

Chapter 1 The beginning of exchanges between Japan and Bengal

The exchanges during the early modern period

The relationship between Japan and India is generally said to have begun with the official introduction of Buddhism into Japan in the middle of the sixth century. Then in 752, during the consecration ceremony of the Great Buddha held at Todai-ji Temple in Nara, High Priest Bodhi Sena from South India was invited from China to lead the consecration ceremony. Priest Bodhi Sena remained in Japan after the ceremony and eventually demised in Japan.

For a long while after that, the direct exchange between India and Japan ceased to exist. Then, from the Edo Period to the Meiji, silk produced in Bengal, Bengal color pigment (red iron oxide) and Indian indigo were imported to Japan through trade with the Netherlands. Bengal color was a popularly used inorganic pigment of old and it is said that the pigment “Bengala” was named after Bengal. Bengala has long wearability and soft and safe touch and is low in price. At present, Bengala latticework seen in Kyoto and a street of factories with Bengala colored walls in Takahashi City, Okayama Prefecture, are popularly known.

At that time, indigo had already been produced in Japan and indigo dyeing was popular among ordinary people and widely used in clothing and for other purposes. Indian indigo produced in Bengal had exceptionally pure ingredients, was easy to dye and highly producible and its import began during the Meiji period.

From the Meiji period to Taisho, “muslin” fabrics produced in East India were highly appreciated in Europe and became popular also in Japan. Later, muslin came to be produced at factories in Asakusa, Tokyo, and it became a brand called “Tokyo Muslin.” Various goods imported from Bengal sometimes harmed the domestic Japanese industry, but Bengal goods came to be part of Japanese life.

Bengal at that time was called fertile Indian breadbasket and its rich land, due to the beneficial natural conditions, made it possible to grow crops used for various products. Therefore, since the 17th century onwards, Portuguese, the Dutch and the French fought over the control of the land of Bengal. In the Battle of Plassey fought in 1757, the British East India Company beat the allied French and Nawab of Bengal forces and the British East India firmly established the rule over the Bengal region.

After this battle, the first protest movement occurred in 1763 in Dacca. At that time, muslin produced in East Bengal was highly appreciated in Europe and a great amount of muslin products was exported to England, harming the British domestic industry. It was protest against the British oppression of

muslin factory workers in Dacca in order to protect the British domestic cotton factories.

Eventually, protest movements against England took place in various parts of India, including Bengal, and in 1857, a great rebellion broke out against the British East India Company. At that time, Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II, until then under British protection, became the highest commander of the rebellion, but it was suppressed in the following year. The emperor was expelled from the country and the Mughal Empire perished. The British East India Company practically put India under colonial control by turning over the power privileges to the British monarchy. Consequently, Britain established the colonial rule over the entire India.

Calcutta in West Bengal was designated as the capital of India, as the second “London” in the British colonial policy and became the center of politics, culture, art, education and thought in India under the British rule. From such historical background, Bengal at that time led the modernization of India and became the region that provided the theoretical basis for the formation of independence movements.

Afterwards, with the rise of the Indian patriots, who demanded the political and intellectual independence of the Bengal people, the Indo-Japan relationship was revived in a glorious way.

This explains why those who are mentioned in the introduction of this book, Vivekananda, Tagore, Behari Bose, Chandra Bose and Justice Pal, who was the only one to judge all the defendants not guilty at the Tokyo Trials, were all Bengalese.

In Japan, at that time, the Black Ships arrived in 1853, forcing an unequal treaty upon Japan. Under such critical circumstances, Japan made laborious efforts to maintain its independence from the European and American Powers. And in mere 15 years, Japan accomplished the Meiji Restoration and drastically changed the nature of the nation from Edo shogunate to the Meiji Government.

India had been under the British rule since 1858. In the capital of Calcutta, there was a prestigious family, the Tagores, that produced many a prominent man. They received Western education, had great political and economical influences over the Indian society and were versed in culture. As far as it can be confirmed, in the modern period, the first exchange between Japan and Bengal began with the Tagore family.

