

“Islamism is not Terrorism - the Report of the Islamist World Assembly in Britain -”

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Place: London, the United Kingdom

Organizer: The Jalsa Salana United Kingdom 2015

Kobe International Christ Church

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Theme scripture: “Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.” (Romans 3:29-30)

<Introduction>

Not a few Japanese people who recall terrorism when they heard about Islam religion. Compared with paganism, monotheism is intolerant so people react to feel scariness. Some people believe that Islam is the terrorism through the media reports about the destruction of the historical ruins by Taliban and killing hostages by the Islamic State. The Tokyo subway sarin attack incident (1995), which killed a lot of people, made people to think that it is scary if the person extremely devoted into religion.

Only the religion you believe is decent and others are heresy. Is there no salvation in there?

Islam is roughly divided into Sunni Islam and Shia Islam. Shia Islam is 10% of the total Muslims.¹ The Ahmadiyya that invited me this time is only an imitator of Sunni Islam from the point of view of Shia Islam. 30,000 people from 90 countries participated in the Ahmadiyya “Jalsa Salana (annual conference)” that was held at the suburbs of London, the United Kingdom from August 21 to 23, 2015. Not only the King of Ghana, President of Senegal and Vice President of Sierra Leone, but also other important people from each country sent messages with quotations from the “Quran (Official name ‘Holy Quran n’)”.



The Republic of Ghana / Ashanti Empire, Osei Tutu II (Born May 6, 1950)

¹ Sakurai,K. 2006. Shiiaha – Daidousuru Isuramusyosuha. Chukoshinshyo.

According to Wikipedia, Shia Islam believers are estimated to 10% to 20% of total Muslims. In 2009, the number of believers is estimated about 200 million.



Conference venue map at the entrance



The entire hall of the Jalsa Salana where 30,000 people together.

The preconception that have been seen in every monotheistic religion, such as exclusion, intolerance and ultimatism, which are occupying religions endlessly, are deleted. It became the opportunity for each divided religions, Christianity, Buddhism, Shintoism and others to realize about insisting own legitimacy that is a foreignness which has no difference from Aum Shinrikyo.

Then, let's consider about intolerance that religion has potentially.

(1) The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

a. Origin of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which is the most worldwide Muslim Community in the Muslim world, was founded in Punjab, India, in 1889. The founder is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad [1835–1908].² In 1947, at the time of Indian independence, they were forced to immigrate to Pakistan from their hometown India where Hinduism is a state religion.³ Civilian's exchanges were held in the tide of the separatist and independence movements. When Bangladesh, the eastern Pakistan region, became independent in 1971, stability of economy, politics and diplomatic in Pakistan were

² Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received a revelation at the age of 41. He raised the Caliphate and he called himself as the promised Messiah and Mahdi. However, unlike the Bayání Faith and The Bahá'í Faith that have disengaged from Islam, he established it as a true Islam and reformist. It was divided into the Qadian and Lahore in 1914, after his death.

³ Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. 2004. Tadhkirah. Islam International Publications Ltd. 1-410.
Hirano, Y. 2002. Sir Salman Rushdie "Shame" niokeru Pakistan no rekishi. Nijyuseiki eibngaku kenkyukai.270.

weakened.⁴ During the presidential period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto [1928-1979] from 1971 to 1973, in the defeat of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, in order to solve the dissatisfaction of the people, the Ahmadiyya was made to be a scapegoat as if they were the root of evil. Persecutions, discriminations, and contempt for the Ahmadiyya from the same Muslims are still continuing. The 5th Caliph Ahmad himself, who gave a lecture, was also taken into custody for 11 days.⁵

5)

b. Islam

Muḥammad (محمد Arabic pronunciation <<fuṣḥā>> of Muhammet) [around 570 – 632], is the founder of Islam. He is from the prestigious the Quraysh tribe in Arab. At his age around 40, he started to receive revelation from Allah (God), and started preaching in Makkah. Due to the persecution from the privileged class people, they escaped to the town of Yathrib (Medina) in 622. This migration is called as the Hegira (Hijra). He died in Medina. Dictionary defines as “*Muhammet*”.⁶ “Muhammad” is a popular name in Muslims, so he was called as the “Prophet Muhammad” for distinction at the conference.

