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PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: DR. TOMOKO KITAGAWA – LECTURE SERIES – THE LADY SUMURAI

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
DR. MALKA	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity – Women in Unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African Women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA	Joining us on the line from Cape Town today is Dr. Tomoko Kitagawa who is visiting South Africa with a lecture series called 'The Lady Samurai' – The Role of Women in the Diplomacy During the Unification of Japan. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and life sciences with a minor in political science from the University of British Columbia; she earned her PhD from Princeton University where she specialised in pre-modern Japanese history and religion and the history of science in East Asia. She went on to teach history at Harvard University and prior to her appointment at Harvard she worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations. Welcome to the show Dr. Kitagawa!
DR. KITAGAWA	Hi, thank you for having me today!
DR. MALKA	It's an absolute pleasure and we do hope that you are enjoying your visit to South Africa!
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, I'm greatly enjoying my time here, thanks.
DR. MALKA	To start with, your career has taken you literally from east through to west....
DR. KITAGAWA	...that's right...
DR. MALKA	...and you started the Lady Samurai lecture when you began teaching at Harvard with just 16 students but interest in your class quickly grew and by the second year you had over 200 students listening in on The Lady Samurai...
DR. KITAGAWA	...yes...
DR. MALKA	...so what I'd like to ask firstly is please tell us what prompted you to start the Lady Samurai class?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right, thanks for asking. I think the title came from my own experience of taking a class at Harvard, so one summer I went to take classes at Harvard Summer School and then I saw a Japanese history class called The Samurai. So I took that class and then merged Japanese History in English for the first time...
DR. MALKA	...wow....!
DR. KITAGAWA	...and...right...and then that class was titled The Samurai and it was all about Samurai and then that means that you know there was a male Samurai building the government and then building you know different sort of cultural activities in.....and you know every single thing sort of related to what men did before. So when I was taking that class I thought that when I'm ever going to teach a class of Japanese history I would like to include more women's activities and also involvement in politics and also her beliefs and religious activities as well so I started to feel like okay the Samurai should be changed to The Lady Samurai.

DR. MALKA	And that'sand that's so important because if you're only looking at history from one perspective you're only getting half of the true story.
DR. KITAGAWA	Exactly, exactly!
DR. MALKA	And we could say her story as opposed to his story.
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, that's right!
DR.MALKA	Now the South African tour is titled 'The Lady Samurai' – The Role of Women in The Diplomacy During The Unification of Japan, round about 1600; if you can give us a little bit more insight for some of the people who may not be so familiar with Japanese culture and Japanese history?
DR. KITAGAWA	Sure, Sure. So when we imagine first of all, like the Samurai, people would say that might be the warriors who has a sword or weapons or like you know have like massive armours and the Lady Samurai as well, if I ask like so who could be the Lady Samurai, people will think like oh that must be a female version of the warrior so like they will be trained in martial arts and then they have like weapons to fight. So that was like the usual response, like not only in South Africa but in everywhere that I go and teach. So I was thinking that this image has been built on like a popular culture basis and then we just see the strength of Samurai...in the Lady Samurai as a physical power to fight. But, in fact, the really interesting part of historical sources telling about women's involvement in any sort of politics and in social activities were that they decide not to fight and then instead they looked for some ways to make peace. So that really like struck me as like a good quality of the Lady Samurai and that story must be told, so it was not only that I wanted to recover the records of women and then I put those things into the men's history, but I realised that there would be more to tell to the contemporary society and then The Lady Samurai really could...did not really rely on the physical power but sort of you know counting on their skill in writing, in their sending letters, in requesting peace treaties, I think those are very much of a similar concerns that we have nowadays, so I decided to write The Lady Samurai not only for the students, but only to talk to more people in general. So that's how The Lady Samurai came about.
DR. MALKA	And it's an important, I would say, contribution to the history of Japan on presenting this approach, also, as you were saying, women bring a different set of skills and characteristics to the table; if men have been about physical power and dominance, women are still contributing but more with a peaceful approach and...
DR. KITAGAWA	...yes....
DR. MALKA	... maybe it's...when you talk about writing letters, it's thinking about things as opposed to just reacting.
DR. KITAGAWA	Right, exactly, right. So the interesting part really is that she did have some education of you know how to deal with...how to ride on a horse and then how to use a sword and the next thing but, they decided not to go onto the real battle but then realised that for the long term like sustainable, a way to make peace is to be writing and then exchanging their opinions and then talk over. So I think that's a really important part of history that has been missing in Japan, ja.
DR. MALKA	And how would you say South African women have responded to the talk?
DR. KITAGAWA	Oh yes very positively indeed. So, many women thought that that would be a story of the female Samurai, so they probably expected me to be talking more about like you know combats and then you know maybe like you