At that time, the Tagores split up over the division of their assets and they lived separately at Jorasanko and Patriyagata in Calcutta. At the Tagore house in Patriyagata lived Raja Sourindro Mohun Tagore, who was famous for his study of music. He was highly valued in India and the European countries and

his name was also known in Japan. The Emperor Meiji came to learn about Sourindro Mohun Tagore's interest in music and reportedly presented him with twelve kinds of musical instruments, including Japanese drum. As a token of gratitude for the Emperor's gift, Sourindro Mohun Tagore presented the Emperor Meiji with three kinds of Indian musical instruments including Veena. This took place between 1877 and 1878 and was an exchange involving musical instruments. Later, the Japanese musical instruments sent by the Emperor Meiji to India were displayed at a musical museum in Calcutta built by Sourindro Mohun Tagore himself. The musical instruments presented from India were kept at the Imperial Palace and later were moved to Japan's Imperial Museum, where they were reportedly displayed for many years.

The history of exchanges between Japan and Bengal cannot be told fully without the Tagores. As I detail later in this book, the other Tagore at Jorasanko was Rabindranath Tagore, a great poet and the first Nobel Laureate for Literature in Asia. Besides him, there was one more prominent person, not from the Tagore family, but he also played an important role in the exchange between Japan and Bengal, early in the modern period. That was a religious teacher from Bengal, Swami Vivekananda.

Vivekananda and Japan

Vivekananda (born Narendranath Datta) was born in 1863 in Calcutta. He followed the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and established a new religious philosophy through reforming Hinduism and became a great religious leader, wholeheartedly devoting himself to the cultural restoration in West Bengal and the nationalistic movement in India. He also introduced the Indian philosophy and yoga to Western Europe, aiming to bring fusion and harmony between Eastern and Western civilizations and religions.

In 1893 Vivekananda was invited to the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago during the World Exposition. On his voyage to the United States, the steamship carrying him stopped at a port in Japan for refueling. At that time, he wrote a letter while staying at Oriental Hotel in Yokohama to his friend Alasinga Perumal and others about his impression of the first visit to Japan:

The Match factories are simply a sight to see, and they are bent upon making everything they want in their own country. There is a Japanese line of steamers plying between China and Japan, which shortly intends running between Bombay and Yokohama.

I saw quite a lot of temples. In every temple there are some Sanskrit Mantras written in Old Bengali characters. Only a few of the priests know Sanskrit. But they are an intelligent sect. The modern rage for progress has penetrated even the priesthood. I cannot write what I have in my mind about the Japs in one short letter. Only I want that numbers of our young men should pay a

visit to Japan and China every year. Especially to the Japanese, India is still the dreamland of everything high and good.

[*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. V, Advaita Ashram (1964)*]

As this letter indicated, Vivekananda seems to have been deeply impressed by the Japanese passion for manufacturing and the succession of Mantras transmitted from India. It can also be seen that the Japanese people in those days had a sense of admiration toward India.

Then, Vivekananda left Japan for Chicago and delivered a speech during the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Vivekananda's words quoted by former Prime Minister Abe were messages Vivekananda delivered at the Parliament of Religions, which deeply moved the audience and were widely appreciated in the world through the reporting by the mass media.

“The different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea.” I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: “As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.”

“Help, and not fight,” “Assimilation, and not Destruction,” “Harmony and Peace, and not Dissension.”

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the other, to him I say, “Brother, yours is an impossible hope.” Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid. The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant. Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth. If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams

of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: “Help and not Fight,” “Assimilation and not Destruction,” “Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.”

Swami Vivekananda Chicago Speeches, Vedanta Society of Japan

Although it was the only and too brief stay in Japan, Vivekananda closely observed Japan with much interest and understood the country. In later years, Vivekananda left various interviews and comments related to Japan. I would like to briefly introduce this especially impressive interview:

Q: What did you see in Japan, and is there any chance of India following in the progressive steps of Japan?

A: None whatever, until all the three hundred millions of India combine together as a whole nation. The world has never seen such a patriotic and artistic race as the Japanese, and one special feature about them is this that while in Europe and elsewhere Art generally goes with dirt, Japanese Art is Art plus absolute cleanliness. I would wish that every one of our young men could visit Japan once at least in his lifetime. It is very easy to go there. The Japanese think that everything Hindu is great and believe that India is a holy land. Japanese Buddhism is entirely different from what you see in Ceylon. It is the same as Vedanta. It is positive and theistic Buddhism, not the negative atheistic Buddhism of Ceylon.

