

**THE ISLAMIC WORLD  
AND  
JAPAN**

IN PURSUIT OF  
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

**THE JAPAN FOUNDATION**

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to Japan. Unlike most of you, I am not a specialist in Islamic studies. I work for the National Museum of Ethnology and my interest is in comparative studies of civilization based on the findings of archaeology and cultural anthropology. I would thus like to speak briefly about some of the ideas I have developed in the course of my work, especially those concerning the resurgence of Islamic interest in Japanese interest in the Islamic countries, and especially in the Middle East, is growing rapidly. One of the reasons, of course, is that events in this area have recently had a major impact throughout the world. But I should like to note as well that substantial changes in conditions in Japan itself have also significantly contributed to increasing our interest.

During the past thirty years, Japan has rapidly industrialized. One of the preconditions for such industrialization is an abundant supply of energy. As is well known, the bulk of Japan's energy has been supplied by oil from the Middle East; yet previously our country had been relatively untouched by events in that area, no matter how great their impact on others. Today, however, even the smallest incident there affects the very basis of Japan's existence.