

# Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Japan

Using Bibliography of the Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Japan 1868-1988 to Identify Research Trends<sup>1</sup>



**I**t seems to be a prevalent idea throughout the world and Japan itself, for the matter, that the Japanese became interested in Islamic and Middle Eastern studies only after the Oil Crisis of 1973. However, this is a mistaken perception, as the recently published *Bibliography of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Japan 1868-1988* (Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko, 1992-1993) clearly shows. In fact we can trace Japanese interest in Middle Eastern affairs as far back as the early Meiji period (1870s), when research was conducted in relations to the crucial problem of revising unequal diplomatic treaties between Japan and Western countries. It was in the 1930s that some institutions specialized for the Islamic and Middle Eastern studies like the Institute of the Islamic Studies which carried out research and published their own journals.

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There is no doubt, however, that the Oil Crisis in 1973 and the Iranian Revolution in 1979 greatly shortened the distance between Japan and the Middle East, for it became visible during these two events that the Japanese economy had become inevitably tangled up in the political situation of the Middle East, as exemplified by those who panicked during among the Oil Crisis, when running out to buy large quantities of toilet paper out of fear of its disappearance from the market place.

These experiences led to steady progress in the field of Middle Eastern studies in Japan. Now, there are many institutions with research programs in Middle Eastern studies such as Institute of Developing Economies, the Japanese Institute of Middle Eastern Economies, the Middle East Institute of Japan, Institute of Oriental Culture at University of Tokyo, Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at International University,

<sup>1</sup> The content of this paper was first published in Japanese in the periodical *Gekkan Hyakka* (Heibonsha Publishers) no. 368 in 1993. It has been enlarged in its English and Arabic version by the author. Concerning the history of the Islamic Middle Eastern studies and relations between Japan and the Middle East, see also Hajime Kobayashi "Japanese Knowledge about Islam and the Islamic World during Feudal Days before the Meiji Era" *Chuto Tsubo*, 229, 1975; San'eki Nakaoka, "Japanese Perception of the Arab World in Japan" in *A Discussion on Modern Egypt*, Tokyo, 1979; Fujio Komura, *A History of Islam in Japan: Activities of Japanese Muslims during Pre-war and War Period*, Tokyo, 1988 (all written in Japanese); Tsugitaka Sato, "The Present Situation of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Japan", *Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies*, 7, 1992 (in English).

and the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan. Associations such as the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan, Association for Islamic Studies in Japan, and Japan Association for Middle East Studies publish journals dealing exclusively with field.

While the research studies carried out in Japan had a tendency in the past to follow up studies made by Western scholars, today it is quite natural and common to use primary sources written in Middle Eastern languages (Arabic, Persian, Turkish etc.) and to travel to countries in the Middle East for field work and research. As for the purpose of such research they not only aim at understanding Islam and the Middle East in their indigenous context, but also attempt to re-examine ideas of history and civilization which have been strongly influenced by Western civilization. One example is the scientific project entitled "Urbanism in Islam: A Comparative Study" (headed by Professor Yuzo Itagaki) which was funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and conducted for three years from 1988 to 1991 at the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo. This project revealed that Islamic culture is never a culture of the Bedouins or the desert, but rather characterized by its urbanity, since it has developed from cities in ancient times and has formed from a number of different cultures. Compared with European culture and its medieval cities, which excluded peasants and foreigners and would not grant citizenship to anyone other than native born residents, Islamic cities realized a high level of flexibility which enabled them to solve similar problems.

