to think about an prototypical example of architecture.

(Reported by Kazuhiko Yanagisawa)



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Dr. Yasuyoshi Okada

ITCS Seminar # 03

Layout of Ancient Buddhist Temples in Central Asia

Date : February 24 (Wednesday), 2016, 13:30~16:00
Venue : K-222, Koshien Hall
Lecturer : Mr. Shunpei Iwai (Lecturer, Ryukoku University, Japan)

The Institute of Turkish Culture Studies' third seminar of the 2015-16 academic year was held on February 24 (Wednesday), 2016, at Koshien Kaikan. For the seminar this time, Lecturer Shunpei Iwai of Ryukoku Museum, Ryukoku University, was invited to give a talk entitled "Layout of Ancient Buddhist Temples in Central Asia."

During the first half of the seminar, Lecturer Iwai surveyed the spread of Buddhism from its origin in India to Central Asia and Western Regions of China via Gandhara. He also introduced the floor plans of various historical ruins while commenting on the characteristics of elements that make up the layout of Buddhist temples and on their changes through time. Buddhist temples in Central Asia initially developed as memorials (cetiya) and monasteries (vihara). Lecturer Iwai discussed changes in the elements emphasized in different regions and time periods and compared their appearances to Japanese Buddhist temples.

In the second half of the seminar, Lecturer Iwai divided the greater Gandhara region (located on the borders of present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan) – with a major focus on Gandhara – into the regions such as, in Pakistan, the Taxila archaeological site, the Buddhist ruins of Takht-i-Bahi, the Ranigat site in Gandhara, and the Swat region; and in Afghanistan, Jalalabad, Kapisa, and Kabul regions. He then introduced the newest research on special features such as the layout of cetiya and vihara and the object of faith in those structures for each area. This seminar was rich with contents about Buddhist archeological sites from India to western China and about the spatial structure of the layouts of Buddhist temples across vast regions and their changes.

(Reported by Tomoko Uno)



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Mr. Shunpei Iwai