

News & Views

Toda Institute Annual Report 2014

2014 has confirmed that, for better or for worse, we live in an interconnected world. To mention a few events in a short review of the year, most people on the planet have been affected by the violence that broke out in the Ukraine, in Syria and Iraq battling ISIS, in Gaza and Israel, the unrest and military coup in Thailand, and upheavals in many other places. It was also a difficult year in aviation, and we have been reminded of the fragility of human health due to the Ebola outbreak.

In addition, through a series of confrontations with the town name Fergusson still echoing in many people's hearts, communities across the United States were devastated by continuing tensions due to inequalities.

It was also a year to mourn the loss of great artists such as Pete Seeger, the icon of protest music who gave us "Where have All the Flowers Gone," Robin Williams, one of the greatest actors of all time, and Maya Angelou, the great poetess, dancer, singer, actress and author of classics such as "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." Challenging many certainties about the international order, the astounding success of the Chinese e-commerce holding Alibaba has taken Wall Street, and the world, by surprise, and North Korea was accused of blocking the release of a comedy in the US.

If I had to conclude this short review of the year on a positive note, I would say that we can rejoice at the happy transition of Tunisia to full democracy, after the election of a new president at the end of December. In the chaos that ensued from the "Arab Spring" of 2011, this is a source of hope for the whole region and for the planet. Finally I must mention the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Pakistani Malala Yousafzai and Indian Kailash Satyarthi for their work in favor of education for all children. In this vein we have continued this year again to foster "dialogue of civilizations" with the continued hope to break through cultural and national impasses, and to establish a more peaceful global reality for all humankind.

The staff of the Toda Institute was honored to have been able to contribute to peacebuilding efforts throughout 2014 through research activities concerning the power of music and continued projects with the Regional Efforts to Achieve Peace (REAP). Our endeavors gave us the opportunity to do collaborative research and to connect with outstanding people in Hawai'i and the continental USA (New York, Washington DC, Aliso Viejo and other cities), in the UK, Turkey, Belgium, Norway, China and Japan.

We hereby present a summary of our activities.

Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings:

Seoul, Korea; Yokohama, Japan: the workshops were co-sponsored by the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, the Kim Dae Jung Presidential Library and Museum and Otago's National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. Held March 7-8, 2014, in Seoul Korea, on the relationships between China, Japan and Korea, this was the second, in what is hoped will

be a series of North East Asian Peace and Security Problem Solving Workshops. It was mediated by the Toda Institute Secretary-General Professor Kevin Clements, as part of our REAP projects.

Some of the issues addressed throughout the two-day workshop were: negative stereotypes; enmification, dealing with historical trauma, and breaking cycles of revenge, with a focus on getting the right balance between autonomy and connection in relation to all three countries. The participants felt that the conversations addressed new topics not discussed at other academic conferences and were able to identify key issues dividing China, Japan and Korea and had important discussions about the ways in which historic memories were being activated, creating a vicious cycle of nationalist adversarialism in all three countries. Continuing this thread the workshop was continued in November (6-7) in Yokohama, Japan, to discuss the possibility of the publication of a book addressing the issues that have arisen throughout the workshop series. The publication is expected in mid-2015.

New York, NY, USA; Aliso Viejo, CA, USA; London, UK; Brussels, Belgium; Xian, China: Launches of the book *A Forum for Peace, Daisaku Ikeda's Proposals to the UN*, an anthology of selected proposals that Mr. Ikeda made to the United Nations and the world from 1983 to 2013 was published in early 2014. As part of the publication Dr. Urbain was able to present the book to various audiences throughout 2014 at the UN Headquarters, at City College New York, and in Washington DC in February, in Southern California in April, in the UK in June, and in Belgium and China in October.

Istanbul, Turkey: The Toda Institute organized a one day meeting on “The Power of Music for Peacebuilding” in Istanbul on August 10. This meeting was held in conjunction with the bi-annual conference held by the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), for which the Toda Institute supported the participation of 13 researchers on the application of music in peacebuilding.

Xi'an, China: In October Dr. Urbain participated in a conference in Xi'an, China on Peace, Culture, Education and Humanism, gathering participants from China, Taiwan, Japan, the US and Belgium.

Oslo, Norway: In conjunction with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) the Toda Institute began a cooperative project (December 18-19) discussing what regional and global actors did to shape the revolutionary changes in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, and what lessons could be drawn for democracy support in the future. A book publication is expected in mid-2015.

Publications

January saw the publication of *A Forum for Peace: Daisaku Ikeda's Proposals to the UN* mentioned above, and this year saw the near-completion of several volumes that will appear in 2015:

Music and Conflict Transformation: Harmonies and dissonances in Geopolitics (Paperback): the new paperback edition of the 2008 volume of the same title has been reissued and now includes an inspirational foreword by jazz legend Wayne Shorter.

Music, Power and Liberty: Sound, Song and Melody as Instruments of Change: in this publication we are very pleased to have been able to bring together musicians from around the globe to discuss complex issues coming from the fundamental ambiguity of the roles of music: it can be used to challenge, or to reinforce, the status quo. Part 1 explores how people have used music to resist it in 19th century France, in 20th century Egypt, and in 21st century Turkey. Part 2 focuses on events in Tunisia since the 2011 ousting of Ben Ali, and part 3 shows that music plays a role in channeling people's hopes and aspirations even if there are no spectacular changes at the political level. Part 4 explores the importance of context when we talk about the power of music for social change, with case studies in Colombia and Bosnia. Writers come from Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain, France, Belgium, the UK, Canada, Puerto Rico and Japan.

The book version of *Peace & Policy* vol. 19, entitled *Global Visioning: Challenges and Solutions for a Common Future*, is a result of the 2011 conference in Morocco, co-organized with the Muhammadan League of Scholars of Morocco. This publication tackles the difficult but necessary question of how we can live better in this chaotic world despite seemingly unsurmountable differences in the way we envision spirituality and ethics, international and transnational relations, education and culture... Authors come from Japan, Morocco, South Africa, Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the United States.

Acknowledgements

Members of the staff of the Toda Institute in Tokyo and Honolulu join me in expressing profound gratitude for our all of our associates and partners who have supported our efforts again in 2014, especially our Secretary-General Kevin Clements who has done a superb job of working together with our Senior Research Fellows: Chaiwat Satha-Anand, Sverre Lodgaard, and Eileen Babbitt; through the various meetings held in 2014 we are enabling breakthroughs and advances in peace research on many fronts. We look forward to continuing our work for peace together in 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

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Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research
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