Japanese scholars have produced both academic work for specialists and publications for general readers. *Dictionary of Islam* (1982), edited by the Association for Islamic Studies, and *Handbook of the Middle East* (1978), edited by Yuzo Itagaki, have enjoyed wide popularity as books indispensable to the field. Furthermore, series covering the subject, such as *Islam* (4 vols., 1983-1986) and *People of the Islamic World* (5 vols., 1984) have already been released, while in 1994 a series entitled *The World of Islam* (6 vols.) began to be published. The most noticeable trend in recent publications is scholars engaged the reading of primary sources presenting their own images of Islamic society through original analysis. To take some examples, *Mamluk: Islamic Governors from non-Islamic World* (1991) by Tsugitaka Sato shows the flexibility of Islamic society in recognition of the *mamluks*, who were originally foreigners and infidels, as ruler. *Mecca and Islamic Urban Society* (1991) by Akira Goto describes Meccan society at the time of the rise of Islam as a "free city" where no official system of headmen, councils and governmental institutions existed. His concept of the "free city" stands in antithesis to and criticism of the interpretation of M. M. Watt and others, who regarded Mecca as a tribal society. *The Formation of the Islamic World and International Trade* (1991) by Hikoichi Yajima presents a new perspective of Islamic history in terms of international trade networks around the Islamic world. Tadashi Suzuki's *The Ottoman Empire: Islamic Flexibility in the Ottoman Autocracy* searches for the reason behind the glory of the Ottoman Empire, arguing that it gave autonomy to each religious and ethnic community, on the one hand, while its strictly regulated legal system combined them with an Empire. All of this research tends to stress on the flexibility and fluidity of Islamic society in terms of slave-soldiers, cities, trade, and administrative systems. Yuzo Itagaki has published two books of his own research *Listening to the Voice of the Stones* (1992) and *Where History and Area Studies Meet: the Middle East Today* (1992) in which he deals with the contemporary problems of the Middle East. For example, he looks at the Palestine Question not as a problem confined to Arabs and Muslims, but rather as a problem of the whole contemporary world, where many problems become intertwined. *Islamic Urban Studies: Historical Review and Perspectives* was published as one of the main products of the afore-mentioned research Project "Urbanism in Islam" by five Japanese scholars (Masashi Hanede, Toru Miura, Masatoshi Kisaichi, Kayoko Hayashi, and Hisao Komatsu) in 1991 in Japanese and in 1994 in English.

There are many Japanese translations of the classics of the Middle East. The Holy Qur'an has been translated from the Arabic text three times: first by Toshihiko Izutsu in 1957-1958, then by Katsuji Fujimoto et al. in 1970 and finally by Japan Muslim Association in 1972. The translation of *Arabian Nights* (or *Thousand Nights and One Night*) was completed in 1992 by Shinji Maejima and Osamu Ikeda. It is the first complete translation from the Calcutta version in the world and took more than twenty years and eighteen volumes to complete. Other famous works now available in Japanese include *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr* (1991), Persian literature like *Shah Name of Firdawsi* (1969), *Khusraw and Shirin* of al-Nizami (1977) and intellectual tomes like *Maqasid al-Falasifa* of al-Ghazali (1985) and *Fibi ma fibi* of Jalal al-Din al-Rumi (1978).

We now know through such research that the Islamic Middle East can not really be understood by a kind of simplified essentialism that attributes the causes of contemporary political problems to the Middle East's arid climate or some such single factor. Rather the Islamic Middle East should be looked upon as a pluralistic society with much diversity and flexibility in terms of nature, history and culture. For example, during the Gulf Conflict, an essay published by a well-known Japanese writer purported that the mentality and behavior of Iraq, which is so difficult to understand for Japanese can be attributed to the national character of a desert people who have been always aggressive and warlike in their request for water. We should however realize that there is a strong ten-

dency among the general public to see the Middle East and Islam as so complicated and so difficult to understand that people became apt to reduce all the phenomena involved to such simplistic causes. However, it also could be that we have not accumulated sufficient information yet, due to the fact that the history of the Middle East has been taught merely as a supplementary topic to the history of the East or the West in Japanese schools since the Meiji period.

One attempt to discern exactly what Japan has come to know about the Islamic Middle East is *Bibliography of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Japan 1868-1988* which was published in 1992-1993 at the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko. It is the first general catalogue on the field in Japan, containing more than fifteen thousand titles concerning the Middle East after the rise of Islam published between the early Meiji era (1868) and the end of the Showa era (1988).<sup>2</sup> The *Bibliography* not only lists books, articles, and translations, but also book reviews, proceedings of the conference and the symposia in the fields of natural science, social science and humanities. It was planned as a reference work to serve journalists and businessmen concerned with the Islam and the Middle East, as well as provide students and researchers in the field with what has become their academic heritage. In addition the *Bibliography* lists all the author names and titles in both Japanese and a foreign language (English, French, German, Arabic, Persian, Turkish etc.) so that the work can be used by the international scholarly community to get a general idea of what their Japanese colleagues have been up to. The index volume includes index of author names and group names in the alphabetical order.<sup>3</sup>