At the conference, English, French Arabic, Urdu language flow from the pulpit. Headphones were handed over to every invited guest from overseas so that they could understand in either in English or French. Relationships among Judaism, Islam and Christianity are like brothers. Islam is a religion that Muhammad started after receiving the revelation of God, so they define the “Old Testament” as the religious text. Moses that appears in the Bible is pronounced as “*Mūsā*”, and Jesus as “*Isa*”.

For Jews, there is Moses, as a leader who is still trusted as a mediator between God and human beings. The feeling toward the Caliph (*Khalīfa* in Arabic) as the heir of Prophet Muhammad is similar to the absolute trust in Moses who heard the people’s groaning, sufferings and sorrows and stood up for them in Egypt.

They believe that even Muslims and Christians worship the same God since Adam who is regarded as the first human being but they did not understand each other correct, so the God sent Muhammad to tell people the true teaching as the final prophet.⁷

c. Persecution against the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Once they introduce about themselves as “We are the Muslims”, or “We are the Islam”, the fire of ruthless persecutions are rose, Even though the Ahmadiyya believers abandoned their jobs, local communities and hometowns to migrate from India. I guess that there was an intention to distract public attention from the independence of Bangladesh which is economically rich.⁸ There is no Christian church in Islam. There is no one who is determined as a cleric in the Western World.

⁴ 2010. Hanif, M. Why Pakistan’s Ahmadi community is officially detested. BBC News. June 16.

Nakano, K. 2014. Pakistan seijishi – Minshyukoka heno kunan no michi. Sekai rekishi sushyo. 93-95.

⁵ 2011. *Life Sketch and Services of Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad – Khalifatul Masih V*. Retrieved. March 12.

⁶ 2006-2014. Matsumura, A (Editor). *Daijirin*. The 3rd edition. Sanseidō.

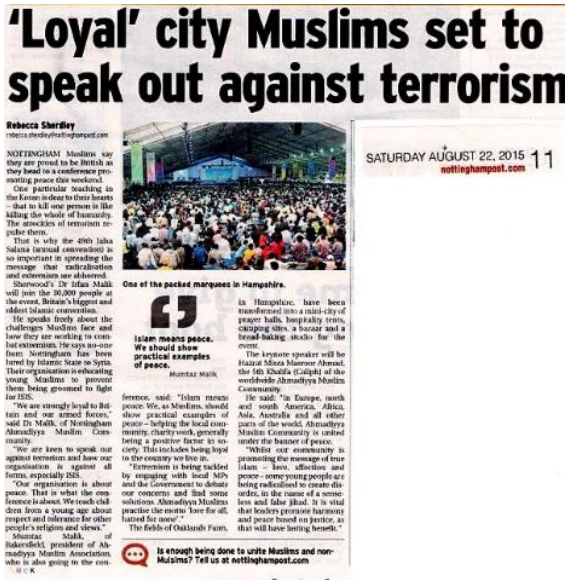
⁷ Okawa, R. 2013. *Isulamkasuru sekai*. Heibonsha. 31.

⁸ 2010. Hanif, M. *Why Pakistan’s Ahmadi community is officially detested*. BBC News. June 16.

2011. *Life Sketch and Services of Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad – Khalifatul Masih V*. Retrieved. March 12.

There is no something close to the papacy or the holy orders.⁹ As the highest authority of the community, Caliph acts as a Messiah.

Abū Bakr al-Baghdadi from “the Islamic State (ISIL: Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) calls himself as the Caliph and does terrorism act in Iraq and Syria, so he draws derision from the world.