	<p>know the female Samurai's strengths in a different way, but they felt like you know this is good because you know it applies to everyday life, it's not only for the time of you know disaster, like you know in the civil wars but every day we're facing the same or similar problems of like negotiating or to fight against like something that a woman needs to get. So in that sense that the South African women's response was immensely positive and then I must add that there actually are half and half are gender ratio attending my talks, so it's not just the women coming to my talks but I was glad to see that many men came out to come and listen to stories of the Lady Samurai. So that was a very impressive part of the audience of the South African lecture.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Do you see that type of ratio in audiences in other countries that you've gone to deliver the series?</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>Right so you introduced the class that I taught at Harvard, so for example the first year I taught the class 80% or say like 14 students out of 16 students were female, so it was like the females dominated. But in the second year the gender ratio became 50/50 and then the third year it became more or less the same but slightly more men came to listen to the story of The Lady Samurai. So I think it was the tendency that at the first instance they sounded like...more like a feminist stance you know or humanities oriented stories but the men also realised that this is an important issue to discuss together and I think it was really like gradual but I see the tendency of things are you know either half of the audience becoming male or even like slightly more male coming out to listen to those stories. So it's a really interesting phenomenon.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>It certainly is and it's great that there is a male interest in the subject matter and that isn't just...</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>...yes...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...a purely female biased view....</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>...right because even if that female wants you know to get going, you know to act for the equality and then get more you know workspace, you know to fight for the work you know rights, and so on, but then without male participation, you know men's participation that nothing will move forward and there will be you know more time that we need to achieve what we wanted. So I think it was really nice to get involved in men as well as women.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You are completely right in terms of the involvement of men and on that note I recall reading that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan, is actively trying to promote the role of women in Japanese economy....</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>...yes....</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...and I believe in I think his document called I think it's Abenomics that he's set a target of having women fill at least 30% of positions by 2020 which is only two years away.</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>Right, exactly, right.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So in your opinion how is gender equality progressing in Japan?</p>
DR. KITAGAWA	<p>I think that awareness wise it has been like progressing greatly in the last five years, so thanks to those activities from the government and also from the journalism and also internet like everybody's starting to talk about attaining a good gender balance and more gender equality everywhere, so my observation is that it is progressing, slowly but surely.</p>

DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to Dr. Tomoko Kitagawa who is visiting South Africa with a lecture series called 'The Lady Samurai – The Role of Women in The Diplomacy During The Unification of Japan'.
DR. MALKA	The majority of women in the world still struggle to achieve equality....
DR. KITAGAWA	...right....
DR. MALKA	...despite, as you say, having greater awareness from a government point of view, internet exposure, journalistic stories, however reflecting on the progress that we've made as a society and we certainly have achieved gains in recent decades and coming from your background in history, I often find that history defines our present but what we do today is going to direct our future....
DR. KITAGAWA	...yes...
DR.MALKA	...so in your opinion what areas do you think that we need to build on the most to benefit women optimally in the future?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. It's a very interesting and difficult question and then as you said if we start to see like worldwide phenomenon of that struggle to achieve equality, there are many areas that have an improvement, like rapid improvement, but I think more or less the same situation in the US and in the UK and over Asian countries are the place for women to work and then not just the part time, but the full time...
DR. MALKA	...yes...
DR. KITAGAWAso I think for that shift from like you know getting the part time to the full time or more permanent position I think that was like you know a necessary place to have a rapid improvement.
DR. MALKA	And when we're looking at the scenario of women working part time and trying to move into full time employment, one of the things that has always also struck me is that there is an imbalance the world over in terms of the amount of unpaid labour that women do, which obviously is essential to keep our household's going from cooking, cleaning, looking after children, and according to you and women, women carry out two and a half times more of the unpaid housework and care work than men, but as a result, it means that they've got less time to participate in paid labour or they often have to work longer hours so that they can incorporate both the paid labour component and still attend to the unpaid labour. How do you think we can promote a more equitable distribution of unpaid work between men and women?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. This is a very interesting question and I do think that this has to be....something has to be done really. So first of all like unpaid labour, it can turn out to be a job instead of like somebody caring for...doing an unpaid job....
DR. MALKAyes...
DR. KITAGAWA	...but then like turning that for a job for other people that she will be free from the unpaid labour. So I think you know more and more such of like a shift of like doing unpaid labour to the paid labour and then she will be getting into the workforce, I think that is really like a critical shift that has to take place. So for example like in childcare as you mentioned, and also the cleaning and all those things can be a little bit morepaid work, so I think in a way that we all have to think about how to make economics...household economics work and then try to work you know around it. I think it's very difficult you know, it's easy to say but it's difficult to do, however, I think that will be like the starting point, a basic point for us to change at any level, so you know even if a woman has a full time job or like already has a good amount of support, I think that can be you know easily done. So I think that really every society has to try to