Q: What is the key to Japan’s sudden greatness?

A: The faith of the Japanese in themselves, and their love for their country, sincere to the backbone—when such men arise, India will become great in every respect. It is the men that make the country! What is there in the country? If you catch the social morality and the political morality of the Japanese, you will be as great as they are. The Japanese are ready to sacrifice everything for their country, and they have become a great people. But you are not; you cannot be, you sacrifice everything only for your own families and possessions.

Excerpts from the interview in *The Hindu* newspaper of February, 1897, in Madras, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda Vol. 5*, by Advaita Ashram (1964)

In 1894, a year after the World’s Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, the first Sino-Japanese War broke out and ended in 1895 with Japan’s victory. Vivekananda’s statement must have reflected the situation at the time, and he strongly felt what India needed in order to achieve its independence, looking at Japan keeping its independence from the threat of European and American Great Powers despite the fact that Japan is a small country in Asia.

Vivekananda travelled across Western Europe and especially the United States and the United Kingdom, passionately promoting his own teaching.

After he returned to India in 1897, he established the Ramakrishna Mission and promoted religious reform movement and social service activities. The Ramakrishna Mission is working as the most active social service organ in India and has branches throughout the world, working respectively. Regrettably, Vivekananda died young at the age of 39 in 1902. About six months before his death, young Okakura Tenshin visited India to meet Vivekananda. The meeting of the two had caused wide ripples, leading to the full-blown exchange between Japan and India.

Okakura Tenshin's visit to India

Okakura Tenshin was born in 1863 in Yokohama, son to Okakura Kakuemon of Fukui-han Domain. Fukui-han at that time was ordered to guard Kanagawa by the Edo Bakufu Government. Fukui-han, having learned the importance of overseas trade by opening the country to the world, opened a trading company "Ishikawa-ya" in Yokohama and sent Tenshin's father to run the company. Since early childhood, Tenshin grew up observing many foreigners and became familiar with English. With the experiences of having grown up in Calcutta and Yokohama, two port cities open to the world, respectively, influenced by both domestic and foreign cultures, Tagore and Tenshin shared the common characteristics to be mentioned later.

After the Meiji Restoration, Fukui-han perished following the abolition of feudal domains and establishment of prefectures, and Ishikawa-ya closed its business. The Okakura family moved to Tokyo and opened "Okakura Inn." Tenshin graduated from the Literature Department of Tokyo Imperial University in 1880 and worked for the Ministry of Education and then began research and study of Japanese traditional art.

Among those who had great influences over Tenshin as a young man was a foreign teacher, Ernest Fenollosa. Fenollosa and Tenshin shared profound appreciation and interest in Japanese classic art and together they went on an inspection trip to the United States and Europe for about eight months from 1886 to 1887. Through this trip, Tenshin re-recognized the value of the Japanese art.

Tenshin passionately lectured on the Japanese art history, endeavoring to realize his ideal art education at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (the predecessor of Tokyo University of the Arts) established in 1889. In 1890 he became president of the school and in 1893 he visited China under the scholarship of the Ministry of the Imperial Household and examined cultural assets, temples, and art works across China.

However, Tenshin's freewheeling character and unique aesthetic ideas were not to be understood by the art society at the time. In the end, in 1898 he was expelled from the school to whose establishment he had contributed so much. Then he founded the Japan Art Academy with his students and comrades only to face various difficulties, including financial matters. At the time of this crisis, Tenshin suddenly left for India.

Okakura Tenshin may have known Vivekananda through newspaper reporting. Besides, Josephine McLeod, a Scottish American woman who attended Tenshin's class at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, was also a disciple of Vivekananda. One theory says that Tenshin came to know Vivekananda through her.

Tenshin was planning to invite Vivekananda to Japan and sent the invitation to Japan with 300 dollars at the then value as travel expenses through Josephine. However, Vivekananda declined the invitation on account of his poor health at that time. There may have been other reasons for Tenshin's visit to India, but Tenshin really wanted to meet Vivekananda in person.

