

Dear Brothers in Islam in North America !
Assalam Alaikum wa Rahmatu-llah wa Barakatuh

Hearty congratulations to you on your holding The 17th Annual Convention of ICNA.

I have given lectures on history for 25 years at a Japanese college (Meteorological College) in a city quite near to Tokyo. I was accepted as a muslim, Al-Hamdu Lillah ! , at the Islamic Center-Japan, on the 23rd Dec. '83. Then I decided that I should lecture on Islam from that day forth under the nominal title of History. Since then I have made every effort to teach Japanese students (or, to study together with Japanese students, to be exact) Islamic thought.

Only superficial information on Islam is prevalent in Japan. But don't blame Islamic Missions of Japan for that ! They have done everything they could to teach and spread Islam, but in vain. A broad and deep river runs between Islam and Japan. I, nevertheless, am convinced that there is a bridge across the river. But only one bridge ! Only one bridge spans the broad and deep river. Nature is the very bridge ! Islamic view of nature is very approachable for the Japanese view of nature (for the Japanese religious sentiment). Both the views, so to speak, mesh with each other. Crossing this bridge, we Japanese will be ready to accept Islam; yes, WE are ready to become Muslims.

As my students learned of much correspondence between the Islamic view of nature and the Japanese religious sentiment, they began to have an interest in Islam !

Yes, Islam is not heterogeneous for us Japanese at all. In other words, Islamic universality itself never consider our religious sentiment to be heterogeneous. As long as Islam is universal, it must hold true in our religious heart. Verily it is so universal that we Japanese, and you Brothers, all human beings were born as Muslims; only being unaware of it on our part.

Dear Brothers in Islam in North America ! In a Far Eastern country remote from Makka al-Mukarrama, in a small city, at a sm

-all college, at a little classroom, my students and I keep studying Islam, with untiring zeal, with ever increasing interest and with the aim of crossing that bridge someday !

Assalam Alaikum !

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