

ICLA 2004 in Hongkong Panel #12 The Tale of the Female

Tenshin Okakura Kakuzo and Sister Nivedita
On an Intellectual Exchange in Modernizing Asia

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The paper treats a case of cultural exchange between Japan and India in Modern era. Tenshin Okakura Kakuzo (1862-1913) 's stay in India in 1901-02 was a marked incident of the Japanese encounter with the Indian intellectuals. His friendship with Swami Vivekanada (1863-1902) and Rabindranatha Tagore (1861-1941) and others are well known. Yet his intense relationship with Sister Nivedita (1867-1911) during the preparation of Okakura's first book in English, *The Ideals of the East* and *The Awakening of the East* (1902 posthumously published in 1938) has not yet been thoroughly investigated.

In the first place I will briefly outline the circumstances in which Okakura stayed in India. Secondly I would propose some of the concrete evidences which may establish the mutual influence which occurred in the elaboration of Okakura thinking of the Ideals of the East as well as in Sister Nivedita's idea of the Indian national identity. Thirdly, I may argue that this intellectual collaboration prepared positive appraisal with which Sister Nivedita celebrated the new Bengal nationalist paintings at the beginning of the 20th Century. In conclusion, the role of female mediators in the colonial context will be critically examined.