

## News & Views

### Toda Institute Annual Report 2015

This past year saw its share of negative and positive events unfolding. The rise of the Islamic State and continued Syrian Civil War contributed to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people throughout North Africa and Europe and has had major global repercussions. Global violence and environmental disasters have overshadowed some of the more positive events of the past year: Bombing of the Erawan Shrine, Bangkok, Thailand; airstrikes on a Doctors Without Borders (MSF) Hospital, Afghanistan; Suicide Bombings, Ankara, Turkey and Beirut, Lebanon; and terrorist attacks, Paris, France, San Bernardino, California, and in many other places. Yet, despite these horrific events, global citizens came together to support the people of France; after 54 years the United States and Cuba reestablished diplomatic relations; Gravitational waves were detected for the first time by LIGO; water was found on Mars; Rubella was eradicated in the Americas; The Chinese and Taiwanese presidents formally met; and there was a global climate change pact agreed to at the COP 21 summit. Every year, the violence we see only continues to inspire us to do our work at the Toda Institute towards promoting dialogues of civilizations for the construction of sustained peaceful relations. Please find below the activities of the Institute during 2015.

#### **New Appointments:**

We want to welcome our new Senior Research Fellow for North America, Lisa Schirch, who was appointed on October 1, 2015. Lisa is Research Professor at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University. She is also Senior Policy Advisor with the Alliance for Peacebuilding where she promotes human security in civil-military-police training with global civil society networks and provides a conflict prevention and peacebuilding lens on current policy issues.

#### **Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings:**

*Regional Efforts to Achieve Peace (REAP):* The workshop “Islam and Nonviolence” was held in Tokyo on May 25-26, 2015. It was co-organized by The National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago and the Toda Institute. The focus of this workshop was to discern the diverse ways in which Islam and Muslims could utilize their rich religious tradition to promote pacific and nonviolent alternatives to violence. The conversations on these issues were very productive and we were able to map out many of the diverse traditions and divisions within Islam and how these might be addressed in future conversations.

*Nagasaki Pugwash Conference:* Held November 1-5, with the main theme of: “Nagasaki’s Voice: Remember Your Humanity,” Secretary-General Kevin Clements and Senior Research Fellow Sverre Lodgaard were in attendance.

*Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRO):* Tatsushi Arai, Research Fellow and Senior Research Fellow Chaiwat Satha-Anand along with several other Toda Institute sponsored

researchers, participated in the Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association's conference "Pathways Towards Just Peace" in Nepal, October 9-11.

*Music in Peacebuilding:* In 2015 the Toda Institute continued its pioneering research on Music in Peacebuilding in numerous ways, including support for the participation of the Toda Institute director Olivier Urbain in the following conferences and research trips: Participation in the Joint International Forum Sponsored by the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) and the International Council on Traditional Music (ICTM) in Limerick, Ireland, September 13-16; A Visiting Research Professorship at Queen's University Belfast from September 19 to October 18, which included several presentations, classes and lectures; Participation in and presentation at the conference organized by the Social Impact of Making Music research group in Ghent, Belgium, October 5-6-7.

*Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace:* The Toda Institute has continued to participate in the development of this research by supporting several research projects by Olivier Urbain: Teaching of a one month learning cluster on this topic at Soka University of America, January 5 to 30; Keynote speech at the Manchester Metropolitan University, for the conference "Education for Peacebuilding and Global Citizenship" organized by the Department of Education; Presentation and workshop at Kansai Soka High School, Japan, on October 27, entitled "Global Citizenship and Peacebuilding."

*Buddhism Peace Study Project:* Research Fellow Tatsushi Arai continued work on the ongoing Toda sponsored project: *Buddhist Theory of Structural Peace*, with the publication of an article outlining his findings "Toward a Buddhist Theory of Structural Peace: Lessons from Myanmar in Transition" in which he reported the analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with Burmese Buddhist leaders, with a view toward building Buddhist theories of social conflict, reconciliation, and structural peace.

## **Publications:**

*Global Visioning: Challenges and Solutions for a Common Future* is the book version of *Peace & Policy* vol. 19, the outcome of the 2011 conference in Morocco, co-organized with the Muhammadan League of Scholars of Morocco. Authors from Japan, Morocco, South Africa, Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the United States have contributed to this challenging discussion on the best ways to live fully and harmoniously in this world despite major differences concerning how to organize local and global economics, politics, education, business, culture, and the roles of religion.

*The Promise of Reconciliation: Examining Violent and Nonviolent Effects on Asian Conflicts* (*Peace & Policy* vol. 20) explores the relationship between violence, nonviolence, and reconciliation in societal conflicts with questions such as: In what ways does violence impact the reconciliation process that necessarily follows a cessation of deadly conflict? Would an understanding of how conflict has been engaged, with violence or nonviolence, be conducive to how it could be prevented from sliding further into violence?

*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. It explores the question of How far can the relationship between music and politics be used to promote a more peaceful world? The reissued volume now includes a thought-provoking foreword by jazz legend Wayne Shorter.

*Music, Power and Liberty: Sound, Song and Melody as Instruments of Change* was edited by Olivier Urbain and Craig Robertson, with a foreword by Tia DeNora. This publication brings together musicians from around the globe to discuss the ambiguity of the roles of music: it can be used to challenge, or to reinforce, the political authority in place.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivier Urbain, Director  
Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research  
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