“Nottingham Post” August 22, 2015

In the Ahmadiyya, Caliph has appeared from repeated difficulties and sufferings. Instead of prognosticating future events, they send messages to people as the mouthpiece of the will of God. Since the Ahmadiyya interprets and deciphers the “Holly Quran” faithfully, so they accepted to be in prison by the Pakistani government’s string-pulling. In 1984, they moved to the United Kingdom for seeking a place of relief.

(2) Persecution and Patience for trials.
a. Germination of the renunciation of war

The majority of Islam that claim their orthodoxy in Pakistan had no choice but change into the militaristic color due to the separation of India, the collapse with Bangladesh and the threat by neighboring countries. The Ahmadiyya teaches people that it is unbelief to do the act of killing by the flames of hatred from the “Holly Quran”.¹⁰ In other words, it is a germination of the renunciation of war.

While the historical Christian churches adhere to the Augustinus’s “Just War Theory”, Menno Simons [1496-1561] who founded the Mennonites, and Alexander Mack [1679-1735] of Schwarzscher Hof in Germany along with other 7 members founded the Brethren together.

⁹ 2008. Khaled M.Abou El Fadl. *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*. Translated by Keiichi Yonetani. 31.

¹⁰ 2006. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad. *Freedom of Speech & Tolerance in Islam*. Baitul Futuh Moden. 4-5.

From about 1871, it began as the Protestant for the renunciation of war.¹¹ From around 1871, the Brethren became to be known as a pacifism Protestant.

Even during the Bhutto's presidential period and the suppression by the Anti-Ahmadi Laws in Zia-ul-Haq's presidential period, no armed uprising had appeared.

I cannot think but it was not a coincidence that I from the Super-denomination Brethren Church was invited to the Jalsa Salana of the Ahmadiyya not only as the representative of Japan but also the Christian world. Because there are many religious people in Japan who are having dialogues with other religions. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have a deep relationship between the Buddhist world, which is the mainstream, and the traditional groups like the Shinto world.¹² Can we be glad as *kairos* [timely] events of 70 years since the Second World War that the Jalsa Salana choose to invite the Super-denomination Brethren Church which is the imitator of the Christian world? I do not think so.

b. Similarities with the Brethren Church

I can raise three commonalities between the Ahmadiyya and the minority group, Super-denomination Brethren Church.

The first is the theoretical armament on renunciation of war.¹³

Secondly, as an opened religion, we organize the conference of ecumenicity, gathering and seminars in various countries around the world and keep having dialogue with different religions and sects. We are not a doctrinism group that the Japanese usually imagine. Even though we are faithful to our religious righteousness, we never criticize about other Islam, other religions and sects.¹⁴ It is tolerance. In other words, radicals, and if I express correctly, it draws a line from a fanatic way. It will not fall into "exclusivism". It is different from the Jehovah's Witnesses which is said to be the world's greatest heretics. Then, as "inclusivism", like the Roman Catholic church, we take the initiative at the point of contact with other religions and maintain the appropriate status as the religious elite empire, and show an attitude that we will not let it go once we hold it. Even the person serve the organization as a representative for ten years, he does not give the way for new blood but remain seated for his lifetime. The Ahmadiyya is "pluralism".

Thirdly, we develop relief volunteers for the weak people at the affected areas as soon as

¹¹ "Super-denomination Brethren Church" page in "Kobe International Christ Church" website.

¹² 2013. *Chugai Nippoh*. September 14, December 3.

Reference: "Ecumenicity", "Interfaith Dialogue" in "Kobe International Christ Church" website.

¹³ Iwamura, Y. 2015. *Christianity and Pacifism*. OCC College. April.

