Cross-cultural and Cross-religious Encounters in Historical Context

— A Report on the Tsukuba Global Science Week 2015 —

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This is a brief report of an academic session entitled "Cross-cultural and Cross-religious Encounters in Historical Context," held on the 29th of September during the second day of the Tsukuba Global Science Week 2015 at Tsukuba International Congress Center.

Considering the interreligious conflicts and understandings of different cultures, which have been two of the most common problems in human society to the present, this session focused on two kinds of historical themes from a mainly historical and philological viewpoint. The morning session, organized by scholars from the field of Ethics and Western Philosophy, aimed to shed light on the early-modern evangelical activities of the Jesuit order in East Asia, while the afternoon session, organized by scholars from Indology and Buddhist Studies, concerned the religio-philosophical perspectives in pre-modern India. Each speech title was as follows:

Part I, chaired by Naoki Kuwabara (University of Tsukuba)

1. Kenichi Nejime (Gakushuin Women's College) "Japan's Christian Century and the Italian Renaissance: From the Point of View of the Immortality of Soul"

2. Yoshitsugu Igawa (University of Tsukuba) "The Understanding of the Soul Theory in China by the Jesuits of the 17th Century: Mainly on Translation of *The Doctrine of the Mean* (『中庸』) in *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*"

3. Patrick Schwemmer (Sophia University / Princeton University) "A Bicultural Theatrical Exchange between the Tenshō Boy's Embassy and the Kyūshū Collegio"

4. Noriaki Takaishi (University of Tsukuba) "Intellect and Will: A Comparative Study of Thomas Aquinas and Pedro Gómez"

5. Ryuta Ishida (University of Tsukuba) "How to Use the Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas: On Pedro Gómez's *Compendium*, Part 2"

Part II, chaired by Ernest Brewster (Harvard University)

6. Akihiko Akamatsu (Kyoto University) "Doxography and Perspectivism in Pre-Modern India: On the Problem of Neutrality"

7. Taisei Shida (University of Tsukuba) "Dialogical Strategy of the Exegetic School among Diverse Ideologies in Classical India"

8. Harunaga Isaacson (University of Hamburg / University of Tsukuba) "Verses by

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Buddhist Authors and Verses with Allusions to Buddhist Teachings in Two Post-1200 A.D. Anthologies of Sanskrit Verses"

9. Alexis Sanderson (University of Oxford) "The Tantric Rebirth of Indian Buddhism under Śākta-Śaiva Influence during the Seventh to Eleventh Centuries"

The morning session, presided over by Prof. Kuwabara, concerned Christian missionaries' encounters with Japan in the 16th to 17th centuries. The first two presentations by Prof. Nejime and Prof. Igawa focused on the argument over the existence of the "soul" between the East and West, a controversy that Jesuit missionaries struggled with in Eastern Asia. Then, Dr. Schwemmer discussed the use of theater and other performing arts in the Jesuit mission to Japan and the cultural exchange through the members of the Tenshō Boys' Embassy to Europe, after their return to Japan. The next two presentations by doctoral candidates of the University of Tsukuba, Mr. Takaishi and Mr. Ishida, concerned Pedro Gómez's *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*, written in Japan, and especially on the development of the interpretation of Aquinas' theology in Gómez's mission in Japan. The afternoon session, presided over by Mr. Brewster, concerned religio-philosophical perspectives in the context of religious and cultural diversity in pre-modern India. Prof. Akamatsu talked about the self-awareness of Indian philosophers on religious tolerance, perspectivism, and the problem of neutral relativism. Prof. Shida analyzed the logic behind the authorization of religious scripture. Prof. Isaacson addressed passages from Indian poetry concerning the accuracy and rhetoric of the poets' depiction of the doctrines of other religions, which have since disappeared. Prof. Sanderson showed the process by which Indian Buddhism accepted the religious element of Śaivism, which functioned as a tool to make Buddhism esoteric and to revitalize it as well. Active floor discussion followed both sessions.