Tenshin visited India accompanied by Josephine and a young Japanese priest, Hori Shitoku. They left Japan on December 5, 1901, and arrived at Calcutta on January 6, 1902. On the day of arrival, Josephine took Tenshin and Shitoku to the Ramakrishna Mission at Belur in the suburbs of Calcutta and introduced them to Vivekananda. Vivekananda was extremely pleased with their visit and reportedly said to Josephine, "I feel as if my brothers finally came home after long absence."

Tenshin wrote about his joy at the meeting in a letter to Priest Oda Tokuno: "We went there and met the Reverend Vivekananda. His spirit and learning are profoundly supreme, and it was such an honor to meet the superb man and we could not help but admire and respect his universal teachings."

"The Reverend is a fluent speaker of English and is well versed in recent Western academic theories and preaches unification of the East and the West and oneness of the opposites. He has an excellent flow of ideas, just like the ancient great debaters. I find him a man rarely to be met with. If possible, I am yearning to bring him to Japan with us when we return home."

On January 12, a reception for Tenshin's party was held and Tenshin strongly wished for Vivekananda's visit to Japan. Unfortunately, however, his wish never came true. Vivekananda was really in poorer health at that time, and he could never make it to Japan. According to "Swami Vivekananda and Japan" (Vedanta Society of Japan), there is a record that the Emperor Meiji was concurrently planning to invite Vivekananda to Japan. Possibly, Tenshin may have been somewhat

involved in the Emperor Meiji's plan to invite Vivekananda to Japan. But this needs to be confirmed.

Through Vivekananda, Okakura Tenshin was able to meet the Tagore Family, who had great influence over India and other prominent people there. At that time, politically, Tenshin had already been working for the liberation of Asia from Europe and America as a Pan-Asianist and his actions were constantly under the surveillance of the British colonial authorities. For this reason, Tenshin rarely left written records of his actions and speeches at that time. Probably, he feared lest information related to the national independence movement in which Tenshin was involved should leak.

After the meeting with Vivekananda, Okakura Tenshin stayed with Tagore's nephew, Surendranath Tagore, visited Ellora, Ajanta and Buddha Gaya, Buddhist holy sites and participated in gatherings of independence activists. Surendranath was not directly acting for independence but was one of the supporters of independence activists.

Okakura Tenshin was a great artist, thinker and at the same time firm-willed political activist. At that time, he finished writing a book, sent it to London and had it published. It was one of Tenshin's major books, *Ideals of the East*, praising the excellence of Asian culture, religion, thought and art. Simultaneously, he wrote another book in India, *The Awakening of the East*, a very radical political writing, which was not published in his lifetime. Thought, philosophy, art and politics did not contradict within Tenshin but rather he regarded them as deeply inter-related.

Ideals of the East and *The Awakening of the East* were written in English and later were exported back to Japan and translated into Japanese.

An English woman called Nivedita (born Margaret Elizabeth Noble), who deeply admired Vivekananda, introduced independence activists to Tenshin. She also cooperated with Tenshin in writing in English and contributed the preface to *Ideals of the East* when the book was to be published.

Nivedita was English but more precisely Irish, and Josephine of the Scottish ancestry introduced Vivekananda to Tenshin and a man who applauded Tagore's GITANJALI as a great book of literature was the Irish writer Yeats. He aimed to restore the Celtic culture which had been ethnic culture before the spread of Christianity in Ireland. It is an interesting fact that those ethical people under the control of England tied Tenshin and the Indian independence movement together.

Asia is one

Okakura Tenshin's famous phrase "Asia is one" appears at the beginning of *Ideals of the East*, which

Tenshin wrote while staying in India. The month of January, when he arrived in Calcutta, is the dry season and it is a comfortable season for Japanese, but from March on, temperature rises gradually, and a hot and humid summer begins. In May onward, with high humidity, the rainy season sets on and the torrential rain is often accompanied by cyclones. Mosquitoes are everywhere and the season, unbearable to the Japanese, continues. Finally, around September it stops raining, the temperatures begin to drop and gradually the dry season takes over.

