

## THIS BEAUTIFUL EARTH: PHOTO ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA MOON OVER MIYAZAKI

An anticipated moonrise. A mirror-like silver orb floats in a rose-colored sky above a blue horizon.

I stand near my camera tripod by the main building of the Miyazaki Training Center. My wife has pointed beyond the silhouetted palm fronds and said to me, “Look, it’s risen!”

There it is, the moon, regarding us with its smiling gaze. It slices across the flagpole bearing the SGI tricolor flag, moving upward and to the right as it aims for mid heaven, tracing its silver-white orbit through the twilight. Its light increases, showering the Earth in its delicate white glow.

The scene of the celestial play gradually shifts from a dazzling drama of sunlight and heat to a stately garden of cool serenity.

The Tale of the Bamboo Princess tells of a capital on the moon, a wonderland basking in the light of love and compassion.

To the moon I call out: “God of the moon! May you watch over my friends around the world for another night! Gently illuminate the footsteps of those who day and night walk our noble path! Please give peace to all people whose hearts are aching.”

With this, I snap the shutter. I want to imprint in the scrapbook of eternity the image that is momentarily reflected in my heart.

It was March 1, 1999, the night before the full moon. Still waxing, the yet incomplete disk was a divine display of “imperfect perfection.”

I had flown to Miyazaki from Okinawa by small plane three days before. My first visit to Miyazaki Prefecture in eight years was also my first to the island of Kyushu—of which the prefecture is part—in four-and-a-half years. Much time had passed.

When I arrived at the training center, I immediately joined some fellow members for a walk in the garden amid a light drizzle.

In one corner of the garden, I noticed some elderly people, members of the group of volunteers who assist with the gardening and upkeep of the facility’s grounds. I told them: “Please take good care of yourselves and don’t catch cold. You are most important to me. Please live long.” They had long been supporting the training center, working steadily and inconspicuously.

It is always my desire to express deep gratitude and respect to those who work and toil behind the scenes, more so even than to those who work in the limelight. That is why I wanted to take a picture of the moon. The moon is like a mirror, clear and pure. The sun and the moon are like the two eyes of the heavens, observing all. The great moon-god sends its light into peoples hearts, a symbol of the Buddhist principle of “inconspicuous observation”—that the law of causality records all our thoughts and actions.

The moon calls out to all on Earth: “Are you living with a broad mind and an open heart?” “Are you kind?” “Are you being true to yourself, walking the correct path?” Though no one may be watching, the moon knows these things, for it dwells also in the firmament of our hearts.

The moon is like a ship that ferries our spirit to the heavens. Its pristine light soothes and purifies hearts tired from a day’s work. It invites us into its sublime, cool serenity, beyond the reach of authority, vanity or greed.

How often since my youth have I received silent encouragement from the elegant yet

Title: Moon Over Miyazaki

Subject: World Tribune 05/26/00 n.3295 p.12 WT000526p12 Miyazaki, Japan

Author: Daisaku Ikeda

Keywords: Attitude Beautiful Behavior Earth Encouragement Essays Guidance Ikeda Japan Miyazaki Moon Over Photo President Tribune World

stern light of the moon? It has inspired me to work by day with the energy of the sun, and to reflect by the moonlight at night upon my self and my humanity. It has encouraged me to consider the wonder of my existence here and now set amid eternity and the limitless vastness of space.

And so, at five that evening, I stood before my tripod awaiting the moonrise. The Kyushu Executive Conference was soon to begin; everyone was waiting. There were manuscripts I had to complete. Despite this, I wanted to seize the moment and converse with the moon; through the moon, I wanted to communicate my thoughts to my many friends.

Palm fronds wave gently as the SGI tricolor flutters in the spring breeze of this southern province. Once called “Hyuga,” or “sun-facing,” it is a mythological land of the sun. Beneath the moon the blue Pacific rolls and roars as it has since time immemorial.

While spring comes as it has since antiquity, and the moon rises today as always, the human world is constantly changing. In each age, people sing, plead, laugh and cry. The moon watches serenely over the frail impermanence of people’s lives. Transcending time and distance, unperturbed by clouds of confusion or winds of change, the enlightened moon moves quietly and intently along its orbit in the heavens. Sometimes gentle, sometimes cold and aloof. At times, it is the compassionate white light of the cosmos, embracing all living things. At others, it is a lightning bolt of causality, the strict light of the Law permeating the three thousand realms of life.

Gazing at this palace of light, my mind seems to extend and disappear into space; my life, now enfolded by the cosmos, struggles to return the embrace. I once again call to the moon: “From your high place in the origin of time, please illuminate us on Earth! Shine your light of philosophy upon the troubled and wandering human race! May you shed your golden light on the future of my friends, princes and princesses of the cosmos, who are everywhere emerging from the earth!”

*Twelfth in a series*