## Fields of Interest and Publication Trends

The decision to compile and edit the *Bibliography* at the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, was made following the Centre's successful publication of *Bibliography of Central Asian Studies in*

<sup>2</sup> Two reference works, *Bibliography of Islamic Studies*, edited by Hiroshi Watanabe in 1961 and *Bibliography of the Arab Studies in Japan 1875-1979*, published in 1981, were available, but both cover restricted fields as indicated by the titles.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the distribution of this *Bibliography*; orders should be directed to, Kinokuniya Co., Ltd., 5-38-1 Sakuragaoka, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 156, Japan. Fax 0081-3-37067479. Enquiries should be addressed to: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko (The Oriental Library), 2-28-21 Honkomagome, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113, Japan. Fax 0081-3-39420120



*Japan 1879-March 1987* in 1988-1989. The compilation work which took four years to complete, started with the creation of a 13,000-item database taken from already existing bibliographies. Then was the task of checking the items with the original publications preserved at the National Diet Library and other libraries with Islamic and Middle Eastern collections for the purpose of not only checking the accuracy of such database information as authors' names, titles, and publication data, but also discovering titles of importance that may have been left out. As a result of this procedure, over 20,000 pieces of Islam- and Middle East-related research were tentatively listed up in the database. Finally, after screening via established criteria for the selecting titles, the database came to include 15,000 titles. Most of the titles come under the category of research, and as a rule, news reports have not been included. However travel journals and essays written by Japanese, as well as foreign correspondence prior to World War II, have been included under a special category entitled "Japan and the Middle East," in order to provide readers with information concerning the political and cultural relations between Japan and the Middle East. All the items are listed in the alphabetical order according to the Japanese phonetic system, then they are arranged according to research scopes of fourteen major research categories and fifty-three sub-categories. The number of the authors (including editors, translators) comes to 4,100 Japanese, 1,500 non-Japanese and 430 organizations. The number of the periodicals listed is about nine hundreds.

Regarding the fields of research that Japanese scholars have been concerned with, the history ranks first, occupying 19% of all the items, followed by postwar politics and international relations (16%), and postwar economy and industry (12%). This data reveals that the study of history with tight relation to Islamic religion and culture, has traditionally assumed an important role in understanding Islam and the Middle East, though interest in politics and economics is increasing over time (see Table 1).

Table 2 analyzes the database according to period of publications. It is surprising that research before World War II occupies about 20% of all the listed works, disproving the general assumption that Japan had little interest in the Middle East before the 1970s. In prewar Japan, published research steadily increased until reaching a peak in the 1930s. Then after the war publication suddenly ebbed until the 1960s.<sup>4</sup>

The *Bibliography* will not only provide the researcher with such quantitative data as what specific fields Japanese have been concerned with over the years, but is also capable of revealing qualitatively the various trends the Japanese scholarly community has experienced over its history. In the following sections, I would like to take up the ebb and flow of the little known prewar period.

In sum, we notice in the *Bibliography* data three trends in the prewar research. The first occurred at the beginning of Meiji era when Japanese Government tried to renew unequal diplomatic treaties concluded with Western countries at the end of the previous Edo era. The second trend appeared during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) when Japan began to colonize Korea and Manchuria. A third trend became apparent during the period after the Manchurian Incident when Japan began to occupy Manchuria and planned to invade China.

## Interest in Egypt and the Abolishment of Diplomatic Concessions

At the beginning of Meiji era the newly formed Japanese government was faced with the task of negotiating of unequal diplomatic treaties with the countries of Europe and the United States in an attempt to

<sup>4</sup> The reader should keep in mind the slightly different criteria established for selecting prewar and postwar materials, leading to qualitative differences between two periods.

abolish certain commercial and extraterritorial concessions made by the Shogunate government in 1858. In preparation the government began to investigate the mixed court system of Egypt, since Britain had intended to induce the system with foreign judges in Japan, much like it had first done in Egypt in 1875. *Code of Law in Egypt* was written by Rinsho Mitsukuri in 1878 and *The Mixed Court of Egypt* by Takashi Hara in 1889. In 1886 Takashi Hasegawa was sent to Egypt to investigate the situation and suggested in his report submitted the next year that the mixed court might infringe the suzerainty of the state.

