

D.E. What do you remember most about the electioneering campaign for a position on the Assembly at Ibaraki prefecture in September 2015?

J.H. City elections are actually very civilized with almost no mudslinging amongst council candidates. The election system makes mudslinging pointless so it was quite a surprise to hear the complete BS that was being said about me by other prefectural candidates. It was said I couldn't read any Japanese, for example. Or that I hadn't asked a single question of the administration in council meetings. That in spite of having served as vice chair of Health & Welfare as well as the Construction committees and chair of the newsletter committee. The actual campaigning was very similar to city campaigns, just a lot fewer candidates. I found out later it was only one candidate who was the primary liar-in-chief so it was disappointing to lose the election, especially by a relatively small margin, but satisfying to kick his butt anyway!

Education Corner

Millie Creighton (Department of Anthropology, University of British Columbia) discusses the Opening of an Innovative New University Credit Course on 'Chado', Japanese Tea Ceremony, a First for Canada.



April signifies opening and awakening. In Japan, January first as the day now celebrated as New Year's Day, Oshogatsu, marks the beginning of things. However, April first also signifies the beginning of things. It marks a beginning of spring with the awakening of buds of leaves and flowers, the beginning of company employment for new *shain* (company members), the opening of the school year, and it is associated with the opening of cherry blossoms accompanied by *hanami* or flower viewing gatherings. On April 1, 2015 university students from a class of 25 involved in a special embedded learning of chanoyu, often called The Japanese Tea Ceremony in English, arrived at Nitobe Garden on the University of British Columbia's Vancouver campus to take part in their first actual *chakai* or Japanese Tea Ceremony. In groups of about eight students each, they walked through the garden they had now grown more familiar with, and then waited together in the *machiai* or garden waiting area. Each group selected from among their members a first guest and a last guest. To begin their session each group of eight removed footwear and wearing white socks (to signify Japanese *tabi*) entered the Tea House and the tatami mat room on their right foot and walked in the style they had practiced to their places, sat in *seiza* style, and performed their roles as guests. They knew how to greet the host and each other, how to bow while seated on the tatami mat floor, how to handle utensils, how to receive the sweets and *matcha*. The Japanese Tea Ceremony highlights seasonal and place associations. Seasonal associations for this Tea Ceremony included those from both Japan and Canada. A dry Japanese sweet with a ginkgo leaf pattern on it was accompanied by marshmallow bunnies—an association of spring in Canada—in neon pink colour, on a lacquer tray passed by each student guest to the next and consumed before drinking the *matcha* that was prepared for each of them.



Although this was their first actual *chakai*, the students had been preparing for it for months as part of a new innovative course created and initiated by myself (Dr. Millie Creighton) at the University of British Columbia. Believed to be the first of its kind in Canada (some similar courses have existed at a few universities in the United States), it is a full three credit university course that combines academic lectures and discussions in the classroom, with learning and practice of doing Japanese Tea Ceremony in *Ichiboan* the Tea House (a contribution to the University of British Columbia by Japan's Urasenke Foundation of tea ritual) within Nitobe Garden, along with extensive learning about the garden. In the classroom students learn Japanese history in relation to the Tea Ceremony, related Japanese aesthetic and philosophical concepts, including Zen, geographical concepts of place and space, and anthropological analyses of how the Tea Ceremony reflects

gender, class, and status, or is used in social networking. During embedded practice within the Tea House, students learn how to bow to each other, how to handle the *fukusa*, or ritual silk cloth, to walk, sit, and stand, use or pass utensils appropriately.

The University of British Columbia's current slogan is "A Place of Mind". This slogan might suggest a Western dualism of Mind and Body. This new innovative course embraces greater possibilities of the slogan by using actual places (Nitobe Garden and *Ichiboan* the Japanese Tea House), while merging learning both through the mind and mental engagement with learning through the body in actual practice of the Japanese Tea Ceremony. This draws the slogan into greater alignment with the Japanese or Asian non-duality of Mind and Body. In Japanese the same character, read as *kokoro* (or *shin*), means Mind/Heart/Body and encompasses both mental and physical aspects of human existence, along with emotional aspects, rather than positioning a division among them. This is the second year the course has been taught for credit under a generic code and number. From next academic year it will be offered as a credit course with its own title and code number based in the Department of Anthropology at UBC

This photo was taken at an event hosted by the Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver, at which members of the Urasenke Vancouver Branch of *chado* or *chanoyu*, often called The Japanese Tea Ceremony in English, performed the ritual for gathered guests. Appearing in the photo left to right are: Mr. Evan Koike, Ph.D. student in Anthropology at UBC, Dr. Millie Creighton, a professor in the Department of Anthropology at UBC, Mr. Seiji Okada, Consul General of Japan in Vancouver, and wife Yasuko Okada, and Ms. Chizuru Kinjo an undergraduate student in Anthropology at UBC from Okinawa, Japan. Dr. Millie Creighton has created and initiated a new university credit course on The Japanese Tea Ceremony at UBC, believed to be the first of its kind in Canada, and Mr. Evan Koike and Ms. Chizuru Kinjo (both student participant in JSAC) were students in it the first time it was taught.



(Photo by Koichi Saito)