



# JaCMES Lecture Series The Middle East and Japan

## No 2: Muslims and Islamic Studies in Japan

Friday, February 22, 2008

Room "Ile de France", 1st Floor, Crowne Plaza, Hamra Street

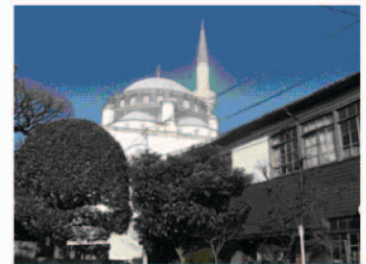
18:00 - 18:10	Welcome Address: Prof. Hidemitsu Kuroki (Director, JaCMES)
18:10 - 18:50	Lecture 1: Prof. Akira Usuki <b>Islamic Studies in Japan during World War II</b>
18:50 - 19:05	Discussion
19:05 - 19:20	Coffee Break
19:20 - 20:00	Lecture 2: Prof. Keiko Sakurai <b>Muslims in Contemporary Japan</b>
20:00 - 20:15	Discussion

**Lecture 1:** Islamic studies in wartime Japan began to flourish in 1938 (one year after the outbreak of the Japan-China War) with the establishment of several research institutes. The purpose of their activities was, above all, to mobilize the Muslims in China to counter both the Chinese nationalists and communists. Prof. Akira Usuki will explain the characteristics distinguishing Islamic studies during the war years from the postwar period in Japan. He will then critically discuss how the wartime ideology of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" situated the roles of Muslims in Asia, introducing the political thought of Shumei Okawa, a representative ideologue of that period, who published a Japanese translation of the Quran in 1950.



Shumei Okawa  
(1886-1957)

**Lecture 2:** Muslims living in contemporary Japan number approximately seventy thousand. The majority of this population is comprised of immigrants from various Asian and Middle Eastern countries, such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran, who came to Japan in search of employment during the mid-1980s and early 1990s. Many married Japanese women and raised their family in Japan. Muslims have managed to influence their communities (by importing halal foods and building mosques, for example) while conforming to local societies there. Prof. Keiko Sakurai will explain their socio-economic backgrounds, share insights into the daily lives of Muslims in Japan, and examine their social interaction with Japanese society.



Tokyo Mosque (photo taken 2008)

**Prof. Akira Usuki** specializes in Palestine/Israel studies and teaches modern Middle Eastern history at Japan Women's University, Tokyo. His publications include *The Invisible Jews: The Orient of Israel* (1998), *Fundamentalism* (1999), and *Palestine-Israeli Conflict in Global Dimension* (2004). (All in Japanese)

**Prof. Keiko Sakurai** specializes in modern Iranian history and teaches Islamic culture and comparative sociology at Waseda University, Tokyo. Her publications include *Contemporary Iran: Changes in the Land of the God* (2001), *Muslim Societies in Japan* (2003), and *The Shi'ites: The Rising Minority* (2006). (All in Japanese)