"Therefore We ordained for the Children of Israel⁵³ that he who slays a soul unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading mischief on earth shall be as if he had slain all mankind; and he who saves a life shall be as if he had given life to all mankind." (Holy al-Qur'an, 5:33)

¹⁴ "Believers! Be upright bearers of witness for Allah, and do not let the enmity of any people move you to deviate from justice. Act justly, that is nearer to God-fearing. And fear Allah. Surely Allah is well aware of what you do." (Holy al-Qur'an, 5:9)

possible.¹⁵ There is a dynamic gospel understanding to turn for practicing in society. We visited Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture for the Tohoku volunteer by the same bus and had meetings with several religious people.¹⁶

Difference from the Brethren Church

As a difference between the Brethren Church and the Ahmadiyya, the perspective of secularity is different. It can be said that it is same as the difference between the galactic nebula and other nebulae does not become the same orbital road. The Ahmadiyya is different from ISIL terrorists who put their hope in “彼岸 (*Higan*. Another world)”. The Ahmadiyya is much more “此岸 (*Shigan*. This world)”.

Following to the “Holly Quran”, “Taught man what he did not know” (96:6), Muslims pursue high education. Mr. Zahid Khan appealed to the audience the intellectualism and scientism in the morning’s lecture on August 22.

In 1974, the Bhutto administration at that time sought nuclear armaments to against India with intellectuals. Mr. Abdus Salam [1926-1996], who received the Nobel Prize in Physics of 1979, was a believer of the Ahmadiyya and he contributed to the science for the government, but he was criticized because he was against the nuclear armaments.¹⁷ The Ahmadiyya believers, who immigrated to the United Kingdom, have high educational background as well as a strong desire to learn, so they have been accepted by the intellectual class in the country. Not only in the United Kingdom, but it is remarkable that socially successful people in the world support the Ahmadiyya.

They have a financial base to build huge mosques around the world. Therefore, I cannot quit say that it was a historical millenary that I was invited to the conference even though I come from the Brethren that is consisted by the incomparable low-income people, to recall about the post seventy years of the world war and the post twenty years of the Aum Shinrikyo incidents.

c. Differences from general Islam

They also learn from the “Holly Quran” to do not start war proactively. It is too ignorant that Japanese people do not know that the Jihad is not a holy war. Inner “strenuous efforts” is the first thing of the Jihad. The effort to discipline oneself is called the “inner Jihad” and the effort to spread Islam is called “external Jihad”.¹⁸ At the everywhere in the conference venue, people exchange greetings, “*Al-salām ‘alaykum* (hello)”. They do the same action toward the new people. When I was teaching Hebrew, a pastor asked me a question in 2008 that either “*Salam*” is the same as

¹⁵ 2014. Minesaki,H. *Homu kara globalu heto hirogaru jinruigaku*.

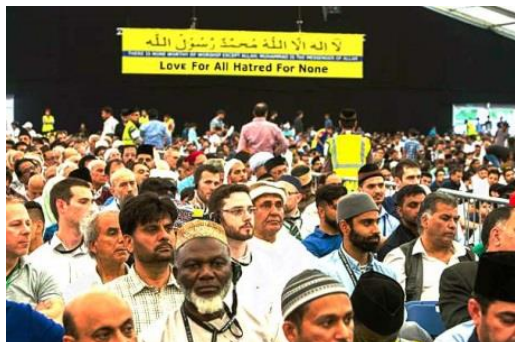
¹⁶ 2013. *Chugai Nippoh*. August 22, September 8 ~ October 12.
2014. *The Christ Newspaper*. May 24.

¹⁷ 1998. *Scientists of Pakistan*. Philately. Pakistan Post Office. November 21.
Department Archived from the original on 20 February 2008. Retrieved 18 February 2008.
2002. Abe,H. *For Beginners Isuramukyo*. Gendaishokan. 43.
2015. Akutsu,M. *Spirituality to heiwa*. Being Net Press. 121-124.

¹⁸ 2012. Bouzid,O. *Isuramuniokeru sei to shi – Kuruan no shiten kara*. “Think about the ‘death’ together” lecture. Kobe Shimbun Kaikan.