Egypt had succeeded in establishing in 1881 its national government with its own constitution and parliament led by Ahmad Urabi, but after the invasion by the British army, Egypt was put under the British occupation. The book called *British Artillery Attack on Alexandria in 1882* by Neville Loyd Walford, which reported the invasion, was translated by the Military Executive of the Japanese Navy as early as in 1884. The reports on the French occupation in Tunis in 1881 were published by the General Staff Office as titles of *Conquest of Tunis* in 1883 and *Records of the Tunis Campaign* in 1887. These publications indicate the serious

concern by the Japanese government with military occupations by the Western powers at the time. It was feared that Japan was in the same position as those Middle Eastern countries facing danger of the military invasion and occupation by the Western powers.

This perception can be found in a report *Interview with Arabi Pasha* by Saiji Nomura, a customs officer, who in 1887 visited Arabi Pasha who was in exile on Ceylon Island. Nomura went to Alexandria upon returning from an inspection tour of Europe and visited the customs facilities. He was astonished by the fact that the British occupied all the higher offices there and that customs revenues were sent to the Committee of the Foreign Debts interest payment on Egypt's debt. At that time, Nomura asked an Egyptian, "Is there no Egyptian who can lead you?" He was told "There is

such a person, but he is now in Colombo on the island of Ceylon, spending a useless life repenting his failure and fishing." When Nomura's ship weighed anchor at Colombo by chance on his way back to Japan, he hurried to see Arabi Pasha, advised him to be careful when dealing with European countries.

We can also observe a feeling of sympathy on the part of Japanese with the oppressed



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peoples in Asia and Africa in the novel named *Adventure of the Beauty* (1885-1897) by Tokai Sanshi which became a best-seller in that time by applauding the nationalism of the oppressed peoples of the world. Similar sentiments dominated in his other work *Modern History of Egypt* (1889).

Diplomatic relations were established by a Japanese mission sent to Iran including members Masaharu Yoshida of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Yoshinobu Furukawa of the Army General Staff. Yoshida's *Exploring the Muslim world: Travels of Persia* of 1894 and Furukawa's *A Travelogue of Persia* of 1891 are records of the mission. In 1890 a warship called the Ertugrul, which was sent by Sultan Abdul Hamid II of Turkey to carry his mission to Japan, sank in the channel of the coast of Wakayama Prefecture. Some members were rescued by fishermen and two years later were returned to Turkey by the Japanese warship Kongo. This incident had long remained in the memories of the Turkish and Japanese people as a token of Japanese-Turkish friendship.

### Egypt as a Model of Colonial Rule for Japan: After Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War

The Japanese interest in the Middle East as oppressed nations underwent a change after its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Japan had already succeeded in re-negotiating the unequal treaties in 1899 and had began making economic and political advances into Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria. The victory in the Russo-Japanese War influenced relations between

Japan and the Middle East in two ways. First, there were Egyptians and Turkish writers who praised Japan's victory as a triumph of all oppressed Eastern people against the West: a good example is Mustafa Kamil's famous poem "The Rising Sun" (al-Shams al-Mushriqa) (1904). On the other hand, Japan was becoming a colonizer itself annexing Korea in 1910. Japan's image was changing from an Eastern nation resisting the Western powers in sympathy with the Middle East, to an imperial power in the East with intentions of politically and economically controlling its neighbouring countries. It is only natural, therefore,

that Japan's interest in the Middle East began to change together with its international position. This is evident in such publications as *Egypt as a Model of Colonial Policy* by Fusazo Kato (1905) and *The British Rule in Egypt* by Masaji Inoue (1906). There the British colonial rule in Egypt began to be studied as a model for Japanese colonial rule in Korea. E. Cromer, the General Consulate in Egypt since the British occupation of 1882, was praised in such research for managing to overcome the region's financial crisis. This standpoint also reflected the friendly relationship established between Japan and Britain after the conclusion of the

Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902. In fact Cromer's *Modern Egypt* was translated into Japanese in 1911 following the Japanese version of Franz W. Jerusalem's *An Outline of French Colonial Code* in 1910, both of which showed the strong interest of Japan in the principles of colonial rule laid down by the Western powers. In the preface for Cromer's translation, Shigenobu Ohkuma, former Prime Minister of Japan, expressed his opinion that the colonialization of Korea should be implemented finding a path through the competition among the Western powers, just like



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the way of Britain succeeded in the colonialization of Egypt.