	make household work as a paid job, I think that's really like.....as I understand it but I think it will be nice shift to make, ja.
DR. MALKA	I think it's an interesting perspective of doing that that switch and creating an economic opportunity out of it, for almost a different sector of industry on household labour, but I wonder if the breadwinner of the home would be willing to pay the spouse to do some of that labour?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right....so that's the whole point, right, so like we've really assumed that that should be unpaid labour but if we really increase the awareness that it has to be a paid labour and then it becomes like more and more strange that the woman staying in the house and doing the labour for not being paid. So I think you know this is something that everybody has to be realised that it should not be another unpaid labour, so I think that has to be like starting pointat this point but I think if you start to recognise the worth of it and then I think that would change many, many things.
DR. MALKA	And it speaks of I would say a shift in our sort of paradigms and the way that we think on traditional gender roles and stereotyping of who does what. So, on that point, what would be your advice to women who find themselves torn between traditional and cultural expectations of them being mothers, women and having and their own personal needs like gaining an academic education and building their professional career?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. I think many women are facing the choices like at you know many points of life like should I be staying in the house and becoming a you know house....a stay home mother or just to go somewhere to work, so for these points for example like you mentioned academic work education, in that regard I think it could...part time education and then doing part time house or stay home mother or a stay home you know care for seniors, I think those could work so I think for the education there's more and more like part time opportunities or like by credit opportunities so like that means like just to take some courses like continuing studies but in a more formal sense. I think it will be really beneficial for them to achieve, so it might be not just like four years of education is equivalent to a bachelors but then she could attain more education by being at home and then so on. And especially now we have the you know IT help like....
DR. MALKA	...absolutely....
DR. KITAGAWA	...right so like you know it doesn't have to be one computer at home but if they have one in the community and then the women can start doing you know their own learning at their pace. So I think you know these ones for the academic learning, it doesn't have to be intensive but I really recommend people to go for like long-term and a continuing education.
DR. MALKA	I couldn't agree with you more, we are avid supporters of education on this programme.
DR. KITAGAWA	Thank you so much.
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to Dr. Tomoko Kitagawa who is visiting South Africa with a lecture series called The Lady Samurai – The Role of Women in The Diplomacy During The Unification of Japan.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	You are listening to 'Womanity – Women in Unity' on Channel Africa, the African Perspective, on frequency 9625 KHz on the 31 meter band, also available on DSTV, Channel 802. Today we're talking to Dr. Tomoko Kitagawa who is visiting South Africa with a lecture series called The Lady Samurai – The Role of Women in the Diplomacy During The Unification of

