

World Heritage Education at Omar al-Mukhtar University, Libyan Arab Jamahirya

The *Project for World Heritage Education and Awareness-Raising for Cultural Heritage Preservation in Libya* carried out by Professor Hidaka, Director of the Doctoral Program in World Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Tsukuba, Japan, at Omar al-Mukhtar University (OMU) in the Libyan Arab Jamahirya was initiated through Prof. Hidaka's friendly relations with the Libyan Department of Archaeology in 2006 and since then continuously enriched through series of bilateral academic exchanges between both countries.

Based on Prof. Hidaka's initial idea of an ideal international cooperation reciprocally beneficial, the project was designed for Libyan youth with the aim to raise awareness and further enhance the knowledge about cultural heritage preservation for sustainable heritage management in favor of Libya. This consisted in in-class seminars and discussions conducted by Prof. Hidaka, the founder of the only post-graduate program specialized for World Heritage Studies in Japan and a Specialist of architectural history and conservation as well as heritage education, Professor Mizushima, Museology Specialist, and Mr. Takanezawa, a Specialist of architectural history and tourism development

Sponsored by the Japan Foundation for the international airfare and by OMU for the accommodation of the visiting Japanese team the project benefitted for its implementation from the support of the Libyan Department of Archaeology and received institutional support from ICCROM, and the Embassy of Japan in Libya.

The project was composed of two phases. Each phase was designed as short-term and intensive courses in order for participating students to be able to attend all sessions while respecting their regular class schedules. The program also included on-site work at an archaeological site (the sanctuary of Asklepeion) located in front of OMU. For Phase 1 (2-5 November 2009), 19 students (17 sophomores and 2 seniors) participated, and in Phase 2-1 (2-6 January 2010) , 20 students (all freshmen) participated. For Phase 2-2, all 39 students attended.

The implementation, overall schedules and program contents were developed together with OMU Department of Archaeology with the aim to satisfy the needs of Libyan partners. Through lectures and discussions, participants gained basic knowledge of heritage conservation and related international framework, such as historical background, challenges, preservation techniques and standards of management of properties and museums. Lecture materials and presentations comprised educational materials prepared by UNESCO, ICCROM and ICOM.

The Japanese team's enthusiasm and commitment as well as the valuable support from the Libyan authorities including OMU Department of Archaeology, and most importantly, the Libyan students' strong motivation for learning for their heritage, succeeded in this unprecedented educational contribution to heritage preservation for future generations.

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