“*Shalom* (peace)” in Hebrew or not, so I checked in the dictionary that they are same origin.

On the wall of the back seat of the large tent venue that can contain tens of thousands of people, there is the slogan that all attendees have in common in every year, “Love for all, hatred for none”.



Love for All, Hatred for None

Therefore, there is a real significance of the “Holly Quran” that is not only about the obedience but also the practice of peace. Meanwhile, like some “Muslim countries”, the execution of severe judgement that ignore someone's human rights by the “*Sharia* (Holy law)” with authoritarianism and ultraorthodox if someone commits inappropriate actions is that can be said a fallout of a crucial killings by the crusade of the Roman Catholic Church. The Ahmadiyya is returning to the “Holly Quran” and pursuing a moderate teaching to show tolerance, love and patience. In general, Muslims have a historical background that they can't walk with one's head held high in Western countries. The Ahmadiyya is opposite from the Islam that does not clearly to confess that “We are the Muslims” in the history. The Ahmadiyya has boldness that cannot be seen in the minority Koreans living in Japan who are the people most discriminated, prejudiced and their human rights have been ignored. The confidence of a superior education, social success and possession of the absolute veridicality become energy to preach the practical advice of the life of the “Holly Quran” in the area where they live. Therefore, the believers who attends the festivals in the world, they positively give greetings with smiles when they meet guests from everywhere in the world.

(3) Specificity of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

a. Inheritance of faith

If it is a religious elite empire, they should be proud about what they achieved through their religion with boast about their planning abilities, conference managements and man powers. The Ahmadiyya does not have such an increased swollenness. Perhaps, the circumstances that they have been persecuted made them humble. However, let's compare them to the international convention of the worldwide Jehovah's Witnesses who is frowned upon as a heretic. If we talk about the witness, there is a mechanism to advertise the cross-section view of the success of the conference, which no other groups can imitate it, by publications and to touch the pride of believers.

I participated in the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Yamaguchi Prefecture, which was held in late July 2015, as a representative of the Hyogo Youth Services Administration. There many Boy Scouts exist in the Middle East, so members also came from Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Approximately 30,000 people spend a tent life together, and there are day visitors and greetings from the crown prince. In the London venue, believers in the United Kingdom create tent villages and people participated in the same way as the World Scout Jamboree camps.



Participants



All human beings are brothers and sisters

Even under the strong hot weather, a friendly international goodwill, bright smiles and displays of orderly managements were noticeable. In Japan, despite there is a universal youth development program which is not inferior to the world, it is decreasing due to an influence of exam-preparation study and extracurricular activities in the school. Compared to the scouting activities that have begun in 1907, I was able to discover the typical Ahmadiyya key to succeed in faith at the London conference. In other words, it is the child education that would be hard to found in the historical Muslim society.

The conference venue was a big tent that martial arts gym could be fit in, and it was a simple facility which had no equipment such as an air conditioner.

Children from participating countries were also listening to the programs from 10 am to 7pm. It is not uncommon to see well-behaved elementary school students at the gathering of Soka Gakkai, which is the biggest religion in Japan. In case of the management of the big scale of the conference, usually well experienced adults or professionals, who have years of practice, operate it. However, at the Jalsa Salana conference, the liveliest services were carried by the age group of elementary school and junior high school students. They were divided into a pair and distributed soft drinks in the venue. At the time of meal, they served to prepare foods, napkins, drinks on the table and clean up after people eating. You can tell that they were not forced to do that because their parents order to do it, when they came to your table with smiles.



