

Silk Road Culture and Architecture Lecture Series # 04

Encounter with Other Cultures Along the Silk Road

Date : June 4 (Saturday), 2016, 13:00~
Venue : The Industry Club of Japan Hall (Tokyo, Japan)
Lecturers : **Dr. Kiyohide Saito (Specially Appointed Professor of Nara Women's University and Technical Advisor to the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)**
Dr. Kosei Morimoto (Abbot Emeritus of Todaiji Temple)
Performer : FUJI (Saz Player)

Encounter with Other Cultures Along the Silk Road, the fourth lecture in the *Silk Road Culture and Architecture* series sponsored by Mukogawa Women's University Department of Architecture and Tokyo Center was held at the Industry Club of Japan Hall in Marunouchi, Tokyo on June 4 (Saturday), 2016. The speakers were Dr. Kiyohide Saito, specially appointed professor of Nara Women's University and technical advisor to the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture, and Abbot Emeritus Kosei Morimoto of Todaiji temple in Nara. We were also fortunate to have FUJI (Yoshiyuki Fujii) to perform Turkish traditional music on the *saz*, a traditional stringed instrument of the region.

FUJI opened the afternoon program with a live performance on the *saz*, a traditional Turkish instrument once made from a horse skull with horsehair strings, but today is a long-necked instrument with a pear-shaped resonance box and six or seven steel strings. The most common stringed folk instrument in Turkey, the *saz* is popular throughout Turkey and surrounding areas. Singing to his own accompaniment, the audience was enthralled by the acoustics and the melodic tones of this classic instrument as it reverberated throughout the hall. FUJI also related colorful folktales associated with the songs he performed.

Dr. Kiyohide Saito then gave his talk entitled "World Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean: Past and Present World Heritage Sites in Syria." After reviewing the long history of excavation, research, preservation, and renovation at Syrian archaeological sites, he went on to relate the sad state of world heritage sites in Syria today. Syria has many heritage sites of immense cultural value to world history, but unfortunately many of these sites have suffered extensive damage in the Syrian Civil War and as of 2013 have been placed on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger. Focusing on the damaged sites, Dr. Saito first presented a broad introduction to the history and background of the ancient capital of Damascus, the caravan city of Palmyra, and other vulnerable sites, then detailed 3D measurement and modeling initiatives that have been undertaken to preserve these treasures of world heritage for posterity.

Dr. Kosei Morimoto then delivered a lecture entitled "Ali al-Tanukhi's Anthology 'Night Stories of the Islamic Empire': Bringing Early Islamic Society to Life." Recounting tales from "Stories to Remember: Essence of Conversation," a series of volumes translated by Dr. Morimoto, these are engrossing stories and anecdotes of the many people passing through Ali al-Tanukhi's courtroom in his capacity as a judge. Dr. Morimoto selected stories from the 11 volumes in the series that best illustrated early Islamic society and highlighted the relationship between Islam and Buddhism and other religions. Dr. Morimoto also described his own travels through Iraq, which he illustrated with his own photographs of archeological sites.



Opening address by Professor Okazaki, Head of the Department of Architecture



Mr. FUJI (Yoshiyuki Fujii) on the *saz*



Dr. Kiyohide Saito



Abbot Kosei Morimoto



Venue: Hall at The Industry Club of Japan

Silk Road Culture and Architecture Lecture Series # 05

Christian Culture Along the Silk Road

Date : February 4 (Saturday), 2017, 13:00~
Venue : The Industry Club of Japan Hall (Tokyo, Japan)
Lecturers : Dr. Shiro Sasano (Professor Emeritus at the Tokyo Institute of Technology)
Dr. Tomotoshi Sugimoto (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Keio University)
Performer : Mr. Yuji Tsunemi (Oud Player)

Christian Culture Along the Silk Road, the fifth lecture in the *Silk Road Culture and Architecture* series sponsored by Mukogawa Women's University Department of Architecture and Tokyo Center was held at the Industry Club of Japan Hall in Marunouchi, Tokyo on February 4 (Saturday), 2017. This program featured presentations by Dr. Shiro Sasano, Professor Emeritus at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, and by Dr. Tomotoshi Sugimoto, Professor at Keio University, and a musical tutorial by Mr. Yuji Tsunemi, who will perform classical Arabic music on the *oud*.

Mr. Tsunemi provided the opening act with a remarkable performance on the Arabian *oud*, a plucked string instrument played throughout the Arab world (the Arabic term *oud* denotes a thin piece of wood and may refer to the thin strips of wood used for the back of the instrument). The sound of the *oud* vibrates within a gourd-shaped sound box made of thin 1-mm-thick wood staves, and the pegbox of the instrument is bent back at a sharp angle from the neck, similar to the Japanese *biwa*. Mr. Tsunemi demonstrated the classical music of Turkey and Syria, and also described the instrument and the different musical scales characteristic of Arabian music. The audience clearly appreciated the lyrical tones, evocative of another place and time, that reverberated throughout the hall.

Dr. Shiro Sasano then delivered a presentation entitled "Survived Prayer or a Stone Ark: Christian Architecture in Eastern Anatolia." In his talk, Dr. Sasano gave a detailed overview of church architecture in the historical / cultural region of eastern Anatolia, where some 800 Christian structures were erected over the centuries from ancient to modern times. He also outlined the belief systems (faith) and thinking associated with the different phases of architectural history. Dr. Sasano went into some detail on the evolution of churches and monasteries over the ages from the very beginning of Christian architecture accompanied by his own personal photographs of ruins and remains taken over a lifetime of archeological research.

We then heard from Dr. Tomotoshi Sugimoto, who spoke on the subject "Byzantine Church in the Holy Land Israel: Based on Recent Archeological Surveys." Dr. Sugimoto's lecture focused on the Byzantine Church in Israel—regarded as sacred turf by the three main monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—detailing the geographical and historical background of each period, and archaeological insight into the faith, beliefs, and thinking of believers. He elaborated on architectural transitions of representative churches throughout Israel, talked about Christian art and archaeological sites that have been excavated, and explained the evolution of church architecture that began with the initial establishment of Christianity.



Opening address by Professor Okazaki, Head of the Department of Architecture



Mr. Yuji Tsunemi on the *oud*



Dr. Shiro Sasano



Dr. Tomotoshi Sugimoto



Venue: Hall at The Industry Club of Japan