Tokutomi Roka, a famous Japanese novelist detected such a turn by Japan to imperialism during his stay in the Middle East. He had planned a trip around the world after the end of World War I and departed from Japan with his wife in January, 1919 to visit Jerusalem. His travelogue, entitled *From Japan to Japan* was published in 1921 and became a best-seller for the time, selling 30,000 copies in one year. He had already traveled to Jerusalem in 1906 and wrote *A Journal of Pilgrimage* in 1906.

The 1919 trip was planned after he had apparently experienced a vision of God and felt that he and his wife had been born again as Adam and Eve. They first stayed in Egypt waiting for their visas to enter Palestine. There he saw a demonstration of Egyptians in the street demanding independence from Britain. Tokutomi stayed at a hotel near Ezbekiyya, where many English generals stayed, though his former stay had been at a cheap hotel. He was impressed so much at the demonstration parade of more than 20,000 Egyptian citizens, especially an old man who knelt down to pray for independence, that he wept with tremor and said to himself "Would that Egypt stand on its own!" This episode was not told merely as a burst of emotion, but rather based on his knowledge of modern Egyptian history. Indeed He wrote: "Egypt has been struggling to free itself from the lion's (Britain) claws for a long time now. It has been about forty years since Arabi Pasha was exiled to Ceylon."

Regarding the recent political position of Japan, he notes, "We, the rulers of Korea, came to and were shown this demonstration march pass right under our hotel. We should remember that Korea is now in the same position as Egypt, while Japan is in a position similar to Britain. We need to think over on both situations." Tokutomi realized that the position of Japan had shifted from the side of oppressed countries in the East to the side of the imperialistic Western powers. Then Tokutomi himself changed in a similar fashion from his anti-military stance to pro-war position around the Russo-Japanese War. Japan had already made inroads to the Middle East market at that time, as shown by a visit Tokutomi made to a brass vessel and tray factory in Damascus. There was told that the raw brass to make such implements was being imported from Japan.

## Islam and its Culture

From the time of the Russo-Japanese War there was a lot of interest shown in Japan concerning the religion and culture in the Islamic Middle East. Ken'ichi Sakamoto published his *Biography of Mohammed* in 1923, after translating the Holy Qur'an in 1920. There published other work on Muhammad as Nukaria Kaiten's *Invincible Mahomet* (1905) and Kitsuo Kuchimura's *Mahomet: A Holy Prophet* (1923). *Islam* by Kame Segawa was the first attempt to explain the doctrine of Islam as a whole. Here we should note the attitude of Sakamoto who told as it follows: "Islam had spread to the eastern end of the Asian continent, but did not reach as far as Japan. Thus, Japan's knowledge of Islam was not brought directly from Arabia, but based on European studies. Europeans, however, did not correctly understand Muhammad the Prophet and Islam. Their study was distorted by such sources as the Song of Roland and the writings of the Protestants, in which Muhammad was described as Satan. Any criticism of Muhammad should be via Islam, when one would like to do it."

Sakamoto had already discovered the distorted Orientalist understanding of Islam, and insisting the need to read European research at the time in a critical view.

First hand accounts of culture and religion were published by Kotaro Yamaoka, the first Japanese to make a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1912 in his travelogue entitled *Mystery of the World: Travels of Arabia* and also travelogue by Ippei Tanaka who included an account of the hajj in the famous journal <*Nihon oyobi Nihonjin (Japan and Japanese)*>, in 1924.

