

The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (45)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

Chapter 6: Genealogy of Islamic terrorism

6-2(45) Religious terrorism crosses the border easily

Terrorism means the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims (from the Oxford Dictionary). According to the definition of terrorism, there should be a political aim in Islamic terrorism. What is the political aim of Islamic terrorism? Main target of Islamic terror is the secular regime which terrorist regarded it as apostates. Their aim is to overthrow the secular regime. Iranian Revolution was the typical example.

Many terrorist activities by Shiite were aimed to defeat Mohammad Rezā Shāh Pahlavi who was a secular ruler of Iran. At last Iranian Revolution took place in 1979. Ayatollah Khomeini established a ruling system combining religion and politics together. It was called "Velayat-e Faqih". The theory justified the control by religious clerics until the appearance of Mahdi who was expected to come and save the world. Ayatollah Khomeini became the leader of Iran. He called for the resistance movement of Shiite Muslims who lived in the Arab world.



Just after the Iranian Revolution, a man who claimed himself as Mahdi occupied Macca Grand mosque in Saudi Arabia. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia restrained terrorist by force. By this incident King Fahd recognized the power of fanatic religious movements. He disliked Iran, the integrated state of religion with politics. As the counter measures, he enforced the religious position of the ruling Saud family. He added the name of "Custodian of the Two

Holy Mosques" in front of the title of "King". Thereafter, he was called officially "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz al Saud". Saud family itself is a secular ruling family. But King Fahd proclaimed himself not only secular dignity but also religious one.

In response to the yell of Ayatollah Khomeini, Hezbollah of Shiite sect stood up in Lebanon. In addition to the conventional terrorism against Israel, Hezbollah extended the terrorist activities against Americans, especially military officers. Israel and the United States are the same enemy for Hezbollah. In 1983, the US Marine Corps headquarters in Beirut was bombed by Hezbollah attacks. 241 US soldiers were killed or injured.

In Egypt, antipathy against President Sadat who concluded historical peace treaty with Israel has ignited religious consciousness. He was assassinated by the officers of the jihad group in 1981. Furthermore, Sunni terrorist group Al Qaeda led by Osama Bin Laden activated terrorism throughout the Middle East. Al Qaeda carried out a bomb terror aimed at US soldiers in Aden of Yemen in 1992.

Shiite terrorism led by Iran and Sunni terrorism by Al Qaeda spread in the Middle East to North Africa. The United States was the next target of Al Qaeda. In 1993 there was the first bombing at the World Trade Center Building in New York. It was a prelude of catastrophic September 11 attacks in 2001.

Not only natural barriers like sea but also manmade land borders could not stop religious terrorism. Furthermore, a sense of solidarity spread by the Internet in the modern information society rapidly and widely. The 1990s was an epoch-making era when Islam terrorism began to spread over the world. Religious terrorism had a characteristic to cross the border easily.

(To be continued ----)

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