Ministrants of young people during the World Assembly



Simultaneous message on the stage Pastor Yoshio Iwamura



20150822London
MyMessage.mp3

Therefore, the succession of faith is fruitful. Even after they become a high school student or a university student, they can confess “no” to the temptation from the worldliness because the method to build their foundation to foster their faith is deft.

b. Misunderstanding on Islam

Under the understanding of the dualism that “Islam powers are extreme violence and evil, Westerns are democratic and right”, we are not able to see the truth. There are unfair straight border lines that the strong powers drew forcibly. Competitions of oil concession by developed countries in the Middle East in the 20th century. In both Islamic State and Al-Qaeda, there was a background that the United States Government trained rogue people to raise a mercenary army and provided weapons and safety zones.

The Islamic State expands their territories in 15 countries with 29 groups. If we just continue to act confrontational attitude of thought to exclude fanatic terrorist groups, we will be in the same muddy situation as the Vietnam War. However, it is regrettable that we cannot see the attitude of the “cross the Rubicon” to set off alarm bells in the media reporting.¹⁹

In 2003, when former President Bush invaded Iraq, he challenged the Jihad (Holy war) by the Crusader and the name of God. However, the media did not say “Christian terrorism”. In the “Holly Quran”, it is written that it is forbidden to convert people forcibly in mission, “Had your Lord so willed, all those who are on the earth would have believed.101 Will you, then, force people into believing? (10:99)” Therefore, suicide bombings were forced actions by the threatening on their family, so it is not related to faith.

A biased coverage in Japan makes it impossible to imagine Muslim’s original life. It is full of misunderstandings and discriminations. People who dislike insects are disgusting because insects do not speak. In the same way, Japanese people, who have few contacts with Islam, are trying to be directly involved in conflicts in the Middle East by the Coalition of the Willing, as a radical defense.

¹⁹ Iwamura, Y. 2015. *Kyujyo Meimai no Kai nusu*. Vol.22. Minnade kangaeru Kyujyo Meimai no Kai. “Misunderstanding to Islam”. May.4.

c. Hostage Incident²⁰

Around October 2014, before Kenji Goto [1967-2015] became a hostage on January 7, 2015, there was the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo attack incident by the Islamic extremism. Medias only took up the incident as the face of “religion” versus “freedom of expression”. For example, January 19 of this year, the headline appeared on the Asahi Shimbun, “The Charlie Hebdo shooting. Do not allow violence against freedom of speech”. Although it was the freedom of expression, if you violate the human rights of others, it is a problem. For example, is it possible to admit the nerve of the editor-in-chief of manga, who makes fun of the Emperor in Japan, when he demonstrates with a placard with as “I am OO”? Did Japanese people demonstrate at the time of an indiscriminate bombing by Israel to Gaza in Palestine? Even more, the nerves of Japanese people to claim human rights by the freedom of speech are strange since they did not do anything toward a hate speech of anti-Koreans.

My friend Mr. Anees Ahmad Nadeem from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, who did work with me through the Tohoku Volunteer, he told me on January 25 that, “I feel deep sorrow and condemn the mean-spirited acts. Islam talks about love, respect and peace, so the evil incidents of ISIL are far from Islam”. Therefore, as it is written “Thou shalt not kill” in the any religious scriptures, if you have a faith, you would not take a sword. I would like to thank Allah that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has arisen to overcome the misunderstandings for Islam for the peace of the world.

<Conclusion>

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is also active in Japan.

In November 2015, the largest mosque in Japan was built in Nagoya.

For the peace and reconciliation of the world, not just by only words of “Put your sword back in its place, Jesus said to him, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword (Matthew 26:52)”, but I hope that a footstep of practice will be embodied by religious pluralism people. Prime Minister Abe strongly insists about “Proactive Contribution to Peace”. However, it is used in the opposite meaning to the original implication of words. It is not “Positive Peace”. It is not pacifism, but it is warlike and militarism. If you are a religious person, you can serve to open the door that holds hands together to prove that we are the one by coming and going between close but far neighboring countries like North Korea and China. It was my United Kingdom visit that I gained truth opportunity to dedicate to the *Volunteer-dō* (The principle way of volunteer).

²⁰ *ibid.*