

識別番号 P5
 研究課題 諸宗教の対話と平和構築
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 Summary 宗教をめぐる紛争は、東南アジア、南アジア、中東だけでなく、ほとんど全世界を覆っている。このような危機的状況の理解には、地域社会における宗教の個別調査だけでなく、諸宗教の対話のような市民レベルの活動も必要であろう。本プロジェクトは、地域研究的手法と社会運動的手法の双方を用いた共同研究ではあるが、カトリック大学としての本学の利点を生かしつつ、研究会・シンポジウムを通じて全学的な討論のフォーラムをめざす。
 研究・調査：分担者、協力者による国内外の調査出張、および研究会、報告会などを数回開催する。研究会、報告会には必要に応じて学外講師を招聘する。
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In the Institute of Asian Cultures, activities on inter-religious dialogue and peace are mainly related to four religions, namely Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity. However, if necessary we are also willing to deal with other beliefs and faiths, such as folk religions and cults. So far however the need to deal with folk religions and cults has not yet arisen, but we are prepared to deal with them if necessary. Our professors are experts in diverse research fields and religious beliefs, but we cooperate and work as a group, and sometimes we split into smaller groups in order to function more effectively.

Concerning Hinduism, in cooperation with the Nippon Vedanta Kyokai, a Hindu religious organization whose main center is in Calcutta in India but which has a Japanese branch in Zushi, we celebrated on May 27 at the Indian Embassy the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, a famous 19th century Hindu philosopher and saint who believed in the unity of all religions. However, 2011 was the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, the winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, who was another great Hindu who believed in inter-religious unity and who was a close friend of Okakura Tenshin, and so these two anniversaries were jointly celebrated. The program consisted of lectures, Hindu forms of meditation, and cultural activities. Our purpose was to educate the average citizen on the need for inter-religious dialogue. About 200 people attended the gathering. Research articles were published on issues related to Hinduism, such as the food taboos of the Hindus, the Hindu religion, and the Brahma Samaj, which is a Hindu group started in the early 19th century by Raja Ram-mohan Roy, and devoted to the worship of the one god of all.

Concerning Buddhism, from August 14-16, in cooperation with the Society of Jesus, we organized an international conference for Christian religious scholars who are doing research on Buddhism in Asia. Scholars from South Asia and Southeast Asia, especially those who are linked to the Jesuit Universities such as Sogang in Korea and the Pontifical Athenaeum in Pune in India,

participated in the conference. The participating scholars gave several lectures dealing with the relationship between Buddhism and the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, and useful discussions were held with the members of the Japanese Buddhist lay group, the Rissho Kosekai. These lectures will in due course be uploaded onto the Internet. Experts also trained the participants on Buddhist forms of meditation, such as Zen and Vipassana, and some of our members visited temples in Kyoto, Nara, and Kamakura as part of their research.

Certain of our members cooperated in bringing out a publication dealing with basic data related to the Churches of Oriental Christianity. Although this was a research dealing with Christianity, yet, the Sophia Organization for Islamic Area Studies (SOIAS), which forms part of the Institute of Asian Cultures of Sophia University, carried out the research. This was due to the close proximity between Christianity to Islam, chiefly within the nations of the Middle East. This publication was presented in the form of a research paper, the eighth in a series, and it dealt with the Christian Churches of the Nile delta, Iraq, Lebanon, Armenia, and India, with articles in both English and Japanese. It was entitled “The Churches of Eastern Christianity: Basic data and a Research Guide.” We also published articles on a diversity of issues linked to Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam in numerous journals, both within the University and outside.

Our research methodology involves fieldwork, the investigation of documents, personal contacts, personal interviews with scholars and other relevant specialists, and on-site investigation. We are closely linked to the Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development, and frequently cooperate with them on a variety of issues. In keeping with the academic axiom of Sophia University, which is, “Men and Women for others with others,” we seek to inculcate within our students a desire to acquire a firm grasp of languages and specialized education, to develop an attitude of resilience, to develop a wideness of thought, a spirit of boldness, self-confidence and a willingness to undertake difficult tasks. We have a keen desire to see that our students utilize their abilities not just for their own good but for the good of others. In this age of globalization we need young men and women who are able to interact with people of diverse religious persuasions, who are able to establish themselves in new cultures, and work for the betterment of mankind. With this object in mind, we seek to provide our students with opportunities to associate with people who speak a variety of tongues, and boost the ambience of internationality that currently pervades our campus.

However, since the pursuit of compassion towards others and concern for all are primary requirements for peace and inter-religious harmony, hence these are the ideals we strive to inculcate to the maximum within our youth, through our educational, research, and other activities. The world today is in dire need of peace, for the situation has grown very volatile in nations like Myanmar, Syria, India, and parts of Africa. Considered to be some of the world’s most persecuted minorities, the fate of the Rohingyas in Myanmar appears uncertain, judging by reports that they were being systematically evicted from their homes to set up “model villages” for the country’s Buddhists. According to the estimates of the United Nations about 800,000 Rohingyas live in Myanmar today, and many flee the country every year. We make efforts to see that facts like these are made available to our students.