

My impossible dream

Presentation at Central Texas College, Sep. 2001

We have heard many times the famous words of Dr. Martin Luther King, "I have a dream". He fought to abolish racial discrimination. He had a very lofty dream: to establish human rights and equality of people.

I also have a dream. It is my personal dream and not as lofty as that of Dr. King. I think, to have a dream is very important for everyone to live an active life.

I retired this March. From this August I have taken classes at Central Texas College. In addition, I have a plan to study in Spain from August, next year. My motives are as follows:

1. to improve my Spanish.
 2. to study the novel "Don Quixote" by visiting the setting of the story.
 3. to practice guitar in the home of the musical instrument.
- And lastly, to write books about life in Spain.

Why Spain and why Don Quixote?

My dream comes from my experience in Latin America.

From 1976 to 1985 I stayed in Panama City, Panama, as a correspondent of the Seikyo Shimbun, organ newspaper of the Soka Gakkai, a lay Buddhist organization.

During these ten years I visited every country in Latin America, including Cuba. They speak Spanish except in Brazil and in Haiti. Visiting these countries I keenly felt that the origin of the culture in these countries had come from Spain. People there seemed to have some kind of admiration of the country.



It is quite interesting that, in contrary, people in Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken, they don't put any interest in their suzerain state of Portugal,.

Anyway, I have come to believe that to understand well about Latin America, it is indispensable to study Spain and its culture. One of the most typical works in Spain, I

think, is Don Quixote. It is a mystic coincidence that I played a mini drama about Don Quixote at literary exercises when I was in primary school.

This April, I went to see the musical “Man of La Mancha”, in which Koshiro Matsumoto played the role of Don Quixote.

As most of you probably know, Don Quixote is incredible idealist. His follower, Sancho Panza, however, is realist.

Don Quixote traveled searching for justice in society. The most incredible and comic incident involved his fight against a windmill. Don Quixote had a strong belief that the windmill was a devil. He rushed to it to fight, holding a spear high. But, Alas! He was knocked down to the ground eventually by the blades of the windmill.

Don Quixote had many incredible adventures like this. You may say that he was a crazy old man. But I am strongly attracted by his character, his way of thinking and his action.

I once heard that some of the retired people feel lonely because they have neither position nor title after retirement. In fact, while we were working we had name cards of the company we work for. However, we don't have it after retirement..

I, however, created, or it's better to say, I invented titles for myself and printed my own name cards.



The title I created is:

“JIYUJIN”— a man who creates pleasure by oneself.

And I included the subtitles:

“Live a life of Don Quixote” and “Researcher and activist of studies abroad as a retired man”.

Don't they sound interesting?

On the top of the card I printed, my name, address, phone number and email address.

On the bottom, I cited a word from Don Quixote. It says:

“I am rushing forward for ideas and justice, but people call me crazy. But I would dare say that they themselves are crazy because they dare not do what they want to do. Owing to some kind of fear of being criticized or a desire to keep up appearances, they finally compromise to reality”.

I myself may seem like Don Quixote because I am planning to study abroad at the age of

60. But nowadays people live long, up to 80 or 90 years of age. So, I think it is very important to supply older people with something creative. Study abroad, I think, is one of the best ways to cultivate their lives.

The theme song of the musical Don Quixote is "The Impossible dream". The melody is beautiful and the lyrics meaningful. Let us keep chasing after impossible dreams. Let us all challenge to achieve these impossible dreams. What a fun and exciting life would be?

I am determined to keep this spirit in my mind and keep on challenging until I make my impossible dreams possible. Thank you very much for your attention.