	Japan. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter:@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	In the previous segment of the conversation Dr. Kitagawa shared some of her experiences on how her talk regarding The Lady Samurai began, founded on some of the experiences that she had in attending a Harvard Summer School Seminar which had emphasised Japanese history and the role of the male Samurai and she has taken this a step further where we have got the perspectives of women and the dynamics that they bring into Japanese history and also how she's adapted her seminar series to be more contemporary and relevant to the everyday woman of society.
DR.MALKA	Dr. Kitagawa when we left off the last part of the conversation we spoke about education as being a key enablement factor and it absolutely is a game changer, even basic levels of literacy and numeracy have had profound effect on the well-being of women from health benefits to income earning potential.
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	You received your BSC in maths and life sciences; you also did a minor in political science from University of British Columbia, you earned your PhD from Princeton University; I'd like to start with firstly before we go into the education elements of what made you decide you to move from Japan and go and study on the other side of the world?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. At that time I didn't think deeply about it but it was just out of curiosity that I decided to get out of the country and my best friend recommended me to go abroad with her so I decided just really out of curiosity that I left the country and I grew up in a small town so I never really thought of going anywhere for college but it was nice that my friend had greater ambitions to get of the country. So at that time I never even went to Kyoto or Tokyo so I was really a you know small town girl so it was nice to experience a big world outside of Japan and then the first place I went to was Vancouver of Canada, so that was a growing multi-ethnic city and the multi-culturalism really welcomed the foreigners and at that phase I really fell in love with living in that environment so I think that really drove me to you know going out of the country and then learn more.
DR. MALKA	And if you don't mind me asking, if you came from a small town in Japan....,
DR. KITAGAWA	...yes,yes....
DR. MALKA	...I presume that English wasn't a major language then?
DR. KITAGAWA	No, not at all. So besides I was studying at high school specialising mathematics so I never really studied English until that point. So I was seventeen and I started to speak English from that point.
DR. MALKA	So it was a complete transformation for you.
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, that was.
DR. MALKA	Can you tell us a little bit more about your decision to continue studying and furthering your education at university? I ask this because sometimes as we're growing up we come to this crossroads in life where we've got to make certain choices and some of our young ladies may not be certain about the role of education in their future.
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, yes, exactly. So my case to continue education I needed scholarship so I applied for graduate programmes and also I was waiting for the scholarship to cover my tuition and living costs. So that was like I had to try twice as hard to get in but I think it was really lucky of me try hard and actually got the results of getting you know admission and scholarship. So I really encourage the young girls to look for more opportunities if there's anything else available to support them I think it'll be critical in many

	senses. So I really think that the part of me continuing education was only available through those, you know, help, so I think it was, you know, without it of course, like even if I wanted I could not continue living abroad and then getting those education with me.... So I think it's really a great experience to get out of what they could do in hometown and then also like there'll be many other facilities if they look for them, then they might find them, so I really just want to encourage all the girls who are thinking of getting education to also look for more support.
DR. MALKA	How would you say that education has contributed to your career so far?
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes. That was an essential part, of course like you know anyonefor example, so that was an essential part of it but at the same time working outside of the academic world, I mean you know the real workspace, for example like....
DR.MALKA	...yes...
DR. KITAGAWA	I had brief experience of working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then I was looking for something I mean I was really interested in looking at the world from a different perspective. So I think education was a necessary part to build my career but also the work experience, even if that was brief, that influenced a lot to make decisions in my career. And of course like career wise like I'd be moving around, not just in the US but the UK, also Europe and France and Germany and so on, so you know, work experience of seeing the world as a broad place built those opportunities that really made me mobile...
DR. MALKA	So education has in effect almost been a ticket to your tour around the world?
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, exactly.
DR. MALKA	Today we are talking to Dr. Tomoko Kitagawa who is visiting South Africa with the lecture series called The Lady Samurai – The Role of Women in The Diplomacy During The Unification of Japan. We would love to receive your comments at Twitter:@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	Turning more towards a personal perspective, one of the questions that I ask my guests on this programme who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields of work are about the factors that they consider have contributed to their success. So some people speak about perseverance or hard work or a particular person who's influenced them; in your opinion what have been some of the key drivers to your success?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right, that's a very interesting question. I think there are many, many things that contributed to build the career and move forward. I think one thing that I always want to emphasise is open-mindedness, so for example there is already a path that somebody took then I would not want to like you know achieve the same way but like you know to see you know what other things that I could do, so I was not really thinking about like sort of formally but really like you know pioneering the way forward. So I think one key ways that Iwould be open-mindedness and also like there would be many talks that I had attended before for the international conferences, I mean the speeches at the conferences really inspired me. So being there and seeing a confident individual talking about some sort of messages to the wider audience; that really motivated me a lot.
DR. MALKA	Who would you say have been some of the strong women in your life?
DR. KITAGAWA	Strong women, I've seen many. That's like really difficult to name one but I must say really like you know just even like this talk, like talking to you, have been like, you know, really professional way of interviewing, that's inspiring already and many people for example this time I met in South Africa, are trying to establish their own jobs, really not to be hired but to