As for literature *Arabian Nights* was translated into Japanese in two ways: both from E.Lane's version (Akinosuke Hinatsu, a scholar of English literature, 1925-1927), and from R.F. Burton's version (Soichi Oya, 1929-1930). The *Rubayyat*, a famous poem of Persian literature was translated by Shigeru Araki and Sofu Taketomo in 1920-1922; Araki, who was a famous collector of Persian and Arabic literature, wrote *Persian Literature* in 1922. Tadazumi Ida and Seitaro Okajima published articles on the thought of Ibn Khaldun, in 1921 and 1930 respectively. Both attempt show the progressiveness of Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history, compared with that of the West. Chutarō Ito, who traveled extensively in Turkey and Syria, published an article entitled *On the Origin of Arabian Arts* in 1909. All of this work reveals a trend among Japanese scholars to understand the Islamic world as having its own culture different from both Western and Eastern culture. It was a trend that began with exoticism and curiosity in the Meiji era, then developed into true discovery and understanding.

### Visit of Muslims to Japan

In February 1909, Abdul Reshit Ibrahim, a Muslim of Tatar under the Russian territorial rule came to Japan to meet with leading politicians such as Hirofumi Ito, ex-Prime Minister of Japan at the beginning of the Meiji era, Shigenobu Okuma, Tsuyoshi Inukai, Prime Minister in the Showa era and social activists. The purpose of the visit was to seek support from a fellow Asian people in the struggle for independence from the West, particularly Russia. Abdul Rshit Ibrahim's memoirs entitled

*Islamic World and Propaganda of Islam*, were translated into Japanese by Kaori Komatsu and Hisao Komatsu in 1991. We can read in them his strong expectations concerning Japan, which had defeated imperial Russia, the enemy of the Tatars in 1905, as well as Japanese people whom he described as honest and polite. In 1918 Muslims of the Bashkirs and the Tatars who fought the Red Russian Army sought refuge in Japan led by Qurban Ali, and established their propaganda center of Islam in Japan at the Tokyo Muslim School in 1927.

Japan began to trade with such Middle Eastern countries as Egypt and Turkey after World War I. Reports on prices, markets trends, custom rates, etc. could be found in such journals as *Boeki* (Trade) *Sangyo* (Industry), *Toyo Boeki Kenkyu* (Studies on Trade with the East), *Keizai Geppou* (Monthly Economic Report) by means of Japanese correspondents stationed in the Middle East. Japanese trade offices were set up at Istanbul in 1928 and at Cairo in 1929 providing more accurate and detailed information for Japan. Most of exports to the region were textile goods, but Japanese companies also traded canned foods, green tea and straw mat prayer carpets in response to the demand in the Middle East. Japan's economic advance into Middle Eastern markets caused rivalries with other countries, especially in Egypt, where strong opposition of Britain forced Japan to retreat from the market. Egyptian policy concerning this problem was also reported in the above-mentioned journals.

### Founding of the Institutes for Islamic Studies

Islamic studies in prewar Japan reached its peak in the 1930s and 40s, as more than 1600 related works were published during the fifteen years up to the end of the World War II, an average of 112 publications per year. The rapid increase in publication was due in large part to the founding of several institutes devoted to Islamic studies. The Institute of Islamic Studies and Greater Japan Muslim League were founded in 1938 and East Asia Research Institute and East Asia Economic Research Bureau of South Manchurian Railway, were set up in 1939. They published such journals *Kaikyoken* (The Islamic World), *Kaikyo Sekai* (The Muslim World), *Toa Kenkyusho Shobo* (Journal of East Asia Research Institute), *Shin Ajia* (New Asia), while many of the top experts in the field like Koji Okubo, Hajime Kobayashi, Hisao Matsuda, Tomohide Naito, Hiroshi Iwanaga, Shumei Okawa, and Shinji Maejima were made research members. If we include *Kaikyo Jijo* (News on Islam), published by the Bureau



of Research and Documentation at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and *Isuramu* (Islam), published by Society of Islamic Culture, the number of publications increased to 100 in 1938, 160 in 1939, 198 in 1940 and 217 in 1941 despite the great difficulty in obtaining materials for publication under the war time economy. It was at this period that mosques were founded first at Kobe in 1935, then at Nagoya in 1937, and finally at Tokyo in 1938.