In such harsh climate, Tenshin wrote his first book, *Ideals of the East*. The other book he wrote during his stay in India, *The Awakening of the East*, was found in the form of draft after Tenshin died. It was not finished and had no original title, and the title was decided by the translator. It may have been another draft of *Ideals of the East*. In these two books Tenshin summarizes what he felt about the world, Asia and Japan in the land of India, away from Japan.

Asia is one. The Himalayas divide, only to accentuate two mighty civilizations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment that broad expanse of love for the Ultimate and Universal, which is the common thought-inheritance of every Asiatic race, enabling them to produce all the great religions of the world, and distinguishing them from those maritime peoples of the Mediterranean and the Baltic, who love to dwell on the Particular, and to search out the means, not the end, of life.

(omission) For if Asia be one, it is also true that the Asiatic races form a single mighty web.

(omission) Arab chivalry, Persian poetry, Chinese ethics, and Indian thought, all speak of a single ancient Asiatic peace, in which there grew up a common life, bearing in different regions different characteristic blossoms, but nowhere capable of a hard and fast dividing-line. Islamic culture itself can be regarded as Confucianism riding on a horse and holding a sword in hand.

Ideals of the East, written by Okakura Tenshin

At the same time, however, Tenshin was deeply hurt by the fact that in India and China their great cultural traditions had already been destroyed through various wars, conflicts, and invasions. Therefore, Tenshin thought it was solely in Japan that the unity of the Asiatic civilization is still retained.

It has been, however, the great privilege of Japan to realize this unity-in-complexity with a special clearness. (omission) The unique blessing of unbroken sovereignty, the proud self-

reliance of an unconquered race, and the insular isolation which protected ancestral ideas and instincts at the cost of expansion, made Japan the real repository of the trust of Asiatic thought and culture. Dynastic upheavals, the inroads of Tartar horsemen, the carnage and devastation of infuriated mobs—all these things, sweeping over her again and again, have left to China no landmarks, save her literature and her ruins, to recall the glory of the Tang emperors or the refinement of Sung society.

(omission) The sublime attainments of Indian art, almost effaced as they have been by the rough-handedness of the Huns, the fanatical iconoclasm of the Mussulman, and the unconscious vandalism of mercenary Europe, leave us to seek only a past glory in the mouldy walls of Ajanta, the tortured sculptures of Ellora [editor's note: famous for cave temples], the silent protests of rock-cut Orissa [editor's note: a province facing the Bay of Bengal] and finally in the domestic utensils of the present day, where beauty clings sadly to religion in the midst of an exquisite home-life. It is in Japan alone that the historic wealth of Asiatic culture can be consecutively studied through its treasured specimens. The Imperial collection, the Shinto temples, and the opened dolmens reveal the subtle curves of Hang workmanship. The temples of Nara are rich in representations of Tang culture, and of that Indian art, then in its splendour, which so much influenced the creations of this classic period—natural heirlooms of a nation which has preserved the music, pronunciation, ceremony, and costumes, not to speak of the religious rites and philosophy, of so remarkable an age, intact. The treasure-stores of the daimyos, again, abound in works of art and manuscripts belonging to the Sun and Mongol dynasties, and as in China itself the former were lost during the Mongol conquest, and the latter in the age of the reactionary Ming, this fact animates some Chinese scholars of the present day to seek in Japan the fountainhead of their own ancient knowledge. Thus Japan is a museum of Asiatic civilization; and yet more than a museum, because the singular genius of the race leads it to dwell on all phases of the ideals of the past, in that spirit of living Advaitism which welcomes the new without losing the old.

The Shinto still adheres to his pre-Buddhistic rites of ancestor-worship; and the Buddhists themselves cling to each various school of religious development which has come in its natural order to enrich the soil.

Ideals of the East, written by Okakura Tenshin

These words of Tenshin were not mere admiration for Japan. In Japan during the Meiji period, Tenshin himself felt angry at the abandonment of precious cultural assets and the disregard of the Japanese art tradition amid the trend of Western worship. He led the movement to restore the Japanese culture. In

India, Tenshin aimed to restore the Asiatic civilization once again.

