

SGI President Begins Visit to Hong Kong
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With only four months to go before Hong Kong returns to Chinese rule on July 1, SGI President Ikeda began a visit here this week to meet with members and various dignitaries. During this evening's meeting with the prominent Hong Kong writer Jin Yong, the SGI leader observed that Asia and the rest of the world are closely watching developments in the territory and expressed confidence that Hong Kong would continue to prosper.

It is his belief, however, that spiritual fulfillment will become an increasingly important focus, since human happiness is not based on economic wealth alone.

Concurring, Mr. Jin said that the people of Hong Kong have an especially strong desire for material wealth and security — with money, an affluent lifestyle and social prestige tending to become people's top priorities in life. Even culture and the arts tend to be appraised in terms of their commercial value, he said. He agreed that there is a need for spiritual values to fill the inner emptiness that many in the territory feel.

Mr. Jin is optimistic, though, that the end to Hong Kong's status as a British colony and its restoration to China will have a positive effect on the citizens of the territory, providing them with a spiritual anchor. He envisages that exchanges with people of the mainland will nurture a love for China and a deeper appreciation of its cultural traditions, particularly Confucian ethics and philosophy.

As a Buddhist scholar, Jin Yong also voiced the opinion that the citizens of Hong Kong could learn much from the teachings of Buddhism, most important the spirit to help not only themselves but others as well. In this regard, he hoped the SGI members of Hong Kong and other parts of the world would continue sharing their value-creating philosophy with as many people as possible.

The first two installments of an ongoing dialogue between President Ikeda and Mr. Jin, now being serialized in the Japanese magazine *Ushio* and the Hong Kong magazine *Ming Pao Monthly*, also focused on Hong Kong's return to China.

Mr. Jin expressed his gratitude to the SGI leader for the wonderful words of encouragement and advice he offers the citizens of Hong Kong. He also remarked that while many people only discuss the territory's return to China from the viewpoint of its economic repercussions, Mr. Ikeda looks at the situation from the standpoint of culture and peace.

The Chinese author [whose real name is Louis Cha, but who is fondly referred to in Hong Kong by his pen name, Jin Yong] was a member of the Basic Law Drafting Committee, which formulated the Basic Law, or mini-constitution, that will govern the territory after its return to China. He is also a well-respected political commentator and opinion leader. President Ikeda lauded the writer's efforts to secure a smooth transition for all parties concerned, asserting that the people of Hong Kong are most fortunate to have someone of Mr. Jin's caliber working in their interests at this epochal time for the territory.

The SGI leader spoke highly of China's recent economic development, and went on to say that if Japan wishes to achieve a new level of trust and cooperation, it should offer a clear and genuine apology for its wartime aggression against China and the suffering it inflicted on the Chinese people. Mr. Jin agreed, adding that should Japan offer such an apology it would surely change the way the country is viewed by the international community. In that regard, he said, Japan, more than China, has much to gain by doing so.

The writer also remarked that he would never forget Mr. Ikeda sharing with him the story of how Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, the first president of the Soka Gakkai, died in prison

for his refusal to bow to the Japanese military authorities during World War II. Mr. Jin further expressed his hope that China–Japan friendship would continue to deepen with each passing year.

President Ikeda thanked Mr. Jin for agreeing to contribute his calligraphy for inscription on a monument to world peace scheduled to be erected this year at the Soka Gakkai Chugoku Memorial Park in Hiroshima. The monument will commemorate the 40th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's declaration for the abolition of nuclear weapons in September 1957. The inscription by Jin Yong, who has long been a staunch opponent of nuclear weapons, Mr. Ikeda said, is sure to inspire a fresh commitment for peace in the Japanese people's hearts.

Turning to the subject of literature, the SGI leader maintained that a renaissance in literature is needed to revitalize humanity. His mentor Mr. Toda, he explained, held that we could deepen our understanding of Buddhism by reading great literary works because they encompass the entire spectrum of the human condition, the central focus of Buddhist teaching. Mr. Jin concurred that both literature and Buddhism address life's problems and enrich the heart.

The two men, who are both prolific writers in their own rights, promised to continue their discussion on literature at a future point.

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