Most of the content consisted of translations of the Qur'an and its commentaries, primers to the Middle Eastern languages, and reports on political affairs, but academic work can also be found like review articles dealing with European studies, and such high quality publication as *History of Islamic Countries* (1934) and *Cultural History of Dry Land Asia* (1938). The foundation of research institutes was linked to Government policy and the idea of the Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere Plan, which hoped for the co-operation of Muslim people residing in Manchuria, China and Southeast Asia, strategic points in Japan's Empire, as well as Muslims in the Middle East who were fighting Britain. Japan would like to be the Empire in the East confronting the Western powers.

Despite the great difficulties involved in producing scholarship during wartime, a lot of academic work appeared, including Tadazumi Ida's studies on Arab music, historical studies such as "Studies on Mamluks" (1939) and <Studies in al-Zanj> (1939) by Hajime Kobayashi, "A Study of Sirop" (1939) by Shinji

Maejima, Kametaro Yagi's research on Sufism, *History of Arabian Thought* (1941) by Toshihiko Izutsu, and *History and Culture of Iran* (1941) by Reichi Gamo. Ida's work had a wide perspective on culture though it is mostly based on European scholarship, while Yagi, Maejime, and Kobayashi used the primary sources edited in Europe in their work.

## Orientalism in Japan

Most of the above-mentioned institutes like the Institute of Islamic Studies, East Asia Economic Research Bureau of South Manchurian Railway, and East Asia Research Institute were closed after the war due to their imperialistic activities. Scholars had to continue their studies without any organization. Islamic and Middle Eastern studies in Japan declined until the Suez Issue and the liberation struggle of Algeria in 1956 drew again wide interest among the Japanese people. This long decline was due not only to the disappearance of the institutes which had organized Middle Eastern studies, but also to a loss of vision. The Middle East came to be studied in terms of Third World struggles for the national independence in Asia and Africa, a standpoint much different from interests before World War II.

As this paper has attempted to show, the various pre-war Japanese research did not necessarily stem from mere academic concerns, but also from contemporary problems common to both the Middle East and Japan. However these problems did not originate from the situation of the Middle East *per se*, but rather from the political situation in Japan, like its solidarity with the oppressed countries of the East which was easily transferred to viewpoints held by the Western colonialists, resulting in the idea of the Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere Plan. For this reason the research done before World War II, could not very well be built upon to form a postwar body of knowledge, because the viewpoint itself had changed from an east - to - west political situation to a west - to - east one, and then in reverse. In this sense, it is remarkable that Hajime Kobayashi and other scholars had already proposed to study the Middle East as a cultural area <the Medient> different from the East and the West in 1940s.

Edward Said has stated that the Orientalism of Europeans divided the world into the East and the West, resulting the idea of the East as a completely different world from the West. This Orientalism not only produced a distorted image of the Orient, but also

reflected the self-image of the Occident itself. Said's theory of Orientalism is now accepted by scholars both in the West and the East. Said's work was translated into Japanese by Yuzo Itagaki, Hideaki Sugita, and

Noriko Imazawa in Japan in 1985. The Islamic and Middle Eastern studies in Japan reflect a self-image of modern Japan that wavered in support between the East and the West, changing colors like chameleon. It is important for future studies that the reflected image becomes a self-portrait, whether it be negative or positive.

**TABLE 1**  
**Research Fields of Works**

I	General Works	609	(4.2)
II	Religion and Thought	988	(6.8)
III	Law	387	(2.6)
IV	Ecology and Geography	688	(4.7)
V	History	2,696	(18.5)
VI	Politics and International Relations(Post World War II)	2,390	(16.4)
VII	Economy and Industry	1,668	(11.7)
VIII	Languages and Literature	1,121	(7.7)
IX	Science and Technology	179	(1.2)
X	The Arts	595	(4.1)
XI	Folklore and Ethnology	295	(2.0)
XII	Society and Sociology	476	(3.3)
XIII	Japan and the Middle East	2,267	(15.5)
XIV	Academic Trends	251	(1.7)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,610</b>	

The number in parenthesis indicates percentage of each distribution.

**TABLE 2**  
**Chronological Distribution of Works**

Years	Total Number	
Average		
1869-1904	166	4.6
1905-1930	907	34.9
1931-1945	1,685	112.3
Before World War II Total	2,758	
1945-1949	67	13.4
1950-1959	902	90.2
1960-1969	2,174	217.4
1970-1979	3,766	376.6
1980-1988	4,617	546.3