	create their own jobs, they've been like tremendously inspiring to me. So I think you know it's very hard for me to name one but I think you know there are many women who've been like you know trying to achieve and then.....out, I think they are very all like inspiring.
DR. MALKA	And looking at your earlier life, when you were growing up, what would you say have been some of the pivotal moments?
DR. KITAGAWA	Some of thepardon me?
DR. MALKA	The pivotal moments, so important almost like the "aha's" or the impact experiences that you had?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. There are many points in life that I discovered things, like almost every step of my life of my life you know followed by the surprises but the one thing that I could remember as a pivotal moment of life is obviously the first time I left Canada and then I met the family who moved from UK to Canada, they decided to host me, so that was a pivotal moment that I was going to Canada and there were no Canadians from like you know Canadian...they're not always from Canada, or city in Vancouver but they'd already made a move from UK to living there and then that was the moment I saw like I came to Canada but there's like more in the world to explore. So you know they let me think of like you know the other side of the world and then this time too when I came out of Harvard and then went to UK and then I started to see more you know European countries and especially here in Africa, I never really thought of going there and then you know being networking and then trying to talk to the audience in Africaso I think you know that making the move....you know every move being farther and farther away, I think that's really been helpful for me.
DR. MALKA	So you effectively are becoming a global citizen?
DR. KITAGAWA	Yes, I probably am.
DR. MALKA	So we've spoken about some of the pivotal moments that have impacted on you; what would you say has been...made the biggest contribution to make you into the person that you are today?
DR. KITAGAWA	Well that has to be my mother, for sure, yes.
DR. MALKA	And can you share why, what was so influential?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. I don't think that she was influential but in the sense that she was completely supportive. So for example like we feel like mother will be telling daughter her like what to do but she did the opposite. So she never told me anything that she thought I have to do, so instead she had been listening to what I want to achieve. So every step of my life she was a good listener and then that was a great part, like you know it's a learning experience for me that somebody who wants to be supportive, she listens and that I really want to be a good listener throughout my life. So here again like when I came to Africa I was focusing on listening to the opinions or comments or feedback of what they thought about in particular The Lady Samurai, so like it's not only just one way talk that I would like to give lectures but then I would like to be always a good listener like my mother used to be.
DR. MALKA	There's a saying that I...I can't recall all of it but it says that the first step in learning is listening.
DR. KITAGAWA	Definitely...definitely.
DR. MALKA	What would you say has been the greatest lesson that you've learned throughout your career thus far?

DR. KITAGAWA	The greatest lesson that I learned...I think you know people fail to do like several projects in life right and I think you know failure really was a big part of it so for one thing.....like you know for one project to be complete people fail like you know ten times, hundred times, in my case maybe a thousand times, but I think the lessons I've learned is never to give up. So you know I think to stay focused and to continue would be the greatest lesson. I'm still learning how to do it.
DR. MALKA	You're absolutely right, failure is certainly a part and I think was it Edison who said that I think he'd just found ten thousand different ways of not to make a light bulb until he made the first one that worked.
DR. KITAGAWA	Right, right. Yes.
DR. MALKA	Finally as we close out our conversation today, could you please share a few words of inspiration or wisdom that you'd like to pass on to the young ladies that are listening to us?
DR. KITAGAWA	Right. It might be a little repetitive but I think staying focused and then it's very essential to what they're wanting to achieve so I wanted to just repeat from you know my lessons I learned from you know my past, staying focused is really, really you know difficult but it's worthwhile, so one thing is really just stay focused. And then as myself wanted to move forwardsI think networking and also staying in touch is a great part of building a career so would like to be you know hearing more and then working together with other women as well so I hope that they young women in their own fields wanted to do the same you know in their workplace and also of course the women who are working at home, I hope that they'll also be able to be connected to many to many numbers of women or also men in Africa and also outside of Africa, so I like to share more in the future through internet and through radio and through many other means.
DR. MALKA	Those are great points of really practical advice, staying focused, building your networks, keeping in touch and you're completely right, with the tools that we've got available to us today and technology, all of this brings our global village smaller and smaller.
DR. KITAGAWA	Right, that's right.
DR. MALKA	Thank you so much for joining us, it's been an absolute pleasure having you on our show and to hear your perspectives from a different part of the world, or should I say different parts of the world....
DR. KITAGAWA	...yes...
DR. MALKAand we hope that you enjoy the rest of your journey and trip in South Africa.
DR. KITAGAWA	Thank you very much it has been my pleasure and nice talking to you Amaleya.
DR. MALKA	And lastly as we close off today's broadcast we wish everybody a happy Africa Day for 25 th May, happy Africa day.
DR. KITAGAWA	For the Africa Day for this year, 2018, I wish all of you in South Africa and in Africa and all of the other parts of the world an amazing, successful year to be ahead and also a great move forward to a better world and peaceful life. Happy Africa Day.
	PROGRAMME END