Tenshin emphasized particularly the movement to restore Buddhism. In India as a whole, Buddhism almost perished by the 12th to 13th centuries, but it was in Bengal that Buddhism was worshipped to the last. However, during Tenshin's time, the Buddhist ruins of Buddha Gaya were devastated. Tenshin tried to purchase land in order to establish a place for pilgrimage at the deserted site.

Tagore greatly sympathized with Tenshin in his effort to revive Buddhism. Tagore was a follower of Brhama Hinduism a sect of Hinduism, but he was also deeply interested in Buddhism and revered it. Tagore and Tenshin toured Buddhist ruins together. (Also, reportedly, Tagore in later years was most sympathetic toward Buddhism.) In *Ideals of the East*, Tenshin states that Buddhism is one of the pillars that unite Asia.

The influence of Tenshin on the Indian nationalists

Much is said by the following impressive episode about how much Tenshin affected nationalists in Bengal in the land of India. Tenshin said to Surendranath and others, "What are you going to do for your country?" After explaining how critical the situation in India was and how difficult their movement was, Surendranath said, "At present, all each of us can do is to make steady efforts and to wait for the outcome." Then Tenshin said that he was sad and disappointed to hear such an answer and told them a certain dreadful story: In his early childhood, hearing a harsh exchange of words in the next room, he peeped through a gap to find his uncle cut at the neck and sitting headless, bleeding enormously from the carotid artery.

This may have been a bit exaggerated horror story Tenshin made up. At the same time, however, this story can be interpreted in a sense as an appeal urging them to move forward, even resorting to extreme actions, when the situation was hard to cope with. In fact, presumably, the nationalists took it for an encouraging message.

In actuality, a secret society "Anushilan Samity" was established concurrently. This society was a nationalist movement, resembling the early movement of Touyama Mitsuru's Genyo-sha in Japan. Tenshin cannot have been ignorant of contemporary Touyama Mitsuru and Genyo-sha. The following passage in *The Awakening of the East* written in India by Tenshin is filled with the spirit of the national independence movement. He wrote this passage for the people of India and all the peoples in Asia under the colonial rule.

[quote from *The Awakening of the East* written by Okakura Tenshin]

“Brothers and Sisters in Asia!

A vast suffering lies on the land of our ancestors. The Oriental has become a synonym for the degenerate, the native is an epithet for slave. Our lauded gentleness is an irony which alien courtesy owes to cowardice. In the name of commerce we have welcomed militant, in the name of civilization we have embraced the imperialistic, in the name of Christianity we have prostrated before the merciless. The light of international law shines on the white parchment, - - -the shadow of a complete injustice falls back on the tinted skin.”

(omitted)

“It is wonderful how few men of courage and insight are enough to accomplish the impossible! The German Empire, the American Republic, the Italian Kingdom are work of a handful who infused their indomitable spirit in to the minds of the desponding masses. And in the East where millions are accustomed to be led by the lustre of a single name, one self-sacrificing leader can achieve more prodigious than are possible in any country of the West.”

(omitted)

"It is unity and leadership that we want, not numerical superiority. The Sepoy attempt only failed through the conflict of their own jealousies, not through the valor of the red-coats, and the Boxers would have been successful if the government troops had only been allowed to join in common action.”

(omitted)

“Asia lacks not the hill nor the rivers where a guerilla war can break the spell of foreign supremacy and thus awake the citizen and the soldier to join in the deliverance of the motherland. Europe can never send large armaments to completely overawe us, her hold on our lands must necessary lie in the trained native regiments. But are they not ours?”

These words are nothing but a call for Asian liberation, penetrating throughout the spirits of Touyama Mitsuru, Oukawa Shumei and the Greater East Asia Conference. And the encounter of the two, Okakura Tenshin and Rabindranath Tagore, deeply impressed each other. As I mentioned earlier, Okakura Tenshin was under the surveillance of the British colonial authorities, and probably for that

reason political conversations between the two were left unrecorded. However, without direct exchange of political views, Okakura would have immediately understood that Tagore had the same spirit and will with his relatives and other nationalists. Thus, Okakura Tenshin's idea of "Asia is one" found the biggest understanding soul in Tagore. In the second chapter, I would like to clearly state how deeply Okakura and Tagore exchanged